

Want to Know More?



What exactly is Stephen's Ministry?

Answer: Stephen Ministry is a ministry in our congregation in which trained and supervised laypersons, called Stephen Ministers, provide one-to-one Christian care to individuals facing life challenges or difficulties.

What do Stephen Ministers do?

Answer: Stephen Ministers are caring Christian friends who listen, understand, accept, and pray for and with care receivers who are working through a crisis or a tough time.

Are Stephen Ministers Counselors?

Answer: Stephen Ministers are not counselors; they are trained lay caregivers. Their role is to listen and care—not to give advice or counsel. Stephen Ministers are also trained to recognize when a care receiver's need exceeds what they can provide. When that happens they work with care receivers to help them receive the level of care they really need.

Can I trust a Stephen's Minister?

Answer: Trust is essential to a caring relationship, and Stephen Ministers are people you can trust. Confidentiality is one of the most important principles of Stephen Ministry, and what a care receiver tells his or her Stephen Minister is kept in strictest confidence.

Why the name Stephen?

Answer: The name Stephen comes from St. Stephen, who was the first lay person commissioned by the apostles to provide caring ministry to those in need as recorded in Acts 6.

What is the Pastor's Role?

Answer: Pastors will always be the primary caregivers, but there is no way pastors can meet all the needs for care. God has called all of us, not just pastors, to minister to one another. Stephen Ministry multiplies ministry by turning pastors into equippers, so they can enable lay people to provide caring ministry as well.

Where did it start?

Answer: Stephen Ministry started in 1975, when Ken Haugk, a pastor and clinical psychologist, recognized the need to multiply the care giving in his congregation in St. Louis, Missouri. We have had Stephen Ministry at Shepherd of the Hills since 1982, and, as of May 2010, are one of more than 10,000 Stephen Ministry congregations from 150 Christian denominations in all 50 states, 10 Canadian provinces, and 23 other countries. Stephen Ministries St. Louis, the organization behind this international ministry, is headquartered in Missouri, and has trained 60,000 Stephen Ministry Leaders who have trained more than 500,000 Stephen Ministers, who have given Stephen Ministry care to over a million care receivers. There are also 250 organizations, other than congregations, using Stephen Ministry, such as hospitals, hospices, military base chapels, correctional institutions, social service agencies, inner-city ministries, assisted living centers, universities and seminaries.

Who is involved?

Answer: Stephen Leaders are the ones who oversee and direct our Stephen Ministry. They recruit, select, train, organize, and supervise our Stephen Ministers, identify people in need of care, and match them with a Stephen Minister.

Stephen Ministers are the caregivers. They have been through 50 hours of training in Christian care giving, including general topics such as listening, feelings, boundaries, assertiveness, and using Christian resources in care giving. In addition, their training covers specialized topics such as ministering to the divorced, hospitalized, bereaved, and aging. Care Receivers are the recipients of Stephen Ministers' care. They are people from our church or community who are experiencing divorce, grief, loss of a job, loneliness, hospitalization, terminal illness, or any of an endless number of other life difficulties. Stephen Ministers usually meet with their care receivers once a week for about an hour for as long as the care receiver will benefit by the relationship.