

Our Story:

Before AA was founded, its pioneer members came to recovery through the Oxford Group, originally known as "A First Century Christian Fellowship." AA Co-Founder Bill Wilson wrote that nearly all the principles he later formulated into the 12-Steps had been passed on to him through Dr. Sam Shoemaker, an Episcopal priest, author, and leader of the Group in America. This original program profoundly changed so many of its first one hundred members that it resulted in recovery rates far higher than those we are witnessing today. *Two Way Prayer*, and the Four Standards of *Absolute Honesty, Purity, Unselfishness, and Love* formed the heart of their life changing program. Early AA members considered them essential for recovery.

Having rediscovered this lost prayer practice for ourselves, we are answering God's call to share it with today's spiritual seekers. We are a small group of men and women committed to recovery and organizing ourselves as a "Christian Community" as defined by the Canons of the Episcopal Church. We follow Sam Shoemaker's vision of finding Christ in us and in those we serve by living a monastic *Rule of Life* grounded in prayer, study, and work. Having no desire to leave or replace our individual 12-Step Fellowships, we seek rather to deepen and enrich our recoveries by joining with like-minded Christian seekers. Being widely dispersed geographically, we form nurturing groups and communities wherever God may lead us. We grow ever closer to him and to one another through our life of daily prayer, effective study, and committed service.

For information regarding
Two Way Prayer,
visit:
TwoWayPrayer.org



*SAM SHOEMAKER
COMMUNITY*

SAMSHOEMAKERCOMMUNITY.ORG

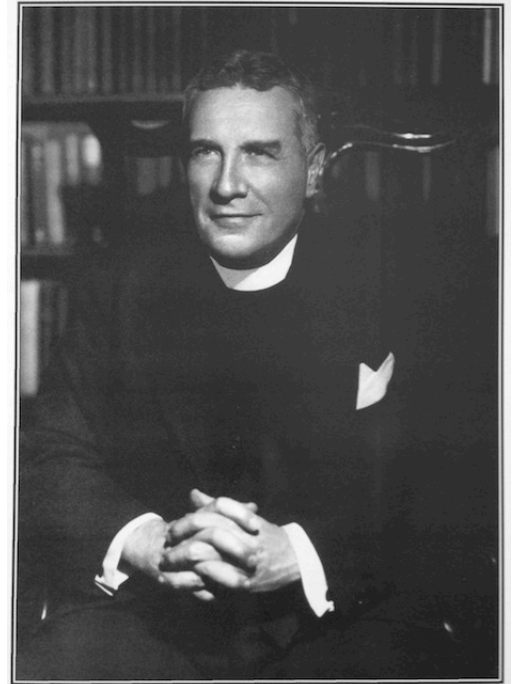
A Ministry of
★ **The Episcopal Diocese of Texas** ★

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SAM SHOEMAKER COMMUNITY

***+An Episcopal Christian Community
Seeking Union with Christ through
Service to the Addicted***



MONASTICS IN RECOVERY
CONTEMPLATIVES
IN ACTION

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Our Vision: *A growing community where Christ and recovery are shared and the lives of addicts transformed.*

Our Principles:

+ We draw closer to God and to one another through the practice of *Two Way Prayer* and the Four Standards of Absolute Honesty, Purity, Unselfishness, and Love

+ We follow the ancient, monastic tradition of carrying the Good News to those living on the edges of society - be they spiritual, social, or economic

+ We practice “the spirituality of descent” known as kenosis; the same “self-emptying” found in the mind of Christ and at the heart of the 12-Step journey

+ We keep alive for new generations the Christian roots of the 12-Steps through our personal Service Fields to which we are called

Our Service Fields: *Seeking God's particular will for us through Two Way Prayer, we discern a Field of Service to which we are being called. Some examples may include:*

- ❖ Starting a *Two Way Prayer* or 11th Step Meditation Group
- ❖ Organizing a Spiritual Retreat or a Recovery Worship Service
- ❖ Beginning a Bible or Spiritual Book Study Group
- ❖ Serving as a Prayer Partner guiding Newcomers in *Two Way Prayer*
- ❖ Writing Articles, Books or Pamphlets Focused on AA's Spiritual Roots
- ❖ Promoting greater awareness and understanding of AA's Pioneer Programs and Practices

Our Member Profile: *Candidates applying for membership in the Community should be:*

- ❖ Living a life of demonstrated Christian service
- ❖ Stabilized in recovery for a minimum of two years and active in a Twelve Step Fellowship
- ❖ Practicing *Two Way Prayer* and the Four Standards for a minimum of six months
- ❖ Seeking communion and fellowship with like-minded sojourners
- ❖ Bringing a desire and ability to enhance the life and work of the Community

Our Formation: *Candidates enter a two to three year program of formation that includes:*

Postulancy / A Period of Exploration
(Lasting six months to a year)

- ❖ Continuing daily *Two Way Prayer* while meeting weekly with an approved Prayer Partner or Group
- ❖ Studying assigned literature
- ❖ Discerning a call to the Community with spiritual guides
- ❖ Visiting formally with two or more SSC members
- ❖ Embarking on the development and practice of an individual *Rule of Life*
- ❖ Remaining in regular contact with the Director of Formation
- ❖ Attending one or more Quarterly Gatherings of the Community
- ❖ Being recommended for the Novitiate by the Director of Formation and the Guardian

Novitiate/ A Period of Discernment
(Lasting one to two years)

- ❖ Continuing daily *Two Way Prayer* and sharing weekly with an SSC member
- ❖ Addressing areas of needed growth and enhancement as discerned during postulancy
- ❖ Refining and living by a written *Rule of Life*
- ❖ Demonstrating proficiency in 12-Step recovery, the mystic writers and teachers, the monastic tradition, Anglicanism, and the Inner Work of psycho-spiritual transformation
- ❖ Participating in local Chapter meetings, attending Gatherings and annual Conclaves as time and travel allow
- ❖ Identifying and actively engaging in a personal Service Field
- ❖ Undertaking a directed retreat further discerning a call to the Community and being recommended for vows by the Director of Formation, the Standing Committee, and the Guardian

Professed / A Period of Commitment

- ❖ Undertaking a series of one-year vows received by our Visiting Bishop at annual Convocation
- ❖ Committing to Life Vows following three years of membership in the Community
- ❖ Remaining actively engaged in the life and work of the Community, in a local Chapter, and in the 12-Step Fellowship of one's choice

Every river has a wellspring at its source. AA is like that too. In the beginning, there was a spring which poured out of a clergyman, Dr. Samuel Shoemaker. Way back in 1934 he began to teach us the principles and attitudes that afterward came to full flower in AA's 12 Steps for recovery.
-Bill Wilson