



### **What is Stephen Ministry?**

- A one-to-one lay ministry in which the Stephen Ministers do the caring and God does the curing.
- A program of our congregation that equips lay persons to provide distinctly Christian care to those who are experiencing crises, difficulties and problems in life.
- A ministry named after Stephen, the first deacon in the early church, commissioned by the Apostles to provide comfort and care in the Christian community.
- Stephen Ministries is a trans-denominational Christian organization based in St. Louis, Missouri, and serving congregations for over 25 years with training, caring, and administrative resources.

### **How does the Stephen Ministry work at our church?**

The Stephen Ministry training program prepares interested men and women to become Stephen ministers through 50 hours of training (broken into twenty 2 1/2 hour sessions) including instruction in:

- Feelings
- Listening
- Assertiveness
- Confidentiality
- Crisis theory and intervention
- Telecare
- Use of prayer and the Bible
- Specialized topics such as: grief, divorce, hospitalization, etc.

Following training, the Stephen Minister is commissioned by our church into active, caring ministers. They usually visit their care receiver one hour per week and spend two hours twice each month in supervision and continuing education.

Stephen Ministers work in continued consultation with the pastoral and leadership staff.

### **Stephen Ministers are:**

Lay men and women from our congregation who have developed their gifts for bringing the concern and care of Christ's community to people in need.

Dedicated Christians commissioned by our church to confidential, in-depth caring.

- People who come from all walks of life, age ranges, and backgrounds.
- Caring Christians who have a desire to be with you in a time of need, grief or crisis.
- Committed Christians who pray with and for you seeking to share Christ's love and support.

### **Stephen Ministers are not:**

- Professional counselors or psychologists.
- Social workers.
- Experts in law, finance, church doctrine, etc.
- Free babysitters or housekeepers.
- Superficial visitors.

### **What kind of needs do Stephen Ministers address?**

- People who are hospitalized.
- People who are grieving the loss of a loved one.
- People who are depressed.
- People who are separated or in the process of divorce.
- People who are terminally ill, along with their families.
- People who have lost their job.
- People in the process of moving.
- People experiencing the birth of a child.
- People who are in trouble with the law.
- People who are shut-in, or lonely.
- People with sick or handicapped children.
- People who are experiencing a life crisis.

### **Does the Stephen Ministry replace pastoral ministry?**

The Stephen Ministry Program is not meant to replace the role of the Rector. Rather, the Rector's work together with the Stephen Ministers as part of their pastoral ministry, and therefore greatly increase the care giving that can be accomplished.

All assignments of Stephen Ministers are made under the guidance and supervision of the Rector.

Stephen Ministry is CONFIDENTIAL ministry, and those receiving care can be sure that their identity and what goes on in the caring relationship will remain private.

For additional information, please contact Mary Bellew (tel. 547-7202) or Anita High (tel. 547-9825).