



# LIFELINE



*I am responsible when anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there, and for that I am responsible.*

**life-line** | \ 'lif- līn : 1. A rope or line used for life-saving, typically one thrown to rescue someone in difficulties in water. 2. A thing on which someone depends for a means of escape from a difficult situation.

<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com>

In *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, the chapter on Step 6 begins:

*"This is the step that separates the men from the boys...." So declares a well-loved clergyman ... who goes on to explain that any person ... capable of enough willingness and honesty to try repeatedly Step Six on all his faults-without any reservations whatever-has indeed come a long way spiritually...."*

"The step that separates the men from the boys." No doubt in today's more gender-focused society he would add, "...and the women from the girls." Or maybe he would just say that it's where the rubber meets the road, for no other Step so challenges us when it comes to the sustained

effort required to "practice these principles in all our affairs."

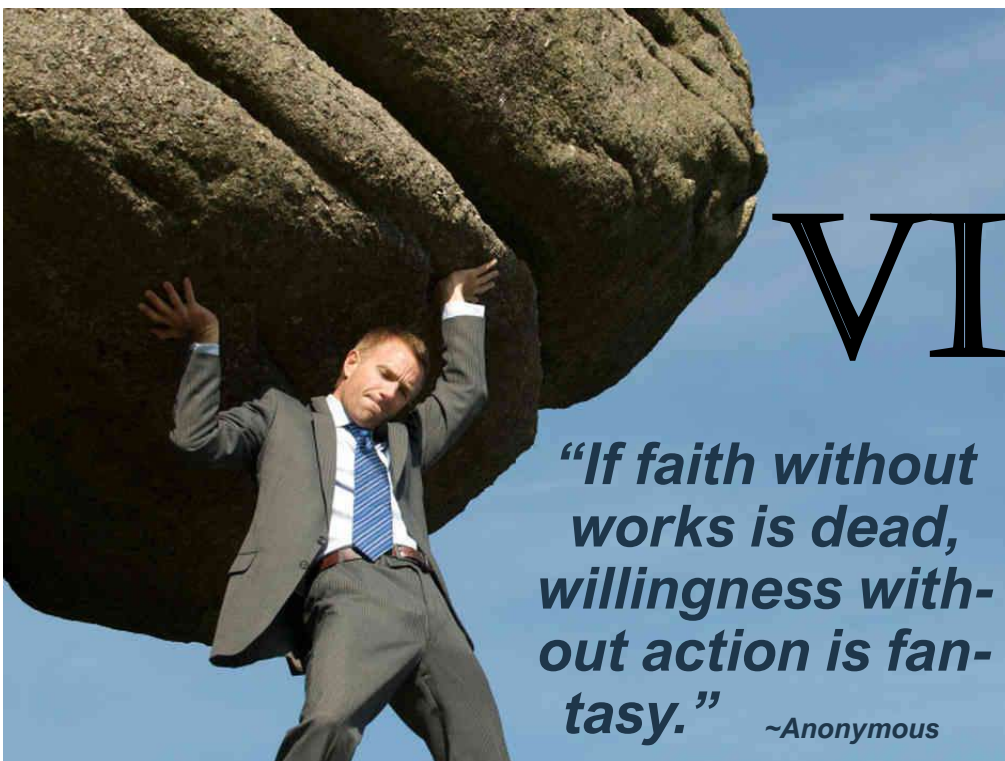
Why this is so might not be immediately apparent when we first encounter Step 6. It certainly wasn't apparent in the early days of AA, for the "Big Book," *Alcoholics Anonymous*, devotes just one short paragraph to it. In effect it says that willingness is indispensable and that if we're not completely ready to give up a character defect, then we should ask God to help us become willing.

That doesn't sound like much. But anyone who has lived the program for any length of time knows—as Bill W. learned during the years between the Big Book and the 12&12—that becoming willing or

"entirely ready" often requires substantial persistent effort. God doesn't do all the work; we must do our part.

Exactly what our part involves varies for each of us depending upon the particular character defect, how attached we are to it, and whether we believe the benefits of practicing it outweigh the costs of giving it up. Some defects seem pretty harmless—at least in comparison with others that are worse. And some seem so much a part of us, or so useful in getting what we think we need in life, that we might not even recognize them as defects until we're sick and tired of the suffering they cause. So just what are these character defects that the Step is concerned with?

Some people equate them with the "Seven Deadly Sins," otherwise known as Pride, Greed, Envy, Lust, Sloth, Anger, and Gluttony. That's not a bad place to start, for if we look closely at more specific defects we usually find that they are manifestations of one or more of the seven. Self-centeredness, for instance, is connected with pride...and with greed...and with each of the other five as well. Studying such lists and discussing them with your sponsor and others can be helpful, but in working Step 6 you will develop your own list that applies specifically to you. And as you continue working the Step over the years, that list will probably



**"If faith without works is dead, willingness without action is fantasy."** ~Anonymous

*(continued on page 2)*

(continued) grow—though as we progress in recovery we usually get free of most of the worst defects.

All of the character defects in these lists describe habitual attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors that cause unnecessary conflict with other people, within ourselves, and with the God of our understanding. Often they have evolved from survival strategies that we learned in childhood. They may have served a purpose at one time, but later in life they interfere with developing healthy relationships and with learning more effective strategies for dealing with life's challenges. Yet we cling to them like a starving child clings to a tiny crust of

bread, fearing to let go and take the bowl full of strange food he's not sure of. Giving them up is an act of faith.

Becoming entirely ready, then, is often achieved as the consequence of a painful struggle with each defect similar to the struggle that brought us to the program in the first place. Most of us are not willing to give up the worst of them until we can no longer stand the pain they cause and have exhausted our efforts to manage them. Thus the process of recovery requires persistent effort to identify patterns of thinking and behavior that no longer work for us.

We must be willing to continue the process of thorough self-examination that we

started in Step 4, and to continue discussing our findings with trusted others as we learned in Step 5. We must be willing to reconsider all of our habitual thoughts and behaviors in light of the character defects that we are beginning to recognize: are we really being nice, or are we being passively aggressive? We must be willing to acknowledge the harmful consequences of some behaviors and attitudes that we've learned to rely on, such as acting out anger to get our way. And we must be willing to keep an open mind to learning new and better ways of doing things, and in letting others show us how. How do we know that we're willing? By doing it.

<https://www.fellowshiphall.com/step-6/>



***The Spiritual Principle of Step 6 is Willingness: Accepting a Higher Power into our lives and recognizing its plan for us is a crucial start. But we must also be enthusiastically willing to follow that path to fight the perils of our disease.***

<https://12steppers.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Spiritual-Principles-of-AA-PDF.pdf>



# Alcoholics Anonymous vs. Other Approaches: The Evidence Is Now In

For a long time, medical researchers were unsure whether Alcoholics Anonymous worked better than other approaches to treating people with alcohol use disorder. In 2006, a review of the evidence concluded we didn't have enough evidence to judge. That has changed.

An updated systematic review published Wednesday by the Cochrane Collaboration found that A.A. leads to increased rates and lengths of abstinence compared with other common treatments. On other measures, like drinks per day, it performs as well as approaches provided by individual therapists or doctors who don't rely on A.A.'s peer connections.

What changed? In short, the latest review incorporates more and better evidence. The research is based on an analysis of 27 studies involving 10,565 participants. The 2006 Cochrane Collaboration review was based on just eight studies, and ended with a call for more research to assess the program's efficacy. In the intervening years, researchers answered the call. The newer review also applied standards that weeded out some weaker studies that drove earlier findings. In the last decade or so, researchers have published a number of very high-quality randomized trials and quasi-experiments. Of the 27 studies in the new review, 21

have randomized designs. Together, these flip the conclusion.

"These results demonstrate A.A.'s effectiveness in helping people not only initiate but sustain abstinence and remission over the long term," said the review's lead author, John F. Kelly, a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and director of the Recovery Research Institute at Massachusetts General Hospital. "The fact that A.A. is free and so widely available is also good news.

"It's the closest thing in public health we have to a free lunch."

Studies generally show that other treatments might result in about 15 percent to 25 percent of people who remain abstinent. With A.A., it's somewhere between 22 percent and 37 percent (specific findings vary by study). Although A.A. may be better for many people, other approaches can work, too. And, as with any treatment, it doesn't work perfectly all the time. Rigorous study of programs like Alcoholics Anonymous is challenging because people self-select into them. Those who do so may be more motivated to abstain from drinking than those who don't. Unless a study is carefully designed, its results can be driven by who participates, not by what the program does. Even randomized trials can succumb to bias from self-selection if people assigned to A.A. don't attend, and if people assigned to the control group do. (It may go without saying, but we'll say it: It would be unethical to prevent people in a control group from attending Alcoholics Anonymous if they wanted to).

Despite these challenges, some high-quality randomized trials of Alcoholics Anonymous have been conducted in recent years. One, published in the journal *Addiction*, found that those who were randomly assigned to a 12-step-based di-

rective A.A. approach, and were supported in their participation, attended more meetings and exhibited a greater degree of abstinence, compared with those in the other treatment groups. Likewise, other randomized studies found that greater Alcoholics Anonymous participation is associated with greater alcohol abstinence.

Alcoholics Anonymous is often paired with other kinds of treatment that encourage engagement with it. "For people already in treatment, if they add A.A. to it, their outcomes are superior than those who just get treatment without A.A.," said Keith Humphreys, a Stanford University professor and co-author of the new Cochrane review. Alcoholics Anonymous not only produced higher rates of abstinence and remission, but it also did so at a lower cost, the Cochrane review found. A.A. meetings are free to attend. Other treatments, especially those that use the health care system, are more expensive.

One study found that compared with Alcoholics Anonymous participants, those who received cognitive behavioral treatments (which help people analyze, understand and modify their drinking behavior and its context) had about twice as many outpatient visits — as well as more inpatient care — that cost just over \$7,000 per year more in 2018 dollars. Another study found that for each additional A.A. meeting attended, health care costs fell by almost 5 percent, mostly a result of fewer days spent in the hospital and fewer psychiatric visits. A.A. meetings are ubiquitous and frequent, with no appointment needed — you just show up. The bonds formed from the shared challenge of addiction — building trust and confidence in a group setting — may be a key ingredient to help people stay on the road to recovery.

*(continued on page 4)*

(continued) Worldwide, alcohol misuse and dependence are responsible for 3.3 million deaths per year, 10 times the number of fatalities from all illicit drugs combined. In the United States, alcohol is a larger killer than other drugs; accounts for the majority of all addiction treatment cases; and is responsible for at least \$250 billion per year in lost productivity and costs related to crime, incarceration and

health care. Moreover, American deaths related to alcohol more than doubled between 1999 and 2017. Reducing the human and financial burdens of alcohol is an often overlooked public health priority, and the new evidence suggests that on balance one of the oldest solutions — Alcoholics Anonymous has been around almost 85 years — is still the better one.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/11/upshot/alcoholics-anonymous-new-evidence.html>

## AGAPE-TOWSON



## HYBRID

MEETS WEEKLY ON

**TUESDAY 7:00 PM –  
8:00 PM EDT**

Now offering ASL

Interpretation on the 3rd  
Tuesday of the month

Next meeting June 18, 2024

Sheppard Pratt, Gibson Bld  
1 Friends Ln, 3rd Floor,  
Towson, MD 21204



Zoom Meeting ID:  
120 784 691

MarylandDeafAccess  
@gmail.com

[www.mdacAA.org](http://www.mdacAA.org)

*“Even Bill had a hard time defining “recovered in AA”. The 50/25/25 story says of the remainder, they showed improvement. In other words, not everyone gets and stays sober for a lifetime in/with/ thru AA, but we make a societal impact through risk reduction. Every night I'm not driving drunk is a potential family saved.” Jeff Y.*

SERVICE IS THE SECRET

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR  
12<sup>TH</sup> STEP WORK

District 35 Treatment Committee

Is asking for people to carry the message into Treatment Facilities

ALPAS in La Plata – Wednesday Nights 7:00pm – 8:00pm

ANCHOR on Golden Beach Road – Tuesday Nights 7:30pm-8:30pm

CONTACT:

JEANINE 301-751-8115 DAN 301-751-1064

***Our primary purpose is to help the still suffering alcoholic. SMIA is committed to this principle and provides a 24x7 Telephone Service. We need phone volunteers! Go to our website, [www.somdintergroup.org](http://www.somdintergroup.org). Click on the Phone List link, complete the online form - this is a secure method to add your name to the 12-Step Call List. This protected information is only shared with the Phone Committee Chair. You will be amazed before you're half way through.***



We looked good on the outside but were highly dysfunctional on the inside,” said Marcus. He grew up in Glendale, California in a very religious Christian family with a domineering mother and a quiet father. Marcus had sensitive ways. He always felt different as the middle child with two older sisters and one younger brother. His parents wanted him to join the ministry and decided the best place was the home of their Presbyterian minister, an imposing, domineering man. Marcus’ sobriety date is February 19, 2007.

“Come and get me,” Marcus called his brother in the middle of the night. He had to escape from the abusive clergyman, who subjected him to long lectures during beatings while he was forced to lie on a bed naked. Life with the minister was pure hell. His spies reported everything from missing class to failing a test. From the pulpit, this man pointed to Marcus and exhorted him to change his ways.

Upon returning to his family home Marcus still felt betrayed and alone. His solution was to drink. He’d ask friends to buy liquor or pilfer from his parents’ bottles. Sneaking off during the day, he drank and read pornography. His parents were not alcoholics, but they had cocktail hour 365 days a year.

The boys played bartender, making Jim Beam and 7-Up drinks. Life at home settled in, until Marcus came home to find the fireplace blazing while his parents threw one gay porn magazine after another into the fire. They were beside themselves with concern about what was happening with their son. Marcus’ mother began to search for gay articles through psychiatric journals trying to understand what was then considered aberrant behavior. At one point his parents sent him to a psychia-

trist. Their one and only session consisted of the therapist asking, “Are you gay or not?” When Marcus answered in the affirmative, he said, “We have nothing more to talk about; you’re fine the way you are.”

Marcus dropped out of college to do odd jobs and eventually became a flight attendant. He came out and made full use of the party scene. This was during the ’70s before the AIDS pandemic. There was never enough alcohol or drugs so he used everything he could. Dating bartenders usually did the trick. He continued working as a flight attendant and moved up the ladder until he showed up intoxicated at work and was eventually fired.

## Never Take A.A. Lightly

Leaving a live-in relationship, he moved to San Francisco for a new start. When 12-stepped, his rationale was, “I’m too young and do not resemble any of these happy, jovial people.” His party life resumed unabated until more people told him he had a serious problem with alcohol. He found a psychologist, who refused to treat him without some sort of support. So he went to New Leaf.

Counselors there continually encouraged him to go to A.A. This time, A.A. clicked with him. He got a Big Book, a sponsor and began working the steps. Life got better. He met a special someone, fell in love and after a few months committed to a holy union in Golden Gate Park.

Eight or nine years in the program, he decided there was a problem with A.A.’s concept of God. Thinking gay A.A. was

the problem, he moved to straight meetings before he eventually decided A.A. was not for him. Around that same time, his sponsor and a few friends relapsed. He figured he was doing fine without A.A.

After 14 years without a drink, he relapsed at an art and wine event. There was free wine, and it seemed so simple. All his crazy alcoholic behavior came back lying, cheating and stealing. He felt worse than ever. Drinking heavily at a bar with a buddy, he’d declare, “A.A. was one of the best things I ever did for myself,” while stealing bar tips.

Marcus was a blackout drinker and rarely remembered how and when he got home. He drove drunk and took many other risks. Relationships suffered, and some were destroyed. Finally, his partner said, “You need help. I love you, but I don’t respect you. Frankly, I don’t like who you’ve become.” After hearing these words from the person he loved most in the world, Marcus started praying to a God he swore he did not believe in. He has not stopped since.

He was afraid to return to the meetings, thinking people would see him as a fraud. It didn’t happen. He was welcomed, embraced and supported. The first 30 days, he cried every day. Today he sees the relapse as the best thing that ever happened to him.

With a spiritual practice of meditation and prayer, he has found humility is the cornerstone of a life worth living. As it says in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* regarding humility, “To those who have made progress in A.A., it amounts to a clear recognition of what and who we really are, followed by a sincere attempt to become what we could be.” That’s how life works with a new higher power.

## **Tradition Six: An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.**

The sixth of our Twelve Points of AA Tradition is deemed so important that it states at length the relation of the AA movement to money and property. This Tradition declares in substance that the accumulation of money, property, and the unwanted personal authority so often generated by material wealth comprise a cluster of serious hazards against which an AA group must ever be on guard.

Tradition Six also enjoins the group never to go into business nor ever to lend the AA name or money credit to any “outside” enterprise, no matter how good. Strongly expressed is the opinion that even clubs should not bear the AA name; that they ought to be separately incorporated and managed by those individual AAs who need or want clubs enough to financially support them.

We would thus divide the spiritual from the material, confine the AA movement to its sole aim, and ensure (however wealthy as individuals we may become) that AA itself shall always remain poor. We dare not risk the distractions of corporate wealth. They have become certainties, absolute verities for us.

Thank God, we AAs have never yet been caught in the kind of religious or political disputes which embroil the world of today. But we ought to face the fact that we have often quarreled violently about money, property, and the administration thereof. Money, in quantity, has always been a baleful influence in group life. Let a well-meaning donor present

an AA group with a sizable sum and we break loose. Nor does trouble abate until that group, as such, somehow disposes of its bankroll. This experience is practically universal. “But,” say our friends, “isn’t this a confession of weakness? Other organizations do a lot of good with money. Why not AA?”

Of course, we of AA would be the first to say that many a fine enterprise does a lot of good with a lot of money. To these efforts money is usually primary; it is their lifeblood. But money is not the lifeblood of AA. With us, it is very secondary. Even in small quantities, it is scarcely more than a necessary nuisance, something we wish we could do without entirely. Why is that so?

We explain that easily enough; we don’t need money. The core of AA procedure is one alcoholic talking to another, whether that be sitting on a curbstone, in a home, or at a meeting. It’s the message, not the place; it’s the talk, not the alms. That does our work. Just places to meet and talk, that’s about all AA needs. Beyond these, a few small offices, a few secretaries at their desks, a few dollars apiece a year, easily met by voluntary contributions. Trivial indeed, our expenses!

Nowadays, the AA group answers its well-wishers saying: “Our expenses are trifling. As good earners, we can easily pay them. As we neither need nor want money, why risk its hazards? We’d rather stay poor. Thanks just the same!

<https://silkworth.net/alcoholics-anonymous/tradition-six/>

## **TRADITIONS CHECKLIST**

through September 1971. While they were originally intended primarily for individual use, many AA groups have since used them as a basis for wider discussion.

- Should my fellow group members and I go out and raise money to endow several AA beds in our local hospital?
- Is it good for a group to lease a small building?
- Are all the officers and members of our local club for AAs familiar with “Guidelines on Clubs” (available free from GSO)?
- Should the secretary of our group serve on the mayor’s advisory committee on alcoholism?
- Some alcoholics will stay around AA only if we have a TV and card room. If this is what is required to carry the message to them, should we have these facilities?

<https://silkworth.net/alcoholics-anonymous/traditions-checklist/>



I've completed Step 6 a few times. At first, I thought it would be easy, but I was wrong. **The Step reads:** *"We're entirely ready to have God remove all*

*these defects of character."*

It's difficult to share about Step 6 without first mentioning the preceding Steps. By the time a person gets to Step 6, they should have a framework for what their Higher Power is through working Steps 2, 3 and 5; and would have built some trust with themselves and cultivated honesty with Steps 4 through 5. These elements are foundational to Step 6.

To truly understand what a Step is asking us to do, I break it down. The words are the most perfectly created. So let's break down Step 6.

- "We"**: each Step starts with the word "we," which speaks to the fact that I am not alone.

- "Entirely ready"**: this means I need to look at my faith and trust. Without those, I won't be ready at all.

- "To have God"**: this defines what I have faith and trust in – my Higher Power. I've come this far and I trust God, which has gotten me to this point in my recovery.

- "Remove all"**: shows that I want to be free of these things that I have been shackled to for so long.

- "Defects of character"**: this is the new part of the Steps that's different from all of the others that came before. It asks me to take a surgical look at my "defects of character" because there are many. I just have to ask my Higher Power to "remove all" of them.

I found Step 6 challenging because I come from a family which has a history of working in the trades. To us, something with a "defect" is meant to be thrown in the garbage. If you have a defective part, you discard it because it is of no use.

However, in the context of the 12-steps, a defect just means that a part of me is not working as it should. Knowing and acknowledging this allows me to focus on that specific area of my life so that I can work toward having all areas run more smoothly.

Our Step working guide... hones in on our assets. While we look at our "defects," we also focus on the aspects of our character that are working. The more I work the program, the more assets I develop and the more comfortable I am asking for my "defects" to be removed.

Every so often – like a car that needs to get its oil changed – I need to go and bring myself to the metaphorical mechanic and give myself a four-point inspection. The 12-step program is a maintenance program. If I do proper maintenance, I am not going to break down.

<https://renascent.ca/brads-perspective-step-6/?src=blog>

Many may struggle with understanding that Step 6 isn't a one-time event. Some may believe that once they perform Step 6 of AA for the first time, they no longer need to return to the Step. However, the 6th Step of AA is a continuing process, one that may need to be performed several times. Understanding that acknowledging that one needs assistance in working towards change can be necessary at several points in one's journey to recovery is pivotal for having realistic expectations.

A common problem that may cause trouble for some working on Step 6 of AA is the belief that the Step focuses entirely on one's behavior. This is often not the case, as the outlook and attitude one has towards seeking and accepting help can play a significant role. This can be frustrating for those who want controlled, regimented steps to fix a problem. Some helpful methods for improving your outlook would be to have an open dialogue with yourself. Every morning when you get up, ask yourself whether you feel willing to turn your negative qualities over to your higher power. Before speaking, ask yourself if what you want to say is positive and based on a belief that your higher power will work things out or negative and based on self-will.

<https://alcohol.org/alcoholics-anonymous/step-6/>

## Reexamine Your Outlook



# Gay in AA: A Look at LGBT Groups in Alcoholics Anonymous

Research indicates that members of the LGBT community have disproportionately high rates of substance abuse. In fact, a full 25 percent of gay and transgender people abuse alcohol, compared to just five to 10 percent of the total population. And while group meetings offer the same important benefits to LGBT individuals as they do to straight people, all groups aren't created equal.

Here's a closer look at why specialized groups can be particularly helpful to LGBT people, along with where to find a group.

## Key Similarities and Differences:

While members of the LGBT community face many of the same challenges as their straight peers, they also have other concerns. Says the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of the difference: "Some LGBT clients will need to address their feelings about their sexual orientation and gender identity as part of their recovery process. For some LGBT clients, this will include addressing the effects of internalized homophobia. Clinicians sometimes see relapses in LGBT persons with lingering negative feelings about their sexual orientation or gender identity."

While SAMHSA is speaking in the context of treatment, the takeaways are the same when it comes to Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). The situation is further complicated by the fact that substance abuse is often inextricably interlinked with socializing in the LGBT community, which may mean that the only environments

where some LGBT individuals are accepted are also ones where drinking is prevalent. Because of this, it can be even harder for LGBT people to move forward, particularly if they think the result may be isolation.

"I truly believed I could not emotionally survive alone, and so I attached myself to lovers with an extraordinary level of dependence. I was terrified of being abandoned, and the bottom line of each of these relationships was that I would do anything to prevent these lovers from leaving me. Self-esteem and self-respect were unknown to me. I felt worthless and so I acted out accordingly," said one LGBT alcoholic.

**Making the Most of AA:** AA meetings welcome everyone, and many members of the LGBT community feel comfortable in non-specialized groups. But while the primary message of recovery from alcoholism remains the same across all groups, the focus may be slightly different. As a result, many LGBT people feel more at home in specialized groups, where they may find more empathy and understanding regarding personal issues.

The mere act of joining an LGBT group may be a stumbling point, but there are payoffs to pushing through. Another LGBT individual said of the process that led him to a gay group, "I refused to go to the gay groups because I did not want to be identified as a homosexual. Because of this, and not being able to let anyone really know me in AA (as this would mean saying I was gay), I did not make any real

progress my first six months in AA. I tried to get drunk twice, but for some reason was not able to drink more than four or five beers each time."

Everything changed, however, when he overcame his fear and attended a specialized group. "I finally went to a gay group and a man came over and talked to me after the meeting. He became my first sponsor. He was able to give me much of the help I needed to start on the road to sobriety," he continued.

Gays and Lesbians in AA (GaL-AA) was established to support members of the LGBT community in AA. Search the organization's meeting list to find an LGBT meeting near you. If you can't find a group near you, browse Online Inter-groups' directory of online meetings to find a specialized or general meeting near you.

Alcohol abuse is a serious problem in the LGBT community. The good news? There's always hope. Reveals one LGBT recovering alcoholic, "After coming into AA and listening to people share their experience, strength, and hope, those unnamed fears began to vanish. I realized that the AA people understood me — something I'd been looking for all my life. That terrible apartness from the human race and the loneliness began to disappear."

<https://harrishousestl.org/gay-in-aa-a-look-at-lgbt-groups-in-alcoholics-anonymous/>







# JUNE 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						<p>1 Sherry S., 35 yrs and Kevin S., 3 yrs, Kingston Creek</p> <p>Mike H., 24 yrs, Tammy M., 13 yrs, and Steve D., 13 yrs, North Beach</p>
2	3 *	4	5 Matt C., 5 yrs, Grateful Alive	6	7	8
9 Vincent S., 1 yr, Never Too Late	10	11	12 Martha K., 28 yrs, Do Drop In	13	14	15
16	17 Mike H., 1 yr, North Beach	18	19	20	21	22
23	24 Mike S., 38 yrs, Awakenings	25	26	27	28	29 Joe S., 1 yr, Early Bird



\*Area 29's Intergroup Liaison Committee (IGLC) is cancelling it's June meeting, normally scheduled on the first Monday of every month, June 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Maryland General Service (MGS) is not meeting during the month of June, as well.

# JULY 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 Danny W., 4 yrs @ Harmony 	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 Todd S., 3 yrs, Patuxent River	11	12	13 Steve G., 6 yrs, Help- ing Others
14	15 Susan B., 7 yrs, MWBR  Keith H., 35 yrs, Almost Normal	16	17 Laura B., 29 yrs and Lisa T., 1 yr, Awakenings	18	19 Mary F., 25 yrs, Leonardtown	20 Linda B., 49 yrs, Waldorf
21	22	23	24	25 Brian B., 8 yrs, Pop- lar Hill	26	27
28	29	30	31 Cindy C., 15 yrs, Awak- enings			



# "BLUE TOP @ NOON"

Lexington Park United Methodist Church

21760 Great Mills Road

12:00 noon

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

Tuesday will be the Daily Reflections

Wednesday will be the Big Book

Thursday will be a Step/Tradition meeting

Come check us out and join our group!



THE "WHAT'S THE POINT?"

A.A. MEETING

BIG BOOK  
AS BILL SEES IT  
GRAPEVINE  
TWELVE  
&  
TWELVE



ALL MEETINGS  
ARE  
LITERATURE  
BASED  
EACH WEEK IS  
DIFFERENT  
A.A. APPROVED  
LITERATURE

**COME OUT AND CHECK US OUT**

GOOD SAMARITAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

20850 LANGLEY RD. LEXINGTON PARK

THURSDAY EVENINGS 8:00 PM.

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR HOME GROUP MEMBERS  
WHICH POSITIONS TO BE FILLED

COME OUT AND FIND OUT

WHAT'S THE POINT! OF LIVING

THE 12 STEPS OF RECOVERY

AND HOW WE DO THIS

"ONE DAY AT A TIME."

**SUPPORT YOUR  
LOCAL GROUPS!**

## CLEAN AIR GROUP

The Clean Air Group

Is in need of support

And home group members

Come on out and check us out

Friday nights 6:30pm.

St. Andrews Episcopal Church

44078 St. Andrews Church Rd.

## NOT QUITE RIGHT

The Not Quite Right Group

8:00pm. Friday Nights

Good Samaritan Lutheran Church

20850 Langley Rd. (Middle Building)

Lexington Park, Md.

Is in need of Support

and Home Group Members



(continued on page 9)





## 2024 Southern Maryland Intergroup Serenity Breakfast

Join us for a delightful breakfast as we join in fellowship. This event will include a speaker meeting, buffet style breakfast, silent auction, a 50/50 raffle, and a book raffle. Please remember to save the date!

### FEATURED SPEAKER - MARC A., SEVERNA PARK, MD

Immaculate  
Conception  
Church  
28297 Old Village Rd  
Mechanicsville, MD,  
21059

Saturday, June 1st, 2024  
8:00 AM - 11:30 AM

*Donations needed for Silent Auction; gift cards, recovery related books and literature, artwork, figurines, candles, pottery, etc*

Tickets are \$20.00 per person and will be available following the March 9th SMIA meeting. They will be distributed between representatives of Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties

Contact the Serenity Breakfast Committee at the e-mail address below for more information  
serenity.breakfast@somdaa.org

Tickets \$2.00  
Each

# District 18 Picnic

JOIN US FOR FOOD, FELLOWSHIP,  
AND FUN!



June 2nd, 2024  
1 p.m. - 4 p.m.



Benjamin Banneker Park  
300 Oella Ave, Catonsville, MD 21228  
Email [District18@marylandaa.org](mailto:District18@marylandaa.org)  
for more information



# Delegate Report Back

From the 74th GSO Conference

## District 35

June 6th 7-8pm

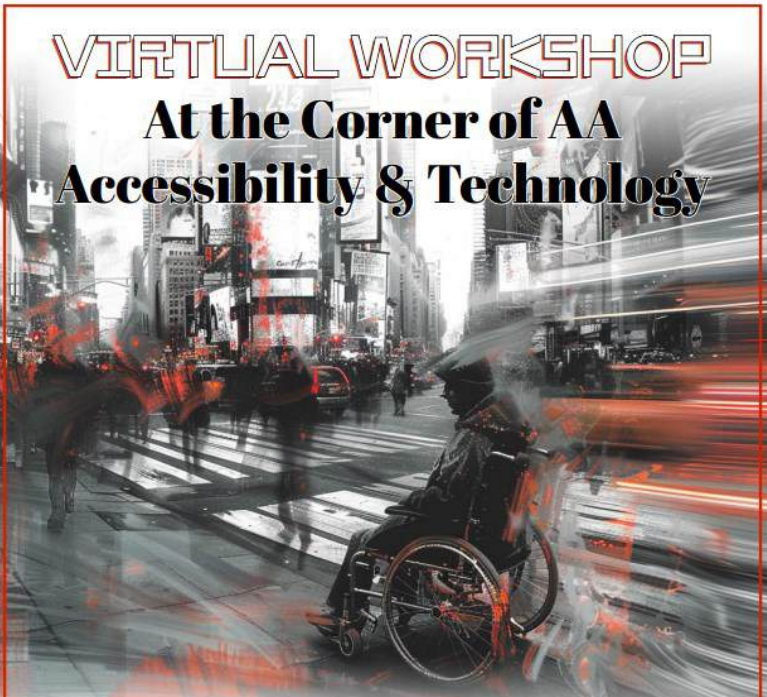
# Peace Lutheran Church

11610 Rubina Pl, Waldorf, MD



## VIRTUAL WORKSHOP

### At the Corner of AA Accessibility & Technology



# June 9th, 3pm

Meeting ID: 848 0308 9697  
PW: Area29

Presented by: Buck R., Lewes DE

Hosted by the Area 29 Accessibilities Committee



# Spring 2024 CONTRA Study

March 7, 2024 through June 20, 2024

Thursdays from 9:00 PM to 10:00 PM Eastern Time (US/Canada)

Moderated by Trusted Servants from Areas 13 (DC), 29 (Maryland) & 45 (Southern New Jersey)



Zoom Meeting ID: 881 6177 7393

Passcode: 330331

Dial-in number for phone callers: +1 (301) 715-8592

We invite all A.A. members to this virtual study of the *CONcepts*, *TRADitions* & *The A.A. Service Manual*

Mar 7, 2024 – Registration & Orientation

Mar 14, 2024 – Traditions 1, 2 & 3

Mar 21, 2024 – Traditions 4, 5 & 6

Mar 28, 2024 – Traditions 7, 8 & 9

Apr 4, 2024 – Traditions 10, 11 & 12

Apr 11, 2024 – Service Manual, pp. I-VIII, 1-6, 85-104

Apr 18, 2024 – Svc Man Ch 1 2 3 & pp 105-14, 160-2

Apr 25, 2024 – Svc Man, Chapters 4 5 6 & pp 164-8

May 2, 2024 – Svc Man, Chapters 7 8 9 & pp 169-73

May 9, 2024 – Svc Man Ch 10 11 12 & pp 155-9, 163

May 16, 2024 – Service Manual, pp. 115-154

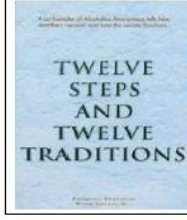
May 23, 2024 – Concepts pp I-VIII, C1-C2, Con 1 2 3

May 30, 2024 – Concepts 4, 5 & 6

June 6, 2024 – Concepts 7, 8 & 9

June 13, 2024 – Concepts 10 & 11

June 20, 2024 – Concept 12



CONTRA Study Materials (provided via email following registration):

*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, B-2 (free participant download at [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org))

*The A.A. Service Manual* combined with *The Twelve Concepts for World Service*, BM-31, 2021-2023 edition

*AA Grapevine Traditions Checklist*, July 2018 revision

*Spring 2024 Contra Study Service Manual Questions*

*A.A.W.S. Concepts Checklist*, SMF-91, 08/18 edition

We will cover approximately three chapters of reading material per week, with associated questions.

Only those who have read the assignment and have written answers to the weekly questions will be invited to read their answers to the group. All others are welcome to join the meeting and listen.

Presented by Trusted Servants from

Areas 13 (DC), 29 (Maryland) & 45 (Southern New Jersey)

For more information, contact:

[2024contrastudy@gmail.com](mailto:2024contrastudy@gmail.com)

# District 36 - Inaugural Cornhole & Bocce Ball Tournament



# CORNHOLE

## June 15th

### 4 - 8 pm

**50/50 Raffle**

Board / Ball Sets and Grill(s) Needed

# Bocce BALL!



Hotdogs & Refreshments will be provided

All Saints Callaway Campus  
21549 Point Lookout Road  
Leonardtown, MD 20650

Bring - Side Dish / Dessert  
- Lawn Chair

**No Pets !!!**

[d36.eventscomm@gmail.com](mailto:d36.eventscomm@gmail.com)

# SMIA Picnic

**FREE: Our thanks for your support!**

**Sunday, June 23, 2024**

**Noon to Dusk**

**Gilbert Run Park**

13140 Charles St, Charlotte Hall, MD

Great site for family fun:  
playgrounds, fishing, kayaking.

Ribs, Chicken,  
Burgers, Veggie Burgers, Dogs,  
Buns & Drinks Provided by SMIA

Bring Side Dish  
or Dessert to Share

Volunteers needed for set up  
(at 10:00 a.m.) and other tasks.

Questions: Email [smia.chair@somdaa.org](mailto:smia.chair@somdaa.org)

Gilbert Run charges \$5 per car entrance fee.



**SAVE THE DATES**  
Sept. 13 - 15, 2024

When it comes to Technology...

We're going...

# BACK TO THE FUTURE

For its 10th Anniversary,  
the NATIONAL A.A. TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOP (NAATW)  
returns to where it all began:

**St. Louis, Missouri**

- Join us for a weekend of in-depth presentations, discussion and fellowship
- The call for presentations as well as in-person and online registration information is forthcoming
- Check our website - [NAATW.org](http://NAATW.org) - for workshop info updates





# Service Opportunities!

JOINT MONTHLY MEETINGS

## PI & CPC Area 29 Maryland

Teaming up to  
Provide  
Comprehensive  
Service to A.A.



Maryland Deaf Access  
Committee (MDAC)  
Alcoholics Anonymous  
**Visit our Website!**  
<http://mdacAA.org>

## Cooperation with the Professional Community

MEMBERS OF C.P.C.  
COMMITTEES INFORM  
PROFESSIONALS AND  
FUTURE PROFESSIONALS  
ABOUT A.A.

JESSICA W., CPC CHAIR  
CPC@MARYLANDAA.ORG

- Establishing better communication with professionals working with alcoholics.
- Finding simple, effective ways of cooperating without affiliating.
- Explaining clearly what A.A. does and doesn't do.

Join us at 3 p.m.  
on the 3rd  
Sunday of the  
month

**ID: 854  
5914 3395**

**Pw: 199887**

District Chairs  
and Interested  
AA members  
are invited!

## Public Information

MEMBERS OF PUBLIC  
INFORMATION  
COMMITTEES CONVEY A.A.  
INFORMATION TO THE  
GENERAL PUBLIC

KATHI K., PI CHAIR  
PI@MARYLANDAA.ORG

- Giving presentations about A.A. to schools and organizations
- Providing information about A.A. through digital and print materials.
- Ensuring local media have accurate information about A.A. through PSA's, anonymity protected interviews, and press kits.

CONTACT: [A29CPCPI@GMAIL.COM](mailto:A29CPCPI@GMAIL.COM)

We organize the funding  
and scheduling of in-  
person / hybrid  
AA meetings  
interpreted in American  
Sign Language (ASL)

PayPal QR code >>>



✓ We follow all of  
AA's 12 Traditions

✓ We rely on contributions  
from only AA members  
& AA entities

✓ We provide language  
Access via ASL  
interpretation

✓ Our focus is to make AA  
accessible to the Deaf and  
Hard of Hearing

Contributions accepted via PayPal@  
[MarylandDeafAccess@gmail.com](mailto:MarylandDeafAccess@gmail.com)

## Grapevine Meeting!

4th Tuesday of each month 6:30 pm

Did you know that The Area 29 Grapevine Committee is a traveling literature store? We have a large variety of AA Grapevine books for sale. Please reach back out if your group, District, or intergroup is hosting an event or workshop and would like us to come and sell literature.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85217774704pwd=TVhEdFpKdmxSRINvNnJHU1pYWDVaQT09>

Meeting ID: 852 1777 4704 Passcode: 019347

Brandi D., Area 29 Grapevine Committee Chair

For more info: [grapevine@marylandaa.org](mailto:grapevine@marylandaa.org)

Group and District GVR's encouraged to attend, all are welcome!

**Are you looking for a fun service position?**

Please join us and find out more! All are welcome to attend!

## Area 29 Accessibilities Committee MONTHLY MEETING

Join us @ 3pm on the  
2nd Sunday of the  
Month

Zoom ID:  
848 0308 9697  
Password: Area29

The Area 29 Accessibilities Committee explores, develops, and offers resources to alcoholics with significant barriers to receiving the AA message and to participating in our program of recovery.

Scan the Code!  
Take the Accessibilities  
Survey



District or Intergroup  
Chairs and all  
interested AA Members  
are invited!

For more information email the  
Accessibilities Chair at  
[Accessibility@marylandaa.org](mailto:Accessibility@marylandaa.org)



# SMIA Meeting Minutes 5/11/24

**Opening:** Buddy F. opened meeting with the Serenity Prayer.

**Board Members Present:** Buddy F. – Chair, Lorraine J. - Vice-Chair, Bruce O. – Treasurer, Paul S. – Parliamentarian and Kristi P. – Secretary

**New Member(s):** Janine G – Ladies Recover Too

**Groups & Committees Represented:** Bill L.–Harmony Group/Web/Bookstall, Paula S. – Bedouin Group, Jamie R. – North Beach, Billy B. – There is a Solution, Mary F. – Leonardtown Group, Zee S. – Sunday Morning Sobriety, Lisa T. – Awakenings, Janine G. – Ladies Recover Too, Nathan H – Waldorf Group, Mandy W. – ODAAT, Barry S. – Inspiration Group, Melissa W. – Basic Text/Phone Chair, Keith H.- SMIA Lifeline Chair

**SMIA Chair Report:** Buddy F. gave an Area 29 intergroup Liaison report. Speakers were Arron W. from the Annapolis intergroup and the Area 29 Treasurer Bridgett F.. Bridgett gave a power point presentation on her duties and functions as the acting Area 29 Treasurer. The power point will be posted on the SMIA website. Arron W. spoke to the attendees about his time as the chairperson for the Annapolis group, accomplishments and lessons learned. Buddy stated that the Area 29 Assembly will be held in Severna Park on May 18<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am.

**Vice-Chair Report:** no report.

**Secretary Report:** Buddy F. read the SMIA April 2024 meeting minutes. A motion was made to accept and passed.

**Treasurer Report:** Bruce O. gave the April 2024 Treasurer's report. A motion was made to accept the Treasurer's report. Motion was seconded and passed. Close out of the budget and new budget will be presented at the June meeting.

## Committee Reports

**Bookstall Report:** Bill reported there

were 1157 visits to the On-Line Bookstall since the March meeting. There were 13 orders since the last meeting. 8 completed and 5 processing. Orders totaled \$877.15. Literature purchases were \$945.57.

**Web/Technology:** Total visitors 3,215. Most frequently visited pages: Home, Where and When Calendar, Anniversary Calendar, Where and When Search and Announcements. Site Updates and Changes: Meeting Change: Sunday Morning Sobriety made their seasonal move back to Tilghman Lake Park, effective 5/5/24. The Another Late Night meeting that met at the Great Escape Recovery Lounge has been terminated. A new meeting was added; Ladies Recover Too, which is held at the Great Escape Recovery Lounge at 5:30 PM on Tuesday, effective 5/7/24. We currently have a total of 127 meetings (120 in person meetings, 6 hybrid meetings, 6 on-line only and 1 meeting is reported as suspended, but has an online presence). Document Posts and Updates: Where and When PDF updated 4/21/24; Lifeline posted 5/1/24; Finance Page updated 5/1/24; Minutes posted 4/29/24.

**Gratitude Dinner:** No updates. Dinner will be November 16<sup>th</sup>. Will start having meetings after the picnic. Looking for volunteers.

**Corrections and Treatment:** Calvert – Lorraine reported District 1 needs new institutions chair, it's noted on the website. Charles – going to RCA 6 times a week (Mon-Wed), Jude House on Wed at 7 pm and ALPAS started back up, 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month. Women are not currently going into corrections center, applying for access to go back in. St. Mary's – no report.

**Lifeline/Archives:** No report. Buddy F. emphasized the importance of distributing the Lifeline's, so we're not spending money unnecessarily.

**Picnic:** Buddy F. mentioned that ribs could be cooked at home and brought to the picnic. Still need volunteers. Lorraine volunteered to prepare flyer. Note – \$5 fee per vehicle fee will be paid to the park, not

SMIA.

**PI/CPC:** Calvert – Lorraine – everything is going well. Charles – no report. St. Mary's – Mary reported that Sandy C. will be taking over her position and will do a great job. Everything is going well.

**Telephone:** Melissa W. gave her report; there were a total of 34 calls, 7 for Calvert, 6 for St. Mary's and 8 for Charles, 13 calls with no county identified. Total of 1 hour and 26 minutes.

**Serenity Breakfast:** Mary F. reported that Serenity Breakfast will be held on June 1<sup>st</sup> from 8-11:30 am, the buffet will be from 8-9:30 am, followed by speaker and raffle. Speaker will be Mark A. from Severna Park. Tickets available for \$20. Next planning meeting scheduled for May 11<sup>th</sup> after SMIA meeting. Has a lot of items for auction. Has 18 volunteers.

**Where and When:** No report. We ordered 3000 and are halfway through, hoping to finish the year out with them.

**New Business:** None.

**For the Good of the Order:** Billy F will celebrate 2 years and Dee E. will celebrate 33 years at the Warner Group.

Meeting adjourned with the Responsibility Pledge and the Lord's Prayer

## SMIA SERVICE TEAM:

Chair: Buddy F.

Vice Chair: Lorraine J.

Secretary: Kristi P.

Treasurer: Bruce O.

Parliamentarian: Paul S.

Web/Bookstall: Bill L.

Lifeline/Archives: Keith

Telephone: Melissa W.

Where & When: Pat P.

# June 2024

## Southern Maryland Intergroup Association Inc Treasury Report

**Monthly Contributions:  
\$160.00**

[www.somdintergroup.org/contribute](http://www.somdintergroup.org/contribute)  
SMIA, PO Box 767, Charlotte Hall, MD

**Southern Maryland Intergroup Association Inc  
Statement of Financial Position  
April 24, 2024 - May 24, 2024**

**Assets**

Primary Business Checking	\$	5,557.10
Primary Business Savings	\$	3,001.09
Prudent Reserve	\$	3,300.00
PayPal	\$	100.89
Bookstall Cash on hand	\$	100.00

**Total Assets** **12,059.08**

**Expenses**

Bookstall	\$	(929.98)
Liability Insurance	\$	-
Lifeline Printing	\$	(72.58)
Misc	\$	-
Phone Service	\$	(28.63)
PO Box Rental	\$	(120.00)
Rent	\$	(150.00)
Webmaster	\$	-
Website Maintenance	\$	45.58
Where and When		

**Total Expenses** **(\$1,255.61)**

**Southern Maryland Intergroup Association Inc  
Yearly Statement of Activity  
May 1, 2024 - Apr 30, 2025**

**Revenue**

Contributions	\$	160.00
Bookstall	\$	394.00
Gratitude Dinner	\$	-
Serenity Breakfast	\$	-
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>554.00</b>

**Expenses**

Bookstall	\$	(929.98)
Liability Insurance	\$	-
Lifeline Printing	\$	(72.58)
Misc	\$	-
Phone Service	\$	(28.63)
PO Box Rental	\$	(120.00)
Rent	\$	(150.00)
Webmaster	\$	-
Website Maintenance	\$	45.58
Where and When	\$	-

**Total Expenses** **(\$1,255.61)**

**Annual Net Assets** **(701.61)**

**THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR DONATIONS:**

**Drunks-R-Us, Awaken-  
ings and Happy Hour**



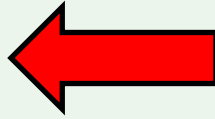
# WHERE DO WE SEND OUR CONTRIBUTIONS?

1) All contributions can be made online:  
[www.somdintergroup.org/donate.php](http://www.somdintergroup.org/donate.php)

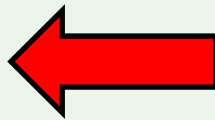
2) Or they can be mailed to the appropriate office location:

**\*PLEASE NOTE THAT GSO AND MARYLAND GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE ADDRESSES HAVE CHANGED\***

**General Service Office  
Post Office Box 2407  
James A Farley Station  
New York, NY 10116-2407**



**Maryland General Service  
PO BOX 1834  
Frederick, MD 21702**



**Southern Maryland Intergroup (SMIA)  
P.O. Box 767  
Charlotte Hall, MD 20622**

**District 1 Trust Fund (Calvert)  
P.O. Box 234  
Barstow, MD 20610**

**District 35 (Charles)  
P.O. Box 1981  
La Plata, MD 20646**

**District 36 (St. Mary's)  
P.O. Box 1334  
California, MD 20619**

**ATTENTION GROUP TREASURERS:**

**\*Remember to include the 6-digit GSO Group Number on all correspondence to Maryland General Service.**

## Samples of Group Contributions to A.A. Service Entities\*

Distribution Plan of \_\_\_\_\_  
(YOUR GROUP NAME)

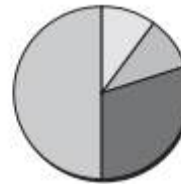
Your Group Service # \_\_\_\_\_

(Be sure to write group name and service # on all contributions.)



\_\_\_\_ % to district  
\_\_\_\_ % to area committee  
\_\_\_\_ % to G.S.O.  
\_\_\_\_ % to intergroup or central office  
\_\_\_\_ % other A.A. service entities  
\_\_\_\_ % other A.A. service entities

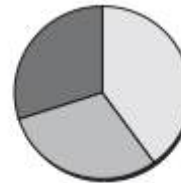
OR



**10%** to district  
**10%** to area committee  
**30%** to G.S.O.  
**50%** to intergroup or central office

OR

If you have no intergroup/central office.



**40%** to district  
**30%** to area  
**30%** to G.S.O.



**THE DEADLINE FOR ALL LIFELINE MATERIALS IS THE 27th OF EACH MONTH.**

**DISTRICT 35 - CHARLES CO.**

**Please come out and join us  
at our next District Meeting -  
the first Thursday of the  
month @ 7pm**

**Peace Lutheran Church  
11610 Rubina Place  
Waldorf MD 20602**

**Mailing address:  
PO Box 1981, La Plata,  
MD 20646**

**SERVICE KEEPS US  
SOBER**

**NEW BOOKSTALL HOURS:**

First and Third Thursday of the  
month 6:00pm - 6:45pm  
Second Saturday of the month 9am - 10am



**DISTRICT 1  
CALVERT COUNTY**

**SERVICE  
OPPORTUNITIES**

**Grapevine Rep  
Accessibility Chair**

**District Meeting:  
7 PM, 3rd Monday  
St. Paul's Episc.  
Church  
Prince Frederick, MD  
District 1 Trust Fund  
PO Box 234  
Barstow, MD 20610  
[www.calvertaa.org](http://www.calvertaa.org)**



**DISTRICT 36**

**ST. MARY'S COUNTY**

**PO Box 1334, California, MD 20619**

**[www.district36mdaa.com](http://www.district36mdaa.com)**



**DISTRICT NOTES**

**Please send any up-  
dates for the Where &  
When to:**

**[smia.whereandwhen@  
somdaa.org](mailto:smia.whereandwhen@somdaa.org)**

**Current meeting guides  
are available at the  
monthly SMIA meeting  
on a limited basis.**

**The next SMIA Meeting will be held on**

**Saturday, July 13 at 10:00 AM**

**Join us in person @**

**Immaculate Conception Church,  
28297 Old Village Road, Mechanicsville, MD  
20659**

**Or via Zoom @**

**[https://zoom.us/j/99982597908?  
pwd=QzVLcUZrVHdacFlrYUNZN21tdkluQT09](https://zoom.us/j/99982597908?pwd=QzVLcUZrVHdacFlrYUNZN21tdkluQT09)**