

What is Stephen Ministry All About?

by Kevin Wilson, Stephen Minister

In our busy world today, it sometimes seems as though we don't have time for one more thing. I have found Stephen Ministry to be not just another time commitment, but an exciting challenge for the heart and spirit and a wonderful walk of faith. I had been involved with various boards for a number of years, but always felt I could do more. Then I began the 50 hours of Stephen Minister training. We met each week for two and a half hours and continually pushed our spiritual envelopes.

Each training session was filled with helpful information about caregiving. With the help of our Stephen Leaders, we all felt supported, loved, and educated. By the end of our training I felt more at ease and much more confident in my abilities as a Stephen Minister. I learned a lot about what it takes to care for and support someone and to share my faith on a weekly basis.

After our commissioning, I was immediately assigned a care receiver. As a spiritual caregiver, I used my training to prepare for whatever lay ahead. At first it was difficult, but through daily prayer and twice-a-month peer group supervision, I made progress. I was amazed to see God at work in and through us. God is the one who brings hope, love, and forgiveness to hurting people.

The four points of the Caregiver's Compass illustrate what Stephen Ministers are all about. We have **COMPASSION** for the care receivers' spiritual, emotional, or physical issues. We are **FULL OF FAITH** because we rely on God—not our own actions—to bring hope and healing to our care receivers. We become **SKILLED** through our initial training and twice-monthly supervision and continuing education. Care receivers depend on our **TRUSTWORTHINESS**—confidentiality is a cornerstone of Stephen Ministry. At the center of the compass and at the center of our ministry is our Lord and Savior **JESUS CHRIST**, who heals through us and fills us with faith, love, and forgiveness.



A Stephen Minister meets with a care receiver once a week for around an hour. That one hour of caregiving is certainly important to the Stephen Minister. But to the person receiving care, that one hour means more than we will ever know.

Growing in faith and love for God by caring for someone who is hurting has been the most meaningful experience of my life. I am no longer afraid to share my faith. I have grown in my ability to pray. Serving Christ as a Stephen Minister is one of my greatest treasures.

As our congregation looks to train another class of Stephen Ministers, I hope others of you are ready to join us in this wonderful journey. Please consider becoming a Stephen Minister. God will bless you and others through you in ways you never dreamed possible!

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