

12 Steps@Trinity



Self Awareness
December 12, 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

As I worked my way through Step Four, I listed my character traits as honestly and fearlessly as I could. I was struck by a great irony: Many things I had once thought of as virtues – taking care of everyone around me, worrying about other people’s lives, sacrificing my own happiness and prosperity – turned out to be the causes of my misery! And those traits I had always ignored – talent, optimism, self-discipline, - turned out to be my truly positive qualities. It was as though, through the power of this Step, I had found a way to turn my upside-down personality right-side up.

I still struggle to keep it all from turning over once again. But when I see myself clearly, I have a sense of wholeness and a feeling of pride and peace. I can be happy to be myself now that I know who I am.

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

*“Let me observe, with new interest, even the commonplace things that happen in each new day.”
One Day at a Time in Al-anon*

One Day at a
Time in Al-anon

*My life is a
constant state
of change.
Awareness
allows me to
keep pace with
that change.
Today let me
listen to my
words and watch
my actions. Only
by knowing the
person I am
can I create the
person I want
to become.
Courage to
Change*

— Br. David
Steindl-Rast

*Melody Beattie,
The Language of
Letting Go*

Second Reading

My life is a series of unfoldings – incidents and occasions, agreeable or distressing. Each day is full of them, hour by hour, and this makes it difficult for me to take a detached view of all that is happening. I'm too close.

If these occurrences were like so many pieces of merchandise – groceries or dry goods – I would see them clearly, good or bad. Looking at the incidents of my life in this way, I might be astonished to discover that the good far outweigh the bad. And yet I concentrate so heavily on my trials and burdens that I hardly give a thought to relishing the pleasant and satisfying things that happen each day.

This noticing is an acute awareness of our surroundings and what takes place in them. It can be cultivated, like watching a play or film.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

Amen.

First Prayer

Let us pray together.

You, from whom we come

And to whom we go,

Unchanging love,

You give us time for change and growth.

**In this time of great change in my life,
please, give me courage to change and grow
and cheerfulness amidst growing-pain.**

Let me take ever deeper roots in love

Make me faithful without clinging

And let me remain faithful in letting go.

Into your hands I lay my life

And the lives of all whom I love.

Amen.

Third Reading

When we first become aware of a problem, a situation, or a feeling, we may react with anxiety or fear. There is no need to fear awareness. No need.

Awareness is the first step toward positive change and growth. It's the first step toward solving the problem, or getting the need met, the first step toward the future. It's how we focus on the next lesson.

Awareness is how life, the Universe, and our Higher Power get our attention and prepare us for change. The process of becoming changed begins with awareness. Awareness, acceptance, and change – that's the cycle. We can accept the temporary discomfort from awareness because that is how we are moved to a better place. We can accept the temporary discomfort because we trust God and ourselves.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.
Amen.

Second Prayer

Let us pray together.

**Dear Gracious and Loving God,
As I take this time to be still,
help me to let go of anxiousness and feel your peace.
You are love and where there is love there can be no fear.
Help me to let go of fear and receive your perfect love.
I come before you with heaviness because of being hurt by others.
Help me to accept the effect that their actions have had in my life
and to let go of this hurt.
I release this hurt.
I release this weight on my body and spirit. I ask your love to carry me.
I forgive those who have hurt me.
Help me to receive and accept love.
Help me to give love freely.
Help me not to strive for perfection but to make progress each day.
Each day, help me to step into the glorious person you created me to be.
I accept and find comfort in knowing—
I am completely loved with your divine, perfect love. 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.

*— Jackie
Trottmann*

*If I learn to see
everything with
a fresh eye, I
will find I have
many reasons
for contentment
and gratitude.
When I find
myself being
bogged down
with negative
thoughts, I will
deliberately turn
away from them.
One Day at a
Time in Al-anon*

Shared Reflections

Today I'm going to pay close attention to what I tell myself. If necessary, I'll stop in mid-thought, start over, and replace negative illusions with positive truths.
Courage to Change

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.

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.

Angel Tree - Opportunities to Share Your Blessings

As you prepare for the holiday season, please consider sharing your blessings with Compass House, Hamlin Park Academy, and Justice for Migrant Families.

In the 1970s, Trinity helped establish Compass House, which provides a safe space for runaway and homeless youth and teens. Justice for Migrant Families is not just another tenant at Trinity. As a sanctuary church, Trinity embraces the mission of this organization as our own. We support their important work by providing office space for them and participating as volunteers in some of their activities. Through Say Yes Buffalo, Trinity has had a partnership with Hamlin Park Academy since the fall of 2016. Trinity has provided school supplies, clothing, books, and volunteers to assist the students in the school.

Trinity is collecting \$25 gift cards for these organizations now through **Sunday, December 15**. Hamlin Park prefers Tops gift cards but any gift cards would be appreciated. If you want to donate cash we would be happy to purchase gift cards for you. There will be envelopes in the back of the church if you want to make a donation during our Sunday offerings or mail in a donation. Thank you for your generosity.

Missy Stolfi (716) 998-6816 or missy.stolfi@gmail.com

Patti Nisbet (716) 698-2834 or tudorspace@aol.com

Sue Doherty (716) 725-7471 or susandoherty50@hotmail.com

You can also donate by scanning this QR code:



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.

Trinity Discussion Group: Exploring Advent Through Poetry

Join Tim Lane and Jeffrey Tooke on **Wednesdays @7pm** via [Zoom](#) (Meeting ID: 816-6863-4672 Passcode: trintalk) starting December 4. Explore Advent with poems from notable poets including Rowan Williams, T. S. Eliot, Gerard Manley Hopkins, and George Herbert in Janet Morley's *Haphazard by Starlight* poetry anthology. Sessions will include readings of poems, faith-based reflections, and discussion questions. Please email Jeffrey Tooke at jeffreytooke@outlook.com to sign up and for more information.

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:

December 14, 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 Van Daniel at vdaniel@sayyesbuffalo.org or (716)388-1572.

*I can't cope
with something
unless I
acknowledge
its reality.
When I am
willing to look
at the whole
picture, I take
the first step
toward a more
manageable life.
Courage to
Change*

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

Trinity Episcopal Church • 371 Delaware Avenue • Buffalo, New York 14202
The Rev. Matthew Lincoln • mcolin@trinitybuffalo.org
www.TrinityBuffalo.org • (716) 852-8314