

# 12 Steps@Trinity



Facing doubt

May 19, 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

Sometimes, the way is not clear.

Our minds get clouded, confused. We aren't certain what our next step should be, what it will look like, what direction we are headed. That is the time to stop, ask for guidance, and rest. That is the time to let go of fear. Wait. Feel the confusion and chaos, then let it go. The path will show itself. The next step shall be revealed. We don't have to know now. We will know in time. Trust that. Let go and trust.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

**Amen.**

## Musical Interlude

## Second Reading

Every single day scientists disprove something that was once an unquestioned fact.

Today's fact is tomorrow's fable. Today's cure is tomorrow's malpractice suit. We live in an ever-changing world where nothing stays the same - with one exception.

*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.*

The Language of Letting Go

In God's Care

Throughout the centuries, people have undergone spiritual transformations that were mysteriously alike. Isaiah, Buddha, Socrates, Mohammed, Roger Bacon, Spinoza, Balzac, and Walt Whitman are among those whose transformations we can read about. The descriptions told by countless others of us who have experienced spiritual transformations we can read about. The descriptions told by countless others of us who have experienced spiritual transformations are also strikingly similar. Across the centuries, God's loving impact on human consciousness has remained steady.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.  
**Amen.**

### **First Prayer**

*Let us pray together.*

**Eternal God,  
lead me now  
out of the familiar setting  
of my doubts and fears,  
beyond my pride and my  
need to be secure into a  
strange and graceful ease  
with my true proportions  
and with yours;  
that in boundless silence  
I may grow  
strong enough to endure  
And flexible enough to  
share your grace. Amen.**

— Ted Loder

*We are here and  
it is now. Further  
than that all  
human knowledge  
is moonshine.  
H.L. Mencken*

### **Third Reading**

**P**eople who say their faith is unshakable are apt to be fudging. Few of us, even the most devout, have gone unquestioning through all life's tribulations. Some of us, in fact, find our faith in God wavering even in good times.

Erich Fromm calls doubt "the fertile condition of all progress," and Malcolm Muggeridge goes so far as to call it. "an integral part of coming to have faith." How could there be faith without doubt, or doubt without faith? They are different sides of the same coin, both part of being human.

So we need never feel ashamed of our doubts. They mean we are still searching. This searching, to Blaise Pascal, is synonymous to finding: "You would not be looking for Me if you did not possess Me."

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.  
**Amen.**

In God's Care

## Fourth Reading

**D**on't stop living your life!

So often when a problem occurs, inside or around us, we revert to thinking that if we put our life on hold we can positively contribute to the solution. If a relationship isn't working, if we face a difficult decision, if we're feeling depressed, we may put life on hold and torment ourselves with obsessive thoughts.

Abandoning our life or routines contributes to the problem and delays us from finding the solution. Frequently the solution comes when we let go enough to live our life, return to our routine, and stop obsessing about the problem.

You don't have to give up your power to problems. You can take your focus off your problem and direct it to your life, trusting that doing so will bring you closer to a solution.

Even if we don't feel like we have let go or can let go we can "act as if" we have, and that will help bring about the letting go we desire.

Hear the Spirit as it speaks to us.

**Amen.**

## Second Prayer

*Let us pray.*

**O God of beginnings,  
as your Spirit moved  
over the face of the deep  
on the first day of creation,  
move with me now  
in my time of beginnings,  
when the air is rain-washed,  
the bloom is on the bush,  
and the world seems fresh  
and full of possibilities,  
and I feel ready and full.  
I tremble on the edge of a maybe,  
a first time,  
a new thing,  
a tentative start,  
and the wonder of it lays its finger on my lips.  
In silence, Lord,  
I share now my eagerness  
and my uneasiness  
about this something different  
I would be or do;  
and I listen for your leading**

The Language of  
Letting Go

*If I believe in  
anything, it is in  
the dark night  
of the soul. Awe  
is my religion,  
and mystery is  
its church.*

*Charles Simic*

— *Ted Loder*

**to help me separate the light  
from the darkness  
in the change I seek to shape  
and which is shaping me.**

**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.**

*Life is what  
happens to us  
while we're  
making other  
plans.*

*William Gaddis*

## 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.

## Spring Cleaning! Rain or Shine

It's that time of year. Trinity could use a crew to help get our courtyard and grounds looking spiffy. Please come help on **Saturday, May 21, between 10 am and 1 pm**. Bring your weeder, garbage bags and a water bottle to stay hydrated. We'll provide other tools. Come for one hour or all three.

There are a few smallish jobs on the inside in case it rains, or if yard work is not your thing. We'll provide any tools you might need such as paint brush, screwdriver, hammer, etc.

Please email Teresa Maciocha and let her know you're coming to help: [tmaciocha@aol.com](mailto:tmaciocha@aol.com) Thanks!

## Eyewitness Bible: The Book of James

On **Wednesday evenings @7pm** Tim Lane and Jeffrey Tooke are facilitating *The Book of James* from the *Eyewitness Bible* series. We will explore the Book of James and look at the major themes found there by watching and discussing video monologues of eyewitness characters from the book.

On **Wednesday, May 25 @7pm**, we will explore community in the early Christian church as presented by James and the challenges it faced due to the changes experienced around it. We will also discuss community as experienced today

*The opposite of faith is not doubt: It is certainty. It is madness. You can tell you have created God in your own image when it turns out that he or she hates all the same people you do.*  
*Anne Lamott*

You can also get there by scanning this QR code:



and how our community changes with new realities in the world we live in. Join Tim and Jeff on Wednesdays @7pm using the Zoom link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81668634672?pwd=eTVJZXFoNzVYdHZvSHZONG1NUUowZz09>

Meeting ID: 816-6863-4672 Passcode: trintalk

If you have any questions, email Jeffrey Tooke at [jeffreytooke@outlook.com](mailto:jeffreytooke@outlook.com).

### **Pride Parade**

**Sunday, June 5**, Trinity will be marching in the Buffalo Pride Parade. It's been too long since we last marched down the streets of Buffalo for the Pride Week Parade. Well, the wait is over... we're thrilled to announce that the Parade is back, and this year's theme, "Homecoming," reflects our excitement to come together again as friends and allies. Join Trinity as we participate in the spirit of love and inclusivity.

Chris Cuccia will be holding our place in line at the Buffalo State College parking lot. When you sign up to march, you will be given his phone number in case you have trouble finding him on the morning of the parade. Come represent Trinity and march! The parade steps off promptly at 11am and will travel down Elmwood Ave ending at Allen Street. Please [sign up here](#) or use the QR Code.



### **Volunteers Needed for Allentown**

Join us in welcoming the return of Allentown Art Festival visitors to Trinity's beautiful historic and sacred space. We will greet and share conversation with visitors on June 11 and 12. For more information contact Patti Nisbet at [tudorspace@aol.com](mailto:tudorspace@aol.com).

Sign up with SignUpGenius (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0C4FAFA629A3F58-allentown1>) in 1-hour shifts. If you are able to volunteer for a 2 hour shift, that will also be very welcome!

Volunteers needed on either day:

**Saturday, June 11 10am to 5pm**

**Sunday, June 12 noon to 5pm**



### **Helping our Afghan neighbors**

Trinity is collecting household items for Journey's End to distribute to Afghan evacuee families who have come to Buffalo. Since the families are setting up completely new lives, they need just about everything so the list is long. A short sample: sheets and blankets, pots and pans, cleaning materials, tea kettle, cutting board, etc. Please read the full list, which is available [online](#) and at the back of the chapel. You can bring your items on the next few Thursdays and leave in a corner. Let Matt know where they are. Thank you for your generosity!



### **Trinity Spaces for Rent**

Our church has work spaces--large and small--available for rent at Trinity Center. We hope to rent to groups and individuals that share our vision of community betterment. If you know someone that would be a good fit, please share this QR code which links to <https://www.trinitybuffalo.org/trinity-center-rentals>.



## **12-Steps@7**

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