

12 Steps@Trinity



Spiritually Teachable
December 19, 2024

Make use of what we offer...

...if not members of religious bodies we sometimes select and memorize a few sets of prayers which emphasize the principles we have been discussing. There are many helpful books also. Suggestions about these may be obtained from one's priest, minister, or rabbi. Be quick to see where religious people are right. Make use of what they offer.

~Alcoholics Anonymous Pg. 87

To us, the Realm of Spirit is broad, roomy, all inclusive; never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek. It is open, we believe, to all.

~Alcoholics Anonymous Pg. 46

12 Steps for All

1. We admitted that our lives had become unmanageable and uncontrollable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood that.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood that, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

12 Steps@Trinity

12-Step Spirituality is not a defined body of wisdom or particular collection of books and sayings. Indeed, the steps are rooted in a tradition much older and extending back millennia through the Judeo-Christian-Islamic religions. The Steps are now used by hundreds of different kinds of recovery groups and millions of people throughout the world. We could even say that 12-Step Spirituality is the combined knowledge and experience of all those who have used spiritual surrender and 12 Steps as a passage to recovery, and the things they have learned along the way. We are fortunate to include in our community many who have journeyed toward liberation with the 12 Steps and so we look to share what we have learned, as well as celebrate the presence of God in our midst.

A Centering Prayer

Let us pray together:

**Gracious and eternal God,
so draw our hearts to you,
so guide our minds,
so fill our imaginations,
so control our wills,
that we may be wholly yours,
utterly dedicated to you;
and then use us, we pray,
as you will, and always to your glory
and the welfare of your people;
through Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.**

First Reading

The road to my hometown wound along a steep hillside. As a child, I was often afraid that our car would swerve too widely and go over the edge. I used to take hold of the rear door handle and try to prevent this. I was too young to understand that my actions could not influence the path of the car. Yet I often take a similar approach to my adult fears and persist in futile actions.

My Twelve Step program tells me to accept what I cannot change and change what I can. Although I can't control the way alcoholism has affected my life, I can't control another person, and I can't make life unfold according to my plans, I can admit my powerlessness and turn to my Higher Power for help.

When I am the driver, the responsibility for steering clear of the road's edge is mine. It is up to me to take my recovery seriously, to work on my attitudes, to take care of my mind, body, and spirit, to make amends when I have done harm – in short, to change the things I can.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

Amen.

Musical Interlude

12Steps@Trinity is offered as a worship experience rooted in the spiritual wisdom of the twelve-steps, which themselves are rooted in the ancient spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius.

Courage to Change

*The pain is not in the surrender and acceptance. It is in the resistance.
Hope for Today*

Second Reading

Courage to
Change

I used to think of God as my adversary. We were in a battle of wills, and I wasn't about to let down my guard. You can imagine how quickly this attitude led me to hit a hard-emotional bottom! I came to Twelve Step recovery, but I was reluctant to admit that I was powerless. I knew it was true – I had obviously failed to conquer alcoholism – but I was not going to submit to my enemy!

I am so grateful to my Twelve step program for helping me learn to surrender. It took a long time, but I finally realized that surrender does not mean submission – it means I am willing to stop trying to do God's part and to do my own.

When I gather flowers, or marvel at nature's wonders, I do not lose face when I concede that I am not in control. So it is with everything in my life. The best way I have found to invite serenity is to recognize that the world is in good hands.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

Amen.

First Prayer

Let us pray together.

Dear God,

Why do I keep fighting you off?

**One part of me wants you desperately,
another part of me unknowingly
pushes you back and runs away.**

**What is there in me that
so contradicts my desire for you?**

**These transition days, these passage ways,
are calling me to let go of old securities,
to give myself over into your hands.**

**Like Jesus who struggled with the pain
I, too, fight the "let it all be done."**

**Loneliness, lostness, non-belonging,
all these hurts strike out at me,**

leaving me pained with this present goodbye.

I want to be more but I fight the growing.

I want to be new but I hang onto the old.

I want to live but I won't face the dying.

I want to be whole but cannot bear to gather up the pieces into one.

**Is it that I refuse to be out of control,
to let the tears take their humbling journey,**

to allow my spirit to feel its depression,

to stay with the insecurity of "no home"?

Now is the time. You call to me,

begging me to let you have my life,

— Joyce Rupp

*Sometimes
the only way I
can determine
what to accept
and what to
change is by
trial and error.
Mistakes can be
opportunities
to gain wisdom
to know the
difference.
Courage to
Change*

**inviting me to taste the darkness
so I can be filled with the light,
allowing me to lose my direction
so that I will find my way home to you.
Amen.**

Third Reading

Sometimes I need to work Step One backwards. I don't always recognize when I'm powerless, but I certainly notice when my life becomes unmanageable. Then I remember that usually when I'm feeling insane, I'm forgetting my powerlessness and trying to control outcomes or other people.

My life quickly deteriorates when I indulge my ego and recklessly set out to change someone or something over which I have no control – in other words, when I try to get my way. I can be stubborn about it, too, spending an inordinate amount of time and effort to that end. The inevitable result is pain, frustration and utter failure. Even if I acknowledge my powerlessness, until I accept it, I still experience pain.

When I accept my powerlessness and surrender to my Higher Power's will, however, I gain some measure of serenity and humility. I become spiritually teachable.

My recovery is about progress, not perfection. Each time I practice accepting my powerlessness, it comes closer to being a natural response. The good news is that with surrender and acceptance comes release from my pain.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.
Amen.

Second Prayer

Let us pray together.

**My God, I have always thought
that growing stronger in spirit
would mean becoming invincible, beyond need.
Now I see you are teaching me
to receive another kind of strength
when I come to the end of mine.
Teach me to walk in your ways
as I have never known them before.
Amen.**

Musical Interlude

Hope for Today

—David Hazard

*If a crisis arises,
or any problem
baffles me, I
hold it up to
the light of the
Serenity Prayer
and extract its
sting before it
can hurt me.
One Day at a
Time in Al-anon*

Reflection

The reflection seeks to be evocative not prescriptive, so there is no expectation that you will agree with the homilist. Instead, allow the reflection to lead you into your own contemplation and feel free to follow your own inner voice rather than remaining focused on what the homilist is saying. Sometimes our journeys converge and sometime they diverge. Enjoy!

Meditation

The meditation will be a brief period of quiet to allow us to center and quiet the mind. Please feel free to participate with whatever method you prefer.

Reconciliation, Release, and Reclamations

A Thursday@7 tradition, you are invited to come forward and symbolically offer your prayer for the reconciliation of a fractured relationship, the release of a resentment, or the reclamation of lost hopes and dreams.

Shared Reflections

The Serenity Prayer

Let us pray together.

**God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference;
living one day at a time;
enjoying one moment at a time;
accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;
taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is,
not as I would have it;
trusting that you will make all things right
if I surrender to your will;
that I may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with you in the next. Amen.**

The Peace

The earliest Christians shared a kiss or embrace as a sign of solidarity and reconciliation among those in spiritual community with one another. We continue that tradition with a common greeting:

The Peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

*Today I can be
grateful that the
earth will continue
to revolve without
any help from me.
I am free to live
my own life, safe
in the knowledge
that a Higher
Power is taking
care of the world,
my loved ones,
and myself.
Courage to
Change*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Financial Support

Your financial support is not only a practical necessity. It can also be a very meaningful symbolic gesture, expressing your gratitude for all the blessings in your life and your hope for health in the world. You can place cash or a check in the big blue urn at the head of the aisle or you can [donate online here](#), text TRINITYBUFFALO to 73256, or send a check to: Trinity Episcopal Church, 371 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14202

Thank you for your participation and contribution. Peace.

Darkness into Light: When the Christmas Spirit Eludes You

On **Sunday, December 22 @7 pm**, Trinity will hold a special evening service for persons who are struggling with Christmas this year. You may be experiencing grief or loss, sadness or depression. For any reason, if you can't quite conjure up Christmas joy, Trinity would like to meet you where you are, give you some empathy, and share this evening of readings, Krista's music, and a communion service. Simple reception to follow. Service also available on Zoom.

Coldest Night of the Year

It's Year 4 of the Coldest Night of the Year Walk in Buffalo, supporting our friends at Compass House! This year's walk will take place on **Saturday, February 22**, kicking off at the Parkside Lodge. This all-ages fundraising walk raises funds and awareness for the mission of Compass House, supporting homeless and runaway youth and young adults in the Buffalo area.

Visit cnoy.com/buffalo and search Team Trinity to join us at Delaware Park or to support with a donation to Compass House! Email Missy Stolfi at missy.stolfi@gmail.com with any questions.

Christmas Week Worship Schedule

Please join:

Sunday, December 22 10:30am service - 4th Sunday of Advent, Lessons and Carols and Greening of the Church

Sunday, December 22 7:00pm service - Darkness into Light Service

Tuesday, December 24 3:00pm service - Christmas Eve Service and Children's Pageant

As usual, there will be no services held on Christmas Day, including the weekly Wednesday noon service.

Thursday, December 26 7:00pm service - 12 Steps@Trinity based on 12-step spirituality

Sunday, December 29 10:30 service

Thursday, January 2 7:00pm service - 12 Steps@Trinity based on 12-step spirituality

Please note that on Sunday, December 29, there will be no nursery services or Creator Quest during the 10:30 service.

Sunday, Dec 29: NO Trinity @7

There is no Wednesday at noon service on December 25 or January 1.

Volunteer Opportunities With One of our Partners

Creative Restorations is seeking dedicated volunteers to assist with the operation of our food pantry, which serves those in need in our community. We are looking for help on **Mondays** from 9-Noon, **Wednesdays** from 12-3pm, and **Fridays** from 3-6pm. If you are interested in lending a hand and making a difference, please reach out to Chris Harzynski at 716-553-4886. Your support would be greatly appreciated!

Hamlin Park School Monthly Community Event

Each event has a theme and is open to all. They are always looking for volunteers. The times and dates are:

Saturday Academy 10am-1pm: February 1, March 8, April 5, May 3

Evening 4:30-6pm: January 30, April 3

Trinity members would be welcome to any of these. For more information, you can contact the Say Yes To Education coordinator Nikki Cocerezl at ncocerezl@sayyesbuffalo.org or (716)388-1572.

You can also donate by scanning this QR code:



Comfort and Care Team

The Comfort and Care Team is here to help and support you or someone you know experiencing health or other life challenges. Email any one of us to request prayers, a caring phone call, notes, information on resources, a friendly visit, or arranging meals.

Phoebe McKay, phoebemckay@gmail.com

Marie Keane, MNMKKeane@gmail.com

Susie Green, susie432@gmail.com

Sara Merritt, smerrit172@gmail.com

Patti Nisbet, tudorspace@aol.com

Parking at Trinity's Franklin Street Lot

When you come to a church service or other Trinity event, you can park in Trinity's Franklin Street lot without paying; the parking fees will not be enforced. You can use the lot any other time you are in the neighborhood, too, so that Trinity gets the parking fee! Use your smartphone to pay.



Explore Buffalo

Learn more about Trinity's windows and the impact they have had on American art history. Share this Buffalo treasure with your friends! Explore Buffalo leads tours of Trinity's windows as part of its Sacred Spaces series. Check the website listed below or scan the QR code for the schedule. You can help the wider community appreciate the resources Trinity has to share. Post this link on your social media or email it to friends. Better yet, invite someone to come on the tour with you. <https://explorebuffalo.org/sacred-spaces/trinity-episcopal-church/>



Sign up [here](#) to get Trinity's eNews to stay in touch!



12-Steps@7

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