

WHAT IS STEPHEN MINISTRY?

Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ -- (Galatians 6:2)

Stephen Ministry is the one-to-one lay caring ministry that takes place in congregations throughout the United States and around the world.

Stephen Ministry congregations equip and empower lay caregivers, called STEPHEN MINISTERS, to provide high-quality, confidential, Christ-centered care to people who are hurting.

Three groups of people are involved in this ministry: Stephen Leaders/Pastor, Stephen Ministers, and Care Receivers.

Stephen Ministry Leaders/Pastor establish and direct Stephen Ministry in the congregation.

They: – build awareness of Stephen Ministry within the congregation and community

- recruit and train Stephen Ministers
- meet with potential care receivers to assess their needs
- match care receivers with Stephen Ministers
- provide Stephen Ministers with ongoing supervision and continuing education.

People learn to serve as Stephen Leaders by attending a Leader's Training Course – a one-week conference that: introduces the resources used to lead Stephen Ministry; develops and refines key skills; deepens and expands the Christian experience.

Stephen Ministers are congregation members trained by Stephen Leaders to offer high-quality, one-to-one Christian care to people going through tough times. A Stephen Minister usually provides care to one person at a time, meeting with that person once a week for an hour. Stephen Ministers gather monthly with their Stephen Leaders for supervision and continuing education.

Care Receivers are people—congregation members and others in the community—who receive care from a Stephen Minister. These are people struggling through a difficult time in life—experiencing grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, or some other life crisis. Some important guidelines for this caring relationship protect both the care receiver and the Stephen Minister:

- The relationship between a care receiver and a Stephen Minister is confidential.
- Men are matched with men; women with women.
- When a care receiver's needs exceed what a Stephen Minister can provide, the Stephen Ministry team recommends a referral to an appropriate community resource.

STEPHEN MINISTRY at Lindenwald United Methodist Church is now seeking additional STEPHEN MINISTERS. Does this caring ministry appeal to you? Is God calling you to a deeper caring ministry to others? Training classes begin in September and will be held on Tuesday evenings in our Fellowship Hall.

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