

## **Stephen Ministry**

Stephen Ministry is the one-to-one lay caring ministry that takes place in St. Mark that uses the **Stephen Series** system. Stephen Ministry congregations equip and empower lay caregivers—called Stephen Ministers—to provide high-quality, confidential, Christ-centered care to people who are hurting. Stephen Ministry falls under the Congregational Care ministry at St. Mark.

### ***Stephen Leaders***

Stephen Leaders establish and direct Stephen Ministry in a congregation. They—

- build awareness of Stephen Ministry within the congregation and community
- recruit and train Stephen Ministers
- meet with potential care receivers to assess their needs
- match care receivers with Stephen Ministers
- provide Stephen Ministers with ongoing supervision and continuing education

People learn to serve as Stephen Leaders by attending a Leader's Training Course—a one-week conference that introduces the resources used to lead Stephen Ministry, develops key skills, and inform the Congregation about this caring ministry. St. Mark has 1 - 2, lay Stephen Leaders running the program. St. Mark Stephen Leaders are commissioned during a Sunday service after their training by the pastor. Stephen Leaders typically serve 2-3 years.

### **Stephen Ministers**

Stephen Ministers are congregation members trained by Stephen Leaders to offer high-quality, one-to-one Christian care to people going through tough times. A Stephen Minister usually provides care to one person at a time, meeting with that person once a week for about an hour. Once a month, Stephen Ministers gather with their Stephen Leaders for supervision and continuing education.

Training for Stephen Ministers:

- takes place at St. Mark
- is lead by Stephen Leaders
- is typically taught in 20, 2-hour, weekly sessions along with a weekend retreat.
- combines pre-class reading, devotions, lecture, video presentation, discussion and skill practice.

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Stephen Minister training classes typically occur every three years depending on the need for Stephen Ministers by the congregation and are recruited by the Stephen Leaders.