

The Alternative

Reading-Berks County Intergroup Newsletter

February 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 Two

“Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”

Step Two is the rallying point for all of us. Whether agnostic, atheist, or former believer, we can stand together on this Step. True humility and an open mind can lead us to faith, and every A.A. meeting is an assurance that God will restore us to sanity if we rightly relate ourselves to Him.

Tradition Two

“For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”

If the founder and his friends have served well, they may – to their surprise – be reinstated for a time. If, however, they have heavily resisted the rising tide of democracy, they may be summarily beached. In either case, the group now has a so-called rotating committee, very sharply limited in its authority. In no sense whatever can its members govern or direct the group. They are servants. Theirs is the sometimes thankless privilege of doing the group’s chores. Headed by the chairman, they look after public relations and arrange meetings. Their treasurer, strictly accountable, takes money from the hat that is passed, banks it, pays the rent and other bills, and makes a regular report at business meetings. The secretary see that literature is on the table, looks after the phone-answering service, answers the mail, and sends out notices of meetings. Such are the simple services that enable the group to function. The committee gives no spiritual advice, judges no one’s conduct, issues no orders. Every one of them may be promptly eliminated at the next election if they try this. And so they make the belated discovery that they are really servants, not senators. These are universal experiences. Thus throughout A.A. does the group conscience decree the terms upon which its leaders shall serve.

Concept Two

“The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole society in its world affairs.”

2nd Step Prayer

Heavenly Father, I am having trouble with personal relationships. I can’t control my emotional nature. I am prey to misery and depression. I can’t make a living. I feel useless. I am full of fear. I am unhappy. I can’t seem to be of real help to others. I know in my heart that only you can restore me to sanity if I am just willing to stop doubting your power. I humbly ask that you help me to understand that it is more powerful to believe than not to believe and that you are either everything or nothing.

Reading-Berks Intergroup Thanks Their Groups for their Support:

On Awakening Group
YASNY Group

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

District 33 Thanks Their Groups for their Support:

Bottom of the Barrel Group
End of the Line Group
Spirit of Recovery Group

(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

RBI Inventory postponed

The Reading Berks Intergroup Inventory that had been scheduled for Saturday January 17th was postponed due to the inclement weather.
Stay tuned for re-scheduled future date.
Easy Does It at 1300 Hilltop Rd, Leesport PA

New Millennium Group's 26th Anniversary Meeting

Sunday February 1st

Food and Fellowship start at 6 PM with Speaker meeting at 7 PM
Please bring a covered dish/snack if possible. This will be an Open Meeting.

St. Paul's UCC at 300 West 1st Street in Birdsboro

(Intersection of 1st and Washington Streets on right, side entrance, parking behind the St. Paul's Christian Education Building on left)

Feel free to attend our SUNDAY BIG BOOK MEETING, 7 PM at the Christian Education Building of St. Paul's UCC Church in Birdsboro PA

Announcements (continued)

Leesport Group is having their annual Start Your Day Over with Pancakes

Saturday February 28th
Door open 8 PM, Speaker at 9:30 PM
The Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity at 102 Apple St in Leesport

Area 59 presents All Intergroup Day

Saturday March 28th
Doors open at 10 AM with program to run from 11 AM to 3 PM
Continental breakfast and lunch will be provided
To include roundtables, panel discussions, and open sharing to show Unity in Action
Easy Does It at 1300 Hilltop Rd, Leesport PA

***NEW MEETING* At Wit's End**

Tuesdays and Thursdays at noon
St Barnabas Community Center at 234 E Main St in Kutztown

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

“Alternative Advertisements”

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

Please email all requests to: Alternative@ReadingBerksIntergroup.Org

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:

The 8:15 Meeting has a new location for their Monday through Friday meeting (Monday - Friday at 8:15 AM). They are now meeting at Bausman Memorial UCC at 1064 Penn Ave in Wyomissing. Their Saturday meetings remain at Kissinger's Church (no change) and their Sunday meetings remain at EDI (no change).

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, February 24th, 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

February 1, 1918: Original date set for Bill Wilson's marriage to Lois Burnham. The date was moved up because of the war.

February 2, 1942: Bill Wilson paid tribute to Ruth Hock, AA's first paid secretary, who resigned to get married. She had written approximately 15,000 letters to people asking for help.

February 5, 1941: Pittsburgh Telegram ran a story on the first AA group's Friday night meeting of a dozen "former hopeless drunks."

February 8:

1940: Bill W., Dr. Bob, and six other AA's asked 60 rich friends of John D. Rockefeller Jr., for money at the Union Club, NY. They got \$2,000.

February 10, 1922: Harold E. Hughes was born on a farm near Ida Grove, Iowa. After his recovery from alcoholism, he became Governor of Iowa, a United States Senator, and the leading dark horse for the Presidential Democratic nomination in 1972, until he announced he would not run. He authored the legislation which created the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, and other legislation to help alcoholics and addicts.

February 11, 1938: Clarence Snyder ("Home Brewmeister" in 1st, 2nd & 3rd editions) had his last drink.

February 12, 1945: World War II paper shortage forced reduction in size of the Big Book.

February 13, 1940: With about two years of sobriety, Jim Burwell ("The Vicious Cycle") moved to the Philadelphia area and started the first Philadelphia A.A. group.

February 14, 1971: AA groups worldwide held a memorial service for Bill Wilson.

February 15, 1946: AA Tribune, Des Moines, IA, reported 36 new members since Marty Mann had been there.

February 16, 1941: Baltimore Sunday Sun reported city's first AA group begun in 1940 had grown from 3 to 40 members, with five being women.

February 18, 1943: AA's were granted the right to use cars for 12th step work in emergency cases, despite gas rationing.

February 19, 1967: Father "John Doe" (Ralph Pfau), 1st Catholic Priest in AA, died.

February 20, 1941: The Toledo Blade published first of three articles on AA by Seymour Rothman.

February 21, 1939: 400 copies of the Big Book manuscript were sent to doctors, judges, psychiatrists, and others for comment.

February 22, 1842: Abe Lincoln addressed the Washington Temperance Society in Springfield, IL.

February 23, 1959: AA granted "Recording for the Blind" permission to tape the Big Book.

February 24, 2002: Hal Marley, "Dr. Attitude of Gratitude," died. He had 37 years of sobriety. Hal testified, anonymously, before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse on December 3, 1970.

February 28, 1940: 1st organization meeting of Philadelphia AA was held at McCready Huston's room at 2209 Delancy Street.