

The Lifeline



February 2016

24 Hour Phone: 651-227-5502

Volume 52, Issue 2

Step Two: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

When I got to AA, Steps 2 and 3 reminded me of my unsuccessful attempts at mental gymnastics as a child and youth at the Lutheran church my mother sent me to. I was told that only complete faith in Jesus as savior counted, and that was pretty elusive. I tended to ask wisecrack questions like, "What happens to the kids who are born in Saudi Arabia. Was God prejudiced?"

An AA friend said that she was walking down a street in Canberra when a sidewalk evangelist accosted her. He said that she would go to hell if she didn't accept certain things. She said that the God she believed in wouldn't be that narrow-minded. The man exclaimed that, "God's very narrow-minded!" That reminds me of something Voltaire said: "God created man in his own image. And man returned the favor."

I couldn't seem to find the bits in the Big Book or 12 Steps and 12 Traditions where they told how to take Steps 2 and 3, but I got a lot out of *Came to Believe*. With all the stories in it about how members were able to take these Steps, I would think just about anyone could find something they could relate to. In one story, I read that somebody came to believe that something was running things, and it wasn't them, and I could accept that.

At a meeting last night, which included a reading about this Step, it hit me that I had always thought of it as being about finding God. But now I think is more about just accepting that I need help and that there is something, or someone, that could help me. One guy said that he told an older member that he just couldn't believe. He was told to just substitute "hope" for "believe" making it, "Came to hope that a power greater than ourselves could return us to sanity." That seems pretty sensible to me and something those who could only hope to be returned to sanity could accept.

(Continue pg. 2)

Tradition Two: For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

I WOULD LIKE to share with my Grapevine friends a small portion of my Fifth Step and the experience with Tradition Two that led me to take this Step.

I try to live the gratitude I feel by carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers, whether newcomer or old-timer. After approximately six months of sobriety, I felt the need for a Sunday-afternoon group. (Toronto has over 180 meetings per week, but not one filled that time period.) When I spoke to a number of AAs, they all replied, "Sounds great! Call me when it's started."

Everything will happen when it is meant to. Finally, a full year later, someone looked thoughtfully at me for a moment, then asked, "When do we get started?" With a lot of help from a lot of people, the discussion group held its first meeting only two weeks after that question was asked. At that time, we had two members and about five visitors weekly. Three months later, we had grown to ten members and twenty to twenty-five visitors weekly--enough to break up into two smaller groups.

Now, there is one thing I failed to mention: I was with the group for the first of those months but was confined to the hospital or my home for the next two. Other AA members looked after the group. This period saw my thinking get more than a little squirrely. I believed that I had started the discussion group, that I had maintained it, and that I was responsible for helping all those people each Sunday. My second week back at the group was our business meeting. I was elected secretary, but I wanted the position of GSR, because it sounded more impressive. After all, didn't I deserve it? Needless to say, my ego was hurt.

My Friend Upstairs was taking care of me, though, as He has always done. For a couple of weeks, I'd go to other groups and unfailingly be asked to read the Traditions. Nobody but myself noticed my voice faltering on the Second Tradition: "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority--a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern." More and more, that began hitting home.

(Continued pg. 2)

St. Paul Intergroup of Alcoholics Anonymous®

Web Site: www.aastpaul.org

E-mail: lifeline@aastpaul.org

Fax: 651-290-0209

Office Hours: Monday through Friday — 9 AM to 6 PM; Saturday 9 AM to 1 PM

1600 University Avenue, W. Suite 214, St. Paul MN 55104

Step Two (Continued from Page 1)

Refusing to believe seems more of a question of ego than real doubt. The world is full of powers greater than myself. I heard an anecdote once in which a guy told his sponsor that he just couldn't believe in a power greater than himself. He was told to go to the middle of the main street and take off all his clothes, and that he would soon see a power greater than himself coming up in a blue and white car.

The only trick is to believe that at least one of those powers could restore me to enough sanity so I would not feel the need to drink again. Being surrounded by others in meetings who have clearly been able to do that, it is hard to not accept that it is possible. It is just a matter of accepting that I need help.

-- Jim F.

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Tradition Two (Continued from Page 1)

Looking at things honestly, I knew that a multitude of people provided the action behind the discussion group, including every individual who participated by coming. I admitted the obvious fact that the group had not only maintained itself while I was ill; it had grown tremendously and become a very popular meeting. The other Traditions came into focus for me, and I realized that God as I understand Him had used me--I was merely an instrument enabled through His grace to carry out His will. Though I am still a bit ashamed to confess this, at first I resented my Higher Power for taking the spotlight away from me. I took a mini-inventory and shared my findings with a wonderful man who had "just happened" to speak on Step Five at a meeting earlier that evening. By the end of our discussion, I realized that God was again working through one alcoholic to help another. What could be more beautiful!

My work was not done. The Ninth Step was also connected with this. The following Sunday afternoon, when it came my turn to discuss what was on my mind, I began, "For what I am about to say, I will probably lose some friends, but. . ." And the story was told. After the meeting, almost all the members came up to me and said little or nothing as they simply, lovingly put their arms around me. They understood.

I chose to share this experience with you because I know that somewhere someone is feeling what I did. To such a friend, I say, "Others who have been there know the original anger and frustration. We know the hurt ego and the guilt that follows. We know the God-given feeling of peace that finally comes when we accept the fact that we are only instruments fulfilling His plan. You are not alone!"

-- Y. T. Toronto, Ontario

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2016 Steering Board

<u>Chair:</u>	Sandy K.
<u>Alt. Chair:</u>	Jenny S.
<u>Secretary:</u>	Scott L.
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Joe W.
<u>Alt. Treasurer</u>	Matt R.
<u>Members at Large 2016:</u>	Jestine M. & Mike C.
<u>Members at Large 2017:</u>	Catherine K. & J.D.
<u>Advisor to the Board:</u>	Tim B.
<u>Office Manager:</u>	Frank N.

Office Calls in December 2015

Meeting information	109
Inventory/hours	39
12th Step calls	10
Temporary sponsor	14
Speaker request	30
Special events	7
Outside issues	19
Info for professionals	2
Administrative	60
Other	30
Total Calls	320
Daily average	13.9
Visitors	274

UPCOMING A.A. EVENTS!!

GOPHER STATE HOSPITAL SUITE RESERVATIONS

Gopher State Roundup XLIII will be held at the **Double Tree Bloomington** on **May 27, 28 and 29, 2016**. Hospitality suites are available by reservation for this event.

If your group is interested in a hospitality suite and able to pay the associated rates, please contact:

Leah W. 612-267-1611

John C. 612-388-5356

Email: hospitalitysuitescommittee@gmail.com

For those groups that had a room last year, this year's application form goes out in February. We hope to see you there!

Gopher State Roundup Hospitality Suites Committee

Southern Minnesota Area 36 Area Committee Meetings

Best Western
North Mankato, MN

Saturday, February 20th - 9:30 AM - 5:30PM

For more Info: www.area36.org

Minneapolis Intergroup 33rd Annual Gratitude Night

Minneapolis Convention Center

Saturday, February 27th, 6:30PM - Midnight

www.aaminneapolis.org

MNYPAA 2016

Radisson Hotel Duluth Harbor

505 W Superior St., Duluth, MN

Friday April 1st - Sunday April 3rd

For more info: mypaa5@gmail.com

Southern Minnesota Area 36 Trusted Servant Leadership Training

Bethel Lutheran Church

1321 North Ave., Northfield, MN 55057

Saturday, February 27th - 9:00AM—4:00PM

For more info: www.area36.org
or call Annette W. at 612-280-5169

Group and Area News

Still Closed: The Downtown Alano building remains closed, but we have heard that work on repairs has begun. Until this all gets settled, we will try to keep the on-line meeting directory at aastpaul.org up to date and complete for those groups who have been displaced by the building closure.

Your News?

We invite you to share your AA news here!

Please send your items to lifeline@aastpaul.org.

We look forward to hearing from you.

MAIN IDEA

New Temporary Location

beginning Thursday, December 31st

The First Baptist Church of St. Paul

499 Wacouta Street

(9th & Wacouta)

Saint Paul, MN 55101

DOWNTOW ALANO

~NEW TEMPORARY LOCATION~

220 SOUTH ROBERT ST.

(corner Plato & S. Robert)

ST. PAUL, MN 55107

All Regularly Scheduled Meetings

Resume Sunday, January 3rd



Looking for a Service Opportunity?

Become a St. Paul Intergroup Night Owl!

Upcoming Night Owl Orientations:

Saturday, February 20th, March 18th, April 16th

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

St. Paul Intergroup Office

1600 University Ave. W. - Suite #214

To RSVP please call: 651-227-5502 (Please call by 4PM the Friday before to RSVP)



St. Paul Area Intergroup Representatives' Meeting Minutes December 15th, 2015

Opened with the Serenity Prayer, introductions, and David read the Primary Purpose of Intergroup.

Minutes from last month were reviewed and approved, Muggsy motioned and Dan seconded.

Treasurer's Report, John M gave the treasurer's report. Bank account total is \$34,323 and prudent reserve is \$45,006. Total contributions are down. Overall, net income of \$2,335. On track for a break-even year. Contact Joe W at treasurer@aastpaul.org

The Office Report, looking for groups to host marathon meetings during New Year's Eve – four 45-minute shifts, beginning at 9pm; Downtown Alano is still not open yet but may be close to a temporary location; shortage of office volunteers right now; a volunteer will be contacting all 12 step volunteers to confirm/update information; have had a couple of persistent drunk dialers on Night Owl phones currently – there are instructions in Night Owl books on how to handle; faithful fiver contributions are ahead of budget

The Website Report, 670 meetings/280 groups, down 17 meetings, partially due to Downtown Alano closure. Outreach committee has been very active and helpful in cleaning up meeting directory. Sergei and Jonathan have been working on a mobile version of the website. Lots of service opportunities on the website (jails/treatment centers). Contact Jonathan at webservant@aastpaul.org

Outreach Program, No Report Contact Jestine M at outreach@aastpaul.org

Update from the Board, Sandy K, Thank you to outgoing board members, welcome to new board members

Night Owl Report, Leslie D, Night Owl Orientation is every third Sa at 10 a.m. in the Office. See website for open shifts. Contact Leslie D at nightowl@aastpaul.org or Frank N at manager@aastpaul.org

Liaison Reports, District 8, Meghan K, had joint workshop with Dist. 18 on rituals in meetings that went well; voted on motion about whether District should donate to treatment centers/jails, motion was to stop, motion defeated, budget discussion coming at the December meeting; District 15, Julie H, will finish the year on budget, discussed partnering with another district for a workshop next year; District 19, Dan R, attendance has grown well over the past year. Outreach program with high schools now have literature racks at 9/18, also getting literature racks in area hospitals, starting outreach to area treatment centers, passed 2016 budget, looking to partner with other districts for workshops in 2016

Upcoming Intergroup Events, New Year's Eve, Th. 12/31, 7pm speaker Pat B; 9pm-12am dance, band Ramshackle Charmers, Recovery Church

Old Business,

2016 Budget – vote to approve: Muggsy motioned to approve, passed unanimously

Night Owl Policy on 12 Step Calls – current Night Owl instructions indicate callers under 18 should call back during office hours; suggestion has made to offer First Call for Help (211) or 911 as additional resources; possible concern is legal issues arising from sending a 12 step volunteer to meet with someone under 18; will add clarification to instructions that First Call for Help (211) is an option for those under 18; will continue discussion at next meeting

New Business, none

Group AA Announcements, Main Idea Christmas Eve Redeemer Lutheran Church 2pm – 7pm, West End Christmas Day Potluck 4pm-8pm with meeting at 8pm, Como Park Big Book will have normal meeting on Christmas Eve

Suggestions for next months's agenda, none

Grapevine Report Christa W gave report; volunteer for Jan, David

Concept XI Paul T gave report; volunteer for Jan, Leslie

Mock Rep Report Sean gave report; volunteer for Jan, Sheryl

Closed with the Responsibility Statement

ATTENDANCE:

Tim B., Board Chair	Sandy K., Alt. Chair	Christa W., Board Advisor	John M., Treasurer	Joe W., Alt. Treasurer	Hillary B., Mem- ber at Large
Paul T., Member at Large	Frank N., Office Manager	Jonathan L, Webservant	Mike S., Basic Text	Jill J., Como Park BB	Julie H., District 15
Dan R., District 19	Catherine K., Fireside Wom- en's Grp.	Carolyn M., The Firing Line	Muggsy A., Hole in the Doughnut	David S., Main Idea	Shawn Y., Maplewood Groups
James D., New Brighton Big Book	Dave L., No Time Like the Present	Paul W., OMD	Christopher D., OMD	Kalene M., Pocketing Our Pride	Kyle H., Problem & Solution
Matt R., Sober Goats	Gentry S., Rule 62	Cheryl B., St. Paul Speaker Mtg.	Erica O., West End Groups	Lesli D., Night Owl Coord. Committee	

**7th Tradition
Suggestions for Groups**

“Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”

The Conference-approved pamphlet: “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix” offers the following suggestions for the distribution of group funds after group expenses have been paid:

50% St. Paul Intergroup

Spruce Tree Center
1600 University Ave. #214
St. Paul, MN 55104

30% General Service Office

P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

10% Southern MN Area 36

Area Assembly
P.O. Box 2812
Mpls., MN 55402

10% District Committee

Ramsey County:
District 8, P.O. Box 131523
St. Paul, MN 55113

Dakota County:
District 19, P.O. Box 1466
Burnsville, MN 55337

Washington County:
District 15, P.O. Box 181
Lake Elmo, MN 55042

SE Ramsey County:
District 26, P.O. Box 75980
St. Paul, MN 55175

DECEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

Number of Group Contributors: 41
Total Group Contributions: \$5464
Number of Faithful Fivers: 25
Total from Faithful Fivers: \$530

Thank You!

District Meetings

District 8 (Ramsey Co.)
Fairview Community Center
1910 Co. Rd B, Rm 108,
Roseville
3rd Wed., 7:30 PM

District 15 (Wash. Co.)
Christ Lutheran Church
11194 N. 36th St., Lake Elmo
4th Mon., 7:00 PM

District 19 (Dakota Co.)
Rosemount Community Center
13885 South Robert Trail
2nd Wed., 7:00 PM

District 26 (SE Ramsey Co.)
Grace Lutheran Church
1730 Old Hudson Rd, St. Paul
2nd Sun., 7:00PM
www.district26-area36.org

**Thanks to all the super
volunteers who helped in the
Office during December**

Brian V., Burt K.,
Charles M.,
Frank D., Henry O.,
Jason S., Jim C.,
Linda S., Mary H.,
Marilyn M., Mike B.,
Pat W., Sheryl J.,
Steve W., Suzanne B.,
Tony G., Ty

**Thanks to all
the NightOwl
volunteers and
groups as well!**



**Thanks to the groups that
contributed in
December 2015**

- Amazing Grace Group
- Anoka Day By Day
- Burnsville - Primary Purpose
- Children of Chaos Plus
- Como Park BB
- Cottage Grove
- Dakota Alano
- Dakota Alano Thurs 11:45 AM
- Defiant Brats East
- Episcopal Homes Group
- Forest Lake Alano
- Happy Joyous and Free II
- Highland Park Groups
- Lakeview Group
- Lindstrom Groups
- Midway Club
- New Brighton Big Book A.M.
- No Time Like The Present
- North Dale Group
- North Hamline
- Oakdale Friendship Group
- Oakdale Woodbury Sun Group
- Ridge Runners II Sat 8:30 AM
- Ringmaster's Group
- Rosemount AA
- Roseville Wed Night
- Rule 62 Step & Tradition Group
- Shoreview 12 x 12
- South Suburban
- Steps to Freedom - Maplewood
- Stillwater Morning Groups
- Stories Group
- Students of Life
- Third Tradition Northfield
- Una Luz en el Camino
- Unity, Service & Recovery
- Up In Smoke
- Uptown Club
- Vadnais Heights Groups
- We Care Groups
- Widening Circle

The Lifeline: Purpose Statement

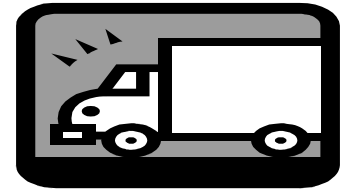
The Lifeline is the monthly newsletter of the St. Paul and Suburban Area Intergroup Association office of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is about, by, and for groups and members of the A.A. Fellowship. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to A.A. as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by either A.A. or Intergroup. We welcome articles on a Step, Tradition or Concept, or descriptions of personal experience. Please email your article to Lifeline@aastpaul.org, or send it by regular mail to Lifeline Editor, St. Paul Intergroup, 1600 University Avenue #214, St. Paul MN 55104. Materials or articles mailed to us cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Intergroup reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, language, length and content that might violate A.A.'s Traditions, etc.

St. Paul Intergroup
Spruce Tree Center
1600 University Ave. W. Ste. 214
St. Paul, MN 55104

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Please let us know if your address changes one month ahead of time. It saves us the cost of return postage and enables you to get each issue of *The Lifeline*. Our mailing permit does not provide for mail forwarding. Thank you!



St. Paul Intergroup *Faithful Fiver* - Enrollment Form

Faithful Fivers graciously contribute \$5.00 or more to St. Paul Intergroup each month to enable us to continue to carry our vital message of Hope and Recovery to all who need and want it. Your contribution entitles you to a one-year subscription to *The Lifeline*. Contributions may be made annually, bi-annually, quarterly or monthly.

~Yes! Please enroll me as a *Faithful Fiver* !

1. Contact information:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
Phone Number _____
Email _____

2. Amount & Frequency:

Amount: \$ _____
Frequency: (check only one)
 Monthly Quarterly Bi-Annually Annually
Start on ____/____/____
 Please send my receipt to my email address
 Please send my receipt to my home/postal address
 Please send my **Lifeline** to my **email** address instead

3. Choose a Payment Method:

Credit Card/Debit Card*
 Visa MasterCard
Card # _____/_____/_____/_____
Expiration Date: ____/____
Name on Card _____

Signature _____

*I authorize St. Paul Intergroup to automatically bill my account as specified (monthly, quarterly, etc.). I understand that I am free to cancel this authorization at any time by contacting Intergroup.

Check - Please make payable to:

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1600 University Ave W. - Suite 214
Saint Paul, MN 55104