



## How Stephen Ministry Works

**Church staff and lay leaders** attend a Leaders Training Course to learn how to implement Stephen Ministry in our congregation.

**Stephen Leaders** recruit laypeople from our congregation to serve as Stephen Ministers and provide them with training in Christian caregiving. Topics include listening, feelings, assertiveness, confidentiality, and ministering to people in specific situations such as divorce, terminal illness, grief, or spiritual needs. Stephen Ministers are also trained to recognize when a care receiver's needs go beyond the care a Stephen Minister can provide and how to refer the care receiver for additional care.

**Stephen Ministers** are commissioned by the congregation at the end of training and can be linked with a care receiver - a person in need of one-to-one Christian care. Stephen Ministers are normally assigned only one care receiver at a time and meets with that person about an hour each week. Stephen Ministers also meet twice monthly for supervision and continuing education. Stephen Ministers initially commit to two years of service.

### Important to Note

**Stephen Ministers are not counselors.** They are trained Christian caregivers. Their role is to listen and care—not counsel or advise.

**Stephen Ministry is a confidential ministry.** What a care receiver tells a Stephen Minister remains confidential. Even in supervision, the names of care receivers and specific details are never discussed.

**Stephen Ministers do not make cold calls.** They are assigned only to people who agree to receive the care of a Stephen Minister.



## **Most Frequently asked Questions about Stephen Ministry**

### **Why The Name Stephen?**

In Acts 6, Stephen was chosen to provide caring ministry to those in need. Since the time of the Apostles, caring ministry has been considered a hallmark of the Christian faith community.

### **What Are Stephen Leaders?**

Stephen Leaders are the pastors, other church staff members, and lay leaders who are equipped to direct Stephen Ministry in their congregation. Stephen Leaders have gifts and skills in areas such as leadership, teaching, and organizing people, along with a heart for caring ministry.

### **What Is A Leader's Training Course?**

A Leader's Training Course is a one week event where pastors, other church staff, and lay leaders are equipped to serve as Stephen Leaders. They learn the Stephen Series system so they can establish and lead Stephen Ministry in their congregations.

### **Does the Leaders Training Course Train People To Become Stephen Ministers?**

It doesn't—the LTC trains people to be Stephen Leaders, the ones who direct Stephen Ministry in the congregation. Stephen Leaders then train members of their congregation to serve as Stephen Ministers and provide care

### **In What Types of Situations Do Stephen Ministers Provide Care?**

Stephen Ministers provide care to individuals facing difficulties in life—grief, cancer, divorce, financial difficulties, hospitalization, chronic illness, job loss, disability, loneliness, a spiritual crisis, or other life struggles.

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### **How Does Stephen Ministry Benefit Pastors?**

Stephen Ministry supports pastors by deepening, expanding, and extending the caregiving capacity of their congregations. A team of Stephen Ministers, together with a pastor, can provide ongoing care for more people than the pastor could provide alone. This also frees pastors to invest more time in other important ministry areas.

### **Do Stephen Ministers Care For People Outside Their Congregation?**

Yes. Stephen Ministers often provide care for people in the broader community, enhancing and expanding outreach in a powerful way.



## **How Can I Become A Stephen Minister?**

Do friends often come to you to share their feelings and confide in you? Are you an encourager with a tender heart for helping people who are hurting or struggling? If you answered yes, you may be a great candidate to serve as a Stephen Minister.

Asbury Memorial is looking for men and women Stephen Minister candidates with a desire to serve God by providing confidential one-to-one Christian care and support to those in our church and community who are going through difficult times.

The role of the Stephen Minister is to journey alongside their care receiver for as long as needed, providing support, encouragement and prayers for him or her every step of the way. Stephen Ministers are not problem solvers; they focus on providing care and look to God to provide the healing.

The training for Stephen Ministers is excellent (50 hrs) and equips Stephen Ministers to provide emotional and spiritual care for people in the midst of a crisis or struggling with life challenges. The training for Stephen Ministers will begin in September. Please contact one of your Stephen Leaders for an application to join our September training class.

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