

The Alternative

Reading-Berks County Intergroup Newsletter

January 2026

ReadingBerksIntergroup.org

The Alternative is published monthly by the Reading-Berks Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous.
Serving Districts 33, 66, and 67 of Delegate Area 59 - Eastern Pennsylvania. Reach us by mail at
PO Box 12157, Reading, PA 19612, or you can email us at Alternative@ReadingBerksIntergroup.org

HELP IS AVAILABLE 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK CALL 610-373-6500

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The Reading Berks Intergroup meets on the 4th Tuesday of each month in person at One United Church of Christ, 1730 New Holland Rd, Reading PA 19607 at 7:00 PM. All members of Alcoholics Anonymous are welcome and encouraged to attend.

"Responsibility Declaration"

"I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there, and for that, I am responsible."

Step One

“We admitted we were powerless over alcohol ~ that our lives had become unmanageable.”

No other kind of bankruptcy is like this one. Alcohol, now become the rapacious creditor, bleeds us of all self-sufficiency and all will to resist its demands. Once this stark fact is accepted, our bankruptcy as going human concerns is complete.

But upon entering A.A. we soon take quite another view of this absolute humiliation. We perceive that only through utter defeat are we able to take our first steps toward liberation and strength. Our admissions of personal powerlessness finally turn out to be firm bedrock upon which happy and purposeful lives may be built.

Tradition One

“Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.”

Those who look closely soon have the key to this strange paradox. The A.A. member has to conform to the principles of recovery. His life actually depends upon obedience to spiritual principles. If he deviates too far, the penalty is sure and swift; he sickens and dies. At first he goes along because he must, but later he discovers a way of life he really wants to live. Moreover, he finds he cannot keep this priceless gift unless he gives it away. Neither he nor anybody else can survive unless he carries the A.A. message. The moment this Twelfth Step work forms a group, another discovery is made – that most individuals cannot recover unless there is a group. Realization dawns that he is but a small part of a great whole; that no personal sacrifice is too great for preservation of the Fellowship. He learns that the clamor of desires and ambitions within him must be silenced whenever these could damage the group. It becomes plain that the group must survive or the individual will not.

Concept One

“Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.”

Alcoholics Anonymous has been called an upside-down organization because the ultimate responsibility and final authority for world services resides with the groups, rather than with the trustees, the General Service Board or the General Service Office.

1st Step Prayer

Dear Lord, Help me to see and admit that I am powerless over my alcoholism. Help me to understand how my alcoholism has led to unmanageability in my life. Help me this day to understand the true meaning of powerlessness. Remove from me all denial of my alcoholism.

Reading-Berks Intergroup Thanks Their Groups for their Support:

(Address for contributions: Reading-Berks Intergroup, PO Box 12157, Reading PA 19612)

District 33 Thanks Their Groups for their Support:

(Address for contributions: D33 Treasurer, PO Box 452, Fleetwood PA 19522)

District 66 Thanks Their Groups for their Support:

(Address for contributions: District 66, PO Box 152, Mohnton PA 19540)

District 67 Thanks Their Groups for their Support:

(Address for contributions: D67 Treasurer, PO Box 73, Birdsboro PA 19508)

Announcements

Alcathon 2025

Wednesday December 31st

This is a FREE event!

Doors open at 1 PM. First meeting will be at 2 PM. Meetings will start every hour and last 45 minutes with the last meeting at 11 PM.

Sober Dance hosted by RYP Group at 9 PM

Easy Does It at 1300 Hilltop Rd, Leesport PA

Hilltop Group's 36th Anniversary Open Meeting

Tuesday January 13th

Food and Fellowship start at 5:30 PM with Speaker at 6:30 PM

The Bridge Fellowship Church at 902 Philadelphia Ave, Shillington PA

Reading Berks Intergroup is holding an Inventory

Saturday January 17th

Start time 10 AM

One United Church of Christ at 1730 New Holland Rd, Reading PA

“Alternative Advertisements”

All A.A. Events, Notifications, Announcements and/or Testimonies are Welcome!

Please email all requests to: Alternative@ReadingBerksIntergroup.Org

Announcements (continued)

The Topton Group is in need of support

Tuesdays at 7 PM at St. Peter's Church at 122 W Franklin Street in Topton PA 19562

The Boyertown Group has 2 meeting dates in need of support

Tuesdays 7 PM: 12 and 12 Topic Discussion

Thursdays 7 PM: Step Study (passages randomly selected from the Big Book for review & discussion)
The Boyertown Inn at 1 S Reading Ave in Boyertown PA

Freedom from Bondage has a new Plain Language Big Book Meeting

Thursdays at 6:30 PM (started June 5th)

Church of the Brethren at 2200 State Hill Rd in Wyomissing

AA SPEAKER JAM – ** Postponed until Spring 2026 **

Still in the planning stages but a date and time and venue have been set

Saturday April 18th

9 AM to 3 PM

To be held at Easy Does It at 1300 Hilltop Rd, Leesport PA

Service Commitments

Please use this QR code to access the most current listing for commitments:



Current Active Commitments:

The Haven, Wernersville, Teen Challenge (Women and Men)

You can also access information for Institution Commitments as well as Prison Commitments on the RBI 12th Step Work webpage which is under the Member Services page from the main page of Reading Berks Intergroup.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers needed for the Prisons Commitment (especially Women's)

Please contact Robbie K (Men's) or Lorraine W (Women's)

Volunteers needed for Bridging the Gap (especially northern Berks County)

Please contact Chris O or there is a flyer with a QR code that will get you signed up

Volunteers needed for the Hotline (especially Spanish Speaking volunteers)

Please contact Trent B

“Become Your Home Group’s Intergroup Representative (IGR)”

In areas where Intergroups have been formed such as Berks County, the AA Groups elect an Intergroup Representative and an Alternative, who participate in the monthly Intergroup business meetings with other elected Representatives. These meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of each month at One United Church of Christ, 1730 New Holland Rd, Reading PA 19607 at 7:00 PM and accessible via Zoom at ID 95087075328 with Password SoberRBI. The meeting starts at 7:00 PM and is usually over by 8:00 PM.

Recent Meeting Updates and Changes:

Coffee & Donuts in Strausstown (Tuesdays at Noon) **will be closing**. All other meetings at the 87 Main St Clubhouse (87 Main St in Strausstown PA 19559) will continue as scheduled. More information regarding when the Coffee & Donuts meeting will officially disbanded will be updated on the RBI website.

“**The Tribe**” virtual meeting meets Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. Wednesdays are speaker meetings, Fridays are Big Book meetings, and Saturdays will be Daily Reflection meetings.
(ZOOM ID 370705063; PW 364095)

The next monthly Reading-Berks Intergroup meeting is 7:00 PM Tuesday, January 27th, 2026 at One United Church of Christ, 1730 New Holland Rd, Reading PA 19607.

Visit the Reading Berks Intergroup page (<https://readingberksintergroup.org/>)

Links for activities around our area and beyond

- Printable schedules in 2 different sizes
- AA Hotline tear-off forms for all members to print, use, and distribute
- The Contributions page which lists the most up-to-date addresses for Area and GSO
- The most recent info on Area 59 and on GSO and the General Service Conference
 - Link to “We” in both English and Spanish (Your Area 59 quarterly newsletter)
- Information and links for the Grapevine App for your smart phone as well as the Grapevine Podcast
 - Updated and latest version of the RBI Structure Manual

Important Dates in A.A. History

January 1:

1943: Columbus Dispatch reports 1st Anniversary of Columbus AA
1948: First A.A. meeting was held in Japan, (English speaking.)
1988: West Virginia A.A. began first statewide toll-free telephone hotline.

January 2, 2003: Mid-Southern California Archives moved to new location in Riverside.

January 3, 1941: Jack Alexander told Bill Wilson the Oxford Group would be in his Saturday Evening Post.

January 4:

1939: Dr. Bob stated in a letter to Ruth Hock that A.A. had to get away from the Oxford Group atmosphere.
1940: First A.A. group was founded in Detroit, Michigan.
1941: Bill and Lois Wilson drove to Bedford Hills, NY to see Stepping Stones.

January 5, 1941: Bill Wilson told Jack Alexander that Jack was "the toast of A. A. -- in Coca Cola, of course."

January 8, 1938: New York A.A. split from the Oxford Group.

January 10, 1940: 1st AA meeting not in a home meets at King School, Akron, Ohio.

January 13:

1988: Jack Norris, M.D., Chairman/Trustees of A.A. for 27 yrs. died.
2003: Dr. Earle Marsh, author of "Physician Heal Thyself," sober 49 years, died

January 15:

1937: Fitz M brings AA meetings to Washington DC.
1945: First AA meeting held in Springfield, Missouri.

January 17, 1919: 18th amendment, "Prohibition," became law.

January 19:

1943: 1st discussion for starting AA group in Toronto.
1943: Wilson's returned from 1st major A.A. tour started in Oct 24 1943.
1999: Frank M., A.A. Archivist since 1983, died.

January 21, 1951: A.A. Grapevine published memorial issue on Dr. Bob.

January 23, 1961: Bill W. sent an appreciation letter to Dr. Carl Jung for his contribution to A.A.

January 24:

1945: 1st black group St. Louis
1971: Bill Wilson died in Miami, Florida.

January 26, 1971: *New York Times* published Bill Wilson's obituary on page 1.

January 27, 1971: The Washington Post published an obituary of Bill Wilson

January 30, 1961: Dr. Carl Jung answers Bill's letter with "Spiritus Contra Spiritum.