

12 Steps@Trinity



New Seasons of Life

April 14, 2022

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

It is time to stop this nonsense of running around picking on ourselves.

We may have walked through much of our life apologizing for ourselves either directly or indirectly – feeling less valuable than others, believing that they know better than we do, and believing that somehow others are meant to be here and we are not.

We have a right to be here.

We have a right to be ourselves.

We are here. There is a purpose, a reason, and an intention for our life. We do not have to apologize for being here or being who we are.

We are good enough and deserving.

Others do not have our magic. We have our magic. It is in us.

It doesn't matter what we've done in our past. We all have a past, woven with mistakes, successes, and learning experiences. We have a right to our past. It is ours. It has worked to shape and form us. As we progress on this journey, we shall see how each of our experiences will be turned around and used for good.

We have already spent too much time being ashamed, being apologetic, and doubting the beauty of ourselves. Be done with it. Let it go. It is an unnecessary

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.

Melody Beattie

*To love oneself is the beginning of a lifelong romance.
Oscar Wilde*

burden. Others have rights, but so do we. We are neither less than nor more than. We are equal. We are who we are. That is who we were created and intended to be.

That, my friend, is a wonderful gift.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

Amen.

Musical Interlude

Second Reading

The spiritual transition to the second half of life moves you from either/or thinking to both/and thinking: the ability to increasingly live with paradox and mystery. You no longer think in terms of win/lose, but win/win. It is a very different mind and strategy for life. In order for this alternative consciousness to become your primary way of thinking, you usually have to experience something that forces either/or thinking to fall apart.

Your first reaction is a struggle: “What do I do now? I don’t like this. I can’t deal with this. I want to go back to my familiar and habitual world.” Inside such “liminal space” is where real change happens, where your self-serving little dualisms must fall apart. It might be called growing up.

If you’re stuck in the first half of life, with your explanation about why you or your group are the best, you will hold on strongly because it’s all you have, and any change feels like dying.

Often the only thing that can break down your natural egocentricity is discovering that the qualities you hate in others are actually within you. You’re not so moral after all. You’ve imagined doing “bad” things; and if you could get away with it, you know you’d do it. Perhaps the only reason you don’t is because you’re afraid. Fear is not enlightenment. Fear keeps you inside of a false order and will not allow any reordering.

Unless you somehow “weep” over your own phoniness, hypocrisy, fear, and woundedness, you probably won’t let go of the first half of life. If you don’t allow this needed disappointment to well up within you, if you surround yourself with your orthodoxies and your certitudes and your belief that you’re the best, frankly, you will stay in the first half of life forever. Many religious people never allow themselves to fall, while many “sinners” fall and rise again. Our greatest “sin” is not falling or failing but refusing to rise and trust ourselves—and God—again. Make sure you are always in need of mercy and you will never stop growing.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

Amen.

Richard Rohr

*Resolve to be
thyself; and know
that who finds
himself, loses his
misery.
Matthew Arnold*

First Prayer

Let us pray together.

O God of the miracles,
of galaxies
and crocuses
and children,
I praise you now
from the soul of the child within me,
shy in my awe,
delighted by my foolishness,
stubborn in my wanting,
persistent in my questioning,
and bold in my asking you
to help me unbury my talents
for wonder
and humor
and gratitude,
so I may invest them eagerly
in the recurring mysteries
of spring and beginnings,
of willows that weep,
and rivers that flow
and people who grow
in such endlessly amazing
and often painful ways;
that I will be forever linked and loyal
to justice and joy,
simplicity and humanity,
Christ and his kingdom. Amen.

Third Reading

In the seasonal predictability of nature, we can always be certain that spring follows winter. But this is not so in human matters.

Those of us with a healthy attitude and loving support may endure profound distress, go on to heal, and perhaps even gain precious wisdom as a result of this experience. Like seasonal changes, this is a passing from death to life.

For some of us, however, there is no passage to life, only from one stage of dying to another. Too few lessons have been learned, too little wisdom has been gained for the wound to heal.

There is nothing natural or guaranteed about a springtime of the spirit. We must choose it. That we can is the glorious part. To work the program is to choose the season in which we live.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

Amen.

— Ted Loder,
Guerrillas of
Grace

*Being true to
myself is one of
the greatest gifts I
can give to those
around me.*

**Courage to
Change**

Days of Healing
Days of Joy

— Br. David
Steindl-Rast

*I believe that
the purpose
of mature
spirituality is
to cultivate in
us the ability to
accept the present
moment, just as it
is, including the
good and the bad,
and to find God
in it.*
Richard Rohr

Second Prayer

Let us pray.

**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.**

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 sometimes 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.

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

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.

*The events in
our lives happen
in a sequence in
time, but in their
significance to
ourselves they
find their own
order.*

Eudora Welty

You can also get
there by scanning
this
QR code:



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Holy Week Services tomorrow and Sunday

You are welcome to gather at church in person or online!

Good Friday 4/15 noon This service is conducted on site at Trinity, and you can participate in person or online via [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#). At noon, the focus is the Gospel's telling of the passion, with communion that coincides with the time that Jesus hung on the cross.

Easter Sunday 4/17 10:30am This service is conducted on site at Trinity, and you can participate in person or online via [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#). Beginning with the lighting of the Paschal Candle, the Easter service will be a full celebration of the hope of new life that overcomes death, with great music and an open invitation to participate in the transformation of Jesus' last supper into the first banquet of life after death. The video of this service remains on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) after the live stream is over.

Sunday 4/17 Trinity @7: NO SERVICE

Easter Bonnets

While COVID numbers are down, there is still cause for caution, so we won't be holding the Easter Bonnet parade this year. BUT, all are welcome to wear their Easter bonnets; we encourage creativity!

12-Steps@7

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