

12 Steps@Trinity



Self Honesty
January 16, 2025

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

What wonderful things could happen in my life if I could get rid of my natural impulse to justify my actions! Is honesty so deeply repressed under layers of guilt that I cannot release it to understand my motives? Being honest with ourselves isn't easy. It is difficult to search out why I had this or that impulse, and why I acted upon it. Nothing makes us feel so vulnerable as to give up the crutch of the Alibi.

Yet I know that self-deception multiplies my problems. How shall I correct this?

I will examine my real reasons for every decision I make that involves taking action. If this shows me I am deceiving myself as to my true motives, I will try to correct this self-deception at its source.

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.

One Day at a Time in Al-Anon

*“We blame little things in others and pass over great things in ourselves; we are quick enough in perceiving and weighing what we suffer from others, but we mind not what others suffer from us.”
Thomas à Kempis*

Second Reading

Courage to
Change

The courage to be honest with ourselves is one quality we can cultivate to help our spiritual growth. It takes a commitment to honesty to admit that someone we love has a drinking problem, that alcoholism and many other things are beyond our control, that there is a source of help greater than ourselves, and that we need the care of that Higher Power.

Honesty allows us to look at ourselves, to share our discoveries with God and others, to admit that we need spiritual help in moving forward, and to free ourselves by making amends for past wrongs.

How do I feel today? How am I doing? If I can answer those questions truthfully, I am more likely to pursue the help I need and to share the happy times with others as well.

Courage to
Change

We need to be truthful with ourselves as we continue to review our attitudes and actions each day. This allows us to be humble enough to reach out to others as equals, and to continue to grow in every area of our lives. Where do we find the courage to be so honest with ourselves? The courage to change the things we can is found in our continuously-developing relationship with a Power greater than ourselves.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

Amen.

First Prayer

Let us pray together.

We struggle, we grow weary, we grow tired. We are exhausted, we are distressed, we despair. We give up, we fall down, we let go. We cry, we are empty, we grow calm. We are ready. We wait quietly.

A small shy truth arrives. Arrives from without and within. Arrives and is born. Simple, steady, clear. Like a mirror, like a bell, like a flame. Like rain in summer.

A precious truth arrives and is born within us. Within our emptiness.

We accept it, we observe it, we absorb it. We surrender to our bare truth. We are nourished, we are changed. We are blessed. We rise up. For this we give thanks. Amen.

— Michael
Leunig

Third Reading

Days of Healing
Days of Joy

There are many recurring themes and phrases in the conversations of recovering people. One of these catchy capsules of wisdom is, “to try to is to lie to.” What this means is that we are tempted to use words as a smoke screen for our actions.

But words, of course, are never an adequate substitution for action. Because we are human, and therefore subject to fear and fatigue, we sometimes tend to alibi by saying we tried to do something we should have in fact done. We tried to talk straight, or we tried to confront a bully, when we know we really didn’t make the effort. As the phrase says, we are simply lying when we claim to have done something we didn’t do.

And it isn't necessary to lie. If we're not up to making an effort we need to say, "I can't handle that today. Maybe tomorrow." We need to be honest more than we need to look good.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

Amen.

Fourth Reading

What is called "cash register honesty" is usually not a problem for adult children. We probably don't cheat people or steal their money, and we're probably not pathological liars. But many of us do have a problem with honesty just the same. Self-honesty is what trips us up.

Honesty is both the benefit and the burden of recovery. Half-truths and unacknowledged truths are the root cause of most of the tangled, conflicting situations we find ourselves in. What we thought, we never clearly stated; what we needed, we never frankly asked for; what we intended to do, we never unmistakably declared. Our half-truths and double messages are the furthest thing from straightforward communications.

If we're honest with ourselves, we don't have to worry about being honest with other people. A self-honest person cannot tolerate duplicity. It's amazing how much simpler life is for self-honest people.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

Amen.

Second 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.

Days of Healing
Days of Joy

— Joyce Rupp

"Help them to take failure, not as a measure of their worth, but as a chance for a new start."

Book of
Common Prayer

continues on next page

“It may feel like an enormous risk but talking honestly about the situation is the key to healing.”
...In All Our Affairs

**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,
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.**

Musical Interlude

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;**

“We can say what we mean only if we have the courage to be honest with ourselves and with others.”
The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage

**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.

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.

Vestry Elections and Annual Meeting on Sunday, Feb 2. You can vote for our new Vestry members now through Sunday, Feb 2 @10:30am. Everyone who considers themselves to be a member of Trinity is welcome to vote. This year we are electing 1 warden and 3 vestry members. Be sure to attend the annual meeting on February 2 @11:30am in the Marfield Room to learn what's been going on at Trinity. You may notice that there are the same number of candidates as there are vestry openings. It is still important that you take the time to vote. Your vote indicates that you do support these people representing you on the vestry. Click [here](#) to vote.

JoAnne Sundell - Warden

I'm a mom of two college-aged sons, small business owner with my husband Dan, and an adjunct history instructor at SUNY Erie's City campus. I've been a member and greeter at Trinity for about 20 years. Since 2019, I've served on two committees formed to help Trinity to become economically sustainable in an era of declining church membership. I believe that I have a clear understanding of our obstacles and opportunities. As Warden, my intention is to support Matt and the vestry as Trinity transforms into the best, sustainable version of itself.

Jane Kearns

I am honored to be asked to put my name up for vestry! I have been an active member since 1976. Trinity has been an important part of my life all of these years. I taught the Sunday school nursery for more than 8 years, served on vestry 2 terms, leader of the kitchen area for the White Elephant Sale for many years and since its demise, have offered assistance in various fundraisers as I have been able. I have just retired from Hunt REC after 42 years and have enough energy left to assist Trinity in any way needed. Thank you for considering me.

Jess Poleon

My background in public service (I work for Erie County) will assist me in serving the congregation as a vestry member. I am a good listener and will listen to what the members want. I bring a fresh set of eyes and perspective to the table. Everyone's voice is essential. No matter how large or small someone believes themselves to be, we are all equal and must be part of the conversations carrying the church into the future. I currently serve on the WNY ASIS [American Society of Industrial Securities] as co-vice chair, having served five terms as chair. I live in the Blackrock section of Buffalo with my husband Paul, who I've shared 21 blissful years of marriage and counting, our teenage son PJ (Paul Jr.), and our two dogs, Harley and Jack. If anyone has any questions, feel free to reach out.

“Whatever is only almost true is quite false and among the most dangerous of errors”.

Henry Ward Beecher

You can also donate by scanning this QR code:



Cynthia J. Stroud

I am affectionately known as Cindy, and I work as a staff member of the Clean Air Coalition, based here at Trinity. I have been asked by the nominating committee to bring a Trinity partner perspective to the vestry. I am a proud Buffalonian who graduated from the Buffalo Public School system. I am always ready to lend a helping hand to my community and anyone in need. I am deeply committed to community health. Additionally, I have experience working with individuals with intellectual and/or physical disabilities, negotiating contracts with a labor union, and ensuring a complete count during each census cycle, including the homeless population. In all of these efforts, inclusion and reducing disparities are priorities.



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/>



Visiting Trinity

The church is open by appointment for private prayer or meditation. Contact our parish administrator, Colleen O'Neill, at coneill@trinitybuffalo.org to schedule an appointment.

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.

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

Thursday 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 ncocerez@sayyesbuffalo.org or (716)388-1572.



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

12-Steps@7

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