

# **AN INVITATION TO BECOME A STEPHEN MINISTER**

Our congregation is in the midst of an exciting new venture in caring called Stephen Ministry. This ministry will enable capable and well trained Caregivers who are carefully matched to support and nurture another congregation member who is enduring a difficult life challenge.

We are currently in the process of finding men and women of our congregation who are willing to serve as Stephen Ministers, beginning with 50 hours of stimulating and useful training in Christian caring skills. This training will be arranged to best fit the busy schedules of our participants, led by trained Stephen Leaders and will include a variety of topics such as effective listening, Christian assertiveness, maintaining boundaries in caregiving, and grief. The training is distinctively founded in Christian belief and focuses on God as Caregiver and we as Caregivers.

When the Stephen Ministers have completed their training, they will be commissioned and ready to begin their ministry. Working under supervision, a Stephen Minister will be available to meet weekly with a person experiencing such problems as these, and many more.

- Bereavement
- Difficult Parenting
- Job Loss
- Terminal or Long-term Illness
- Natural disasters
- Divorce

Stephen Ministers commit to at least two years for training, service, and regular supervision. Many Stephen Ministers enjoy their ministry so much that they choose to serve beyond two years. While being a Stephen Minister requires commitment of time and effort, it also brings incredible joy and fulfillment. It may be one of the most rewarding challenges you will ever embrace. In addition, you will use the skills you learn not only in your caring ministry but also in your everyday relationships with family, friends, neighbors and coworkers.

We are excited to see what God is going to do in the lives of those who undertake this ministry and in the lives of those who will receive care from our Stephen Ministers.

Please prayerfully consider this opportunity. If you decide you would like to be a Stephen Minister, please contact one of us right away and we can talk about how you can get started. If we agree that you would be well-suited to be a Stephen Minister, you will then begin training for this exciting ministry in January.

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