

Stephen Minister Job Description

Stephen Ministers are congregation members who are recruited, selected, trained, and commissioned to provide one-to-one lay caring ministry to persons in crisis or with other needs for care. They participate in Supervision Group twice a month. They initially commit to serve for two years including training and may renew their commitment.

What Stephen Ministers Do:

Pray

Stephen Ministers pray daily for their care receivers and strive to worship God always in word and deed. They reveal the love of God to those who most need to see it.

Care for the Care Receiver

Stephen Ministers are assigned to care receivers—people in crisis who need caring support. Stephen Ministers care for those in moderate difficulties. The Stephen Minister's care helps the care receiver resolve the difficulty and achieve growth.

Most Stephen Ministers meet once a week with their care receivers for about an hour at a time. They may also check in with the care receiver by telephone, particularly when the care receiver is going through a difficult time.

Stephen Ministers use special skills to care for their care receivers. Among the most important are the following:

Listening. Most care receivers need someone simply to listen—really listen—as they talk through their difficulties.

Dealing with feelings. Stephen Ministers reflect the care receiver's content, feelings, and ideas and ask open-ended questions to help the care receiver recognize, express, and accept his or her feelings.

Sharing distinctively Christian caring resources. Stephen Ministers may share a prayer, a Bible verse or story, or other caring gestures that the care receiver would welcome.

Remaining process-oriented. Stephen Ministers do not try to fix the care receiver or his or her problems; they focus on the process of caregiving and rely on God to achieve results.

Relating assertively. Stephen Ministers respect both the needs of the care receiver and their own needs as well.

Maintaining boundaries. Stephen Ministers set appropriate boundaries in the caring relationship, helping the care receiver remain as independent as possible while being there for the care receiver as needed.

Recommending professional care when necessary. Stephen Ministers are not trained to care for those who are suicidal, severely depressed, abusive, or homicidal, or who are abusing drugs or alcohol. If Stephen Ministers recognize that their care receiver's needs exceed the care they are able to provide, they see that the care receiver receives professional care.

Maintain Confidentiality

Stephen Ministers understand that confidentiality is crucial in any caring relationship. The care receiver needs to know that what he or she says to the Stephen Minister will remain in confidence. Stephen Ministers maintain confidentiality and encourage other Stephen Ministers to do the same.

Help Identify People in Need of Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministers act as ministers of referral, helping to find people who would benefit from the care of a Stephen Minister.

Participate in Twice-Monthly Supervision and Continuing Education Sessions

Stephen Ministers participate faithfully in Small Group Peer Supervision and continuing education, coming prepared to every supervision session unless illness or emergency makes

attendance impossible. Supervision provides Stephen Ministers with support, guidance, and accountability for their caring relationships. There are no unsupervised Stephen Ministers.

Help the Congregation Understand and Appreciate Stephen Ministry

Through their service, Stephen Ministers help the congregation appreciate Stephen Ministry and encourage members to become ministers of referral who help those in crisis receive the care they need.

A 24 Month Commitment

Stephen Ministers commit to at least two years for training, service, and regular supervision. This requires about 10 to 12 hours per month with about 5 to 6 hours in personal time with a “Care Receiver” and the remainder in Supervision and Continuing Education. Many Stephen Ministers enjoy their ministry so much that they choose to serve beyond the two years. While being a Stephen Minister requires commitment of time and effort, it also brings joy and fulfillment. It may be one of the most rewarding challenges you will ever embrace.

Training

Through its trained Stephen Leaders, Stephen Ministers receive 50 hours of training for this ministry before they are assigned a care receiver. Training is on Monday nights from 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM. The training is comprehensive, and Stephen Ministers can feel confident in their skills for this ministry. Trainees are expected to give priority to these 50 hours of initial training and to study all the materials used in the course, including books and articles.

Topics of Study

Training will be led by our trained Stephen Leaders and will include a variety of topics such as listening, Christian assertiveness, maintaining boundaries in caregiving, and dealing with grief. The classes are distinctively Christian and focus on God as the one who cures as we care.

Supervision

Small Group Peer Supervision provides Stephen Ministers with encouragement and assures that no Stephen Minister will ever have to carry the responsibility for his or her care receiver all alone. Supervision and Continuing Education is on the first and third Monday nights of each month from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM as long as the Stephen Ministers serve.

Post-Training Responsibilities

- Be available for service as a Stephen Minister for the remainder of the 24 month commitment following initial training.
- Respond promptly to referrals made by the referral coordinator.
- Seek to establish a one-to-one trusting relationship following a referral. Visitation will normally be on a weekly basis, and may also include follow-up phone calls.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times by not discussing care receivers by name or implication.
- Set aside time on a regular basis for Bible reading and prayer. Pray especially for “care receivers”, other Stephen Ministers, and Stephen Leaders.

For more information about Stephen Ministry at Broomfield UMC contact Pastor Thomas Cross, Bill Pelham (303) 466-5996 - williampelham@msn.com, or Judy McGoogan (303) 325-7862 - jmcgoogan@yahoo.com

