

STEPHEN MINISTRY



Christ caring
for people
through People.

ST.  DAVID'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Stephen Ministry

What is the Stephen Ministry?

The Stephen Ministry is a non-profit Christian lay ministry and training organization based in St. Louis. In existence since 1975, Stephen Ministries has provided Christ-centered training and resources to more than 10,000 congregations from more than 150 denominations around the world. The core purpose of this ministry can be summed up in the words of St. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians:

"To equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12-13).

What is a Stephen Minister?

A Stephen Minister is a member of St. David's who has completed the Stephen Ministries training program and is prepared to provide emotional and spiritual care to people who are hurting. A Stephen Minister is a caring, Christian person of the same gender who listens, prays, and cares in a confidential setting. This is a formal, care-giving relationship that often leads to a lasting friendship.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is the foundation of the Stephen Ministry. The only individuals who know the name of a Care Receiver are the clergy person in charge of the Stephen Ministry, the Stephen Leader, and the assigned Stephen Minister. The only time this confidentiality may be broken is when there is an issue of suicide, homicide, or abuse. The Stephen Minister does not talk with the Care Receiver's family, other staff members at St. David's, nor any Parish members at St. David's regarding any matter related to the Care Receiver. It is the Care Receiver's right to disclose any personal information related to their relationship with a Stephen Minister and never the prerogative of the Stephen Minister.

What are Stephen Ministers trained to deal with?

All types of grief including: terminal illness, long-term care, hospitalization, death, divorce, loss of job, retirement, loneliness, aging, downsizing, children moving, loss of pet, and single parenting. A Stephen Minister can be a helpful source of Christian-based support for those in the middle of great calamities as well as those who are just hurting.

What Stephen Ministers do not deal with:

Suicide, homicide, severe depression, drug and/or alcohol dependency, abuse, personality disorders, mental instability, and minors (under the age of 18), due to confidentiality issues.

2. During the initial meeting, the Stephen Minister will explain the Stephen Ministry confidentiality guidelines to you and will discuss meeting times, location(s), and duration. From this discussion you and your Stephen Minister will work out a meeting schedule that is convenient for both of you. Typically, these meetings occur on a weekly basis.

Should the Stephen Minister take the place of any other caregivers?

No. The Stephen Ministry does not replace any other St. David's ministry or source of support. The clergy at St. David's will continue to help the Parish member and their family for as long as they are needed and able to do so. The major difference between the Stephen Ministry and the other ministries at St. David's is that the Stephen Ministry cares confidentially, is separate from the other resources, is for one person at a time – the Care Receiver, and not the family unit.

How long do I stay with my Stephen Minister?

For as long as they are needed, which can be a few weeks or a few months, but generally for not more than a year. The relationship can be discontinued at any time by either the Care Receiver or by the Stephen Minister, but the decision to do so is usually arrived at in a mutual manner.

Types of care a Stephen Minister provides:

Spiritual, Crisis, follow-up, chronic, preventive, and supportive.

Types of care a Stephen Minister does not provide:

House cleaning, financial aid, counseling, legal aid, baby sitting, shopping, and transportation.

How are Stephen Ministers trained?

Each Stephen Minister has fifty hours of training in: Listening Skills, Setting Boundaries, Christian Care, Assertiveness, Grief, Depression, Confidentiality, Supervision, Feelings, Process vs. Results, Closure, and Mental Health – to name a few. All training is based on a sound biblical understanding of who Jesus is and what He wants His church to be. God uses Stephen Ministers to touch hurting people with His healing love. Once commissioned, Stephen Ministers continue Supervision and Continuing Education twice a month, and serve at least a two-year commitment.

A Stephen Leader has an additional week-long training in all phases of Stephen Ministries, including how to start up the Ministry, organize it, and efficiently run it. The Stephen Leader maintains a direct connection to the Stephen Ministries headquarters in St. Louis and works closely with the clergy at St. David's and the Stephen Ministers.

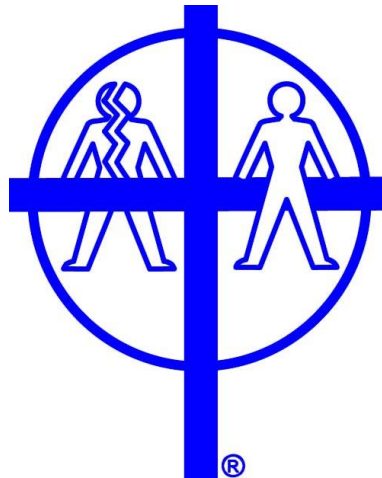
The Stephen Minister's Motto

“God is the Cure; We are the Care”.

We strive to fulfill this motto by “loving one another as Christ loved us.”
(*John 13:34*).

How to contact a Stephen Minister:

Contact The Reverend Michelle Fritch at 770-993-6084 or email her directly at michelle@stdavidchurch.org.



This pamphlet was produced by the St. David's Stephen Ministers for all parish members who are interested in knowing more about this ministry.