

# 12 Steps@Trinity



It is Good to Ask

December 22, 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

If God already knows what we need before we ask, and God actually cares about us more than we care about ourselves, then why do Step 7?

Are we trying to talk God into things? Does the person or group with the most prayers win? Is prayer of petition just another way to get what we want? Or is it to get God on our side? In every case, notice that we are trying to take control.

Why is it good to ask, and what is really happening in prayers of petition, or intercession? Are we needed or encouraged to talk God into things?

*We ask not to change God but to change ourselves. We pray to form a living relationship, not to get things done. Prayer is a symbiotic relationship with life and with God, a synergy which creates a result larger than the exchange itself. God knows that we need to pray to keep the symbiotic relationship moving and growing. Prayer is not a way to try to control God, or even to get what we want. God gives us power more than answers.*

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

**Amen.**

*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.*

—Richard Rohr

## Musical Interlude

### Second Reading

**W**e can never engineer or guide our own transformation or conversion. If we try, it will be a self-centered and well controlled version of conversion, with most of my preferences and addictions still fully in place but now well disguised. Any attempts at self-conversion would be like an active alcoholic trying to determine his own rules for sobriety. God has to radically change the central reference point of our lives. We do not even know where to look for another reference point because up to now it has all been about me! Too much “me” can never find “you” – or anything beyond itself.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

**Amen.**

### First Prayer

*Let us pray together.*

**O God of peace, you have taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and in confidence shall be our strength: By the might of your Spirit lift us to your presence, where we may be still and know that you are God. We ask this, trusting that you are already doing more than we can ask or imagine. Amen.**

### Third Reading

**S**tep 7 says that we must “humbly ask God to remove our shortcomings.” Don’t dare go after your faults yourselves or you will go after the wrong thing, or more commonly a clever substitute for the real thing. “If you try to pull out the weeds, you might pull out the wheat along with it,” as Jesus says (Matthew 13:29).

Instead, you have to let God (1) reveal your real faults to you (usually by failing many times!), and then (2) allow God to remove those faults from his side and in God’s way. If you go after them with an angry stick, you will soon be left with just an angry stick – and the same faults at a deeper level of disguise and denial. Thus most early-stage people in alcoholic recovery just replace one addiction with another: Now it is nicotine, caffeine, stinkin’ thinkin’, and the angry stick, which is now OK because it is a Christian angry stick.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

**Amen.**

—Richard Rohr

*Adapted from  
the Book of  
Common Prayer*

—Richard Rohr

*Humility leads  
me to do anything  
I can in any  
situation without  
having to do  
everything in  
every situation.  
Joan Chittister*

## Fourth Reading

**S**o it is important that you ask, seek, and knock to keep yourself in right relationship with Life Itself. Life is a gift, totally given to you without cost, every day of it, and every part of it. A daily and chosen “attitude of gratitude” will keep your hands open to expect that life, allow that life, and receive life at ever-deeper levels of satisfaction – but never to think you deserve it. Those who live with such open and humble hands receive life’s “gifts, full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over into their lap” (Luke 6:38). In my experience, if you are not radically grateful every day, resentment always takes over. *For some reason, to ask “for your bread” is to know that it is being given.* To not ask is to take your own efforts, needs, goals – and yourself – far too seriously. Consider if that is not true in your own life.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

**Amen.**

## Second Prayer

*Let us pray.*

**Disturb us Lord, when we are too well pleased with ourselves,  
When our dreams have come true because we dreamed too little,  
When we arrive safely because we sail too close to the shore.  
Disturb us Lord, when in the abundance of things we possess  
We have lost our thirst for the waters of life.  
Having fallen in love with Life we have ceased to dream,  
When in our effort to build a new earth,  
We have allowed our vision of a new heaven to dim.  
Disturb us Lord, to dare more boldly,  
to venture on wild seas where storms will show your mastery,  
Where losing sight of land we find the stars,  
We ask you to push back the horizon of our hopes  
And to push us into the future of strength, courage, hope, love. This we ask,  
trusting in your 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!*

—Richard Rohr

—attributed to  
Sir Francis Drake

*“If my problems  
have brought me  
to prayer then  
they have served a  
purpose.”  
As We  
Understood...*

## 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.**

*There are many things that I can do to improve my life and to further my recovery, but I cannot heal myself. Today I can ask for help in becoming free of all that blocks me from my true self.  
Courage to Change*

### 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.

### Christmas Eve—Crazy Schedule!

Christmas Eve falls on a Saturday this year with a Bills game in the afternoon! Our Christmas Eve Pageant and Communion service will be offered at **11am** that day. That will permit people to celebrate Christmas in church, enjoy the game and gather with family and friends for Christmas dinner all in one day! If you have a child or grandchild you would like to see in the pageant, talk to Childrens' Ministry Coordinator Colleen O'Neill or simply bring them to church at 10:30 that morning to get a costume. All kids will be included! No rehearsal needed!

### Christmas Week Worship Schedule

As usual, there will be no services held on Christmas Day, neither Sunday 10:30am nor Trinity@7. Wednesday, December 28 there will be no service this week.  
Thursday, December 29 7:00pm service - 12 Steps@Trinity based on 12-step spirituality  
Please note that on Sunday, January 1, there will be no nursery services nor Creator Quest during the 10:30 service and **no** Trinity @7.

### Friends of Night People

We are looking for volunteers to help out at Friends of Night People which provides food, clothing, medical care, counseling and other necessities to people in our community experiencing homelessness and poverty. We would love to have you join us on the second Monday of each month from 4:45-7. For more information, please speak to Emily Carlin or email: [emily.g.carlin@gmail.com](mailto:emily.g.carlin@gmail.com)

### Shoe Fundraiser

Our shoe collection drive is still short of our goal of 2,500 pairs. Please help Trinity to reach our fundraising goal of \$1,000! Clean out those closets; ask your families, friends, co-workers, and neighbors to donate gently used (no holes) or new shoes, sneakers, sandals, boots, and athletic footwear in any size. Shoes can be placed in the labeled collection bin in the Red-Carpet area on Sunday mornings. Please contact Erickson at [ehc@buffalo.edu](mailto:ehc@buffalo.edu) if you have any questions. Thanks to all who've donated shoes so far!

You can also get there by scanning this QR code:



## Visiting Trinity

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



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

## 12-Steps@7

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