

# Turning Point Group History

## The Beginning

In the spring of 1994, several members of the Easy Does It group of Athens, Georgia, which met at Emmanuel Episcopal church, proposed to the group conscience to change the meeting time from 8:30 p.m. to an earlier time. The main reason for wanting to meet earlier was the poor lighting around the church, especially during the winter months. After discussion, no clear decision could be reached. Someone suggested that all group members be polled by phone to see what the members wished. Although the poll results clearly indicated the desire for an earlier meeting time, no consensus could be reached as to a new time: 8:00? 7:30? 7:00? After 4-5 meetings, the group conscience was finally reached. Of the small minority voice, one member who did not want to change the time said, "Easy Does It is a good group; why change the meeting time? If some want an earlier meeting, then buy a coffee pot, find a place, and start a new meeting."

The small minority voice within the group conscience was heard. In August, 1994, fifteen persons met at the St. James Methodist Church (corner of Westlake and Lumpkin Street) in Athens. The members of the new group were: Clarke, A., Ginny D., Rick G., Kathy G., Shirley G., Bobbie M., Carl M., Helen P., Jimmy P., David S., Janet S., Ron R., John R., Joe T., and Mike W. During the first group conscience, Janet S. suggested that the new group be called "The Turning Point", and the name was adopted. The group met on Mondays and Thursdays at 7 p.m. as closed discussion meetings.

Attendance grew, and a couple of years later the group was split into two meetings on Monday nights: a closed discussion meeting and a separate closed beginners meeting. The group conscience resisted splitting the Thursday meeting as well. The Beginner's Meeting took place for several years, until which time the interest began to wane. Since then and to the present time, Turning Point has met as a closed discussion meeting on both Mondays and Thursdays, with periodic starts and stops of various second meetings on Thursday nights, e.g. Big Book (Alcoholics Anonymous), 12 and 12, Language of the Heart book studies, etc. have taken place. The Turning Point group, whose membership has been 40-45 members on average, has consistently been a diverse group, rich with a cross-section of members whose sobriety ranges from 24 hours to a few decades.

TURNING POINT GROUP  
St. James United Methodist Church  
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