

To receive care from a Stephen Minister or to simply find out more information about what this ministry has to offer call Greg Bowman or Kathy Gurzynski, Pastoral Associates, at 585-1257. You may also e-mail questions to them directly at greg@hspgeist.org or kathy@hspgeist.org. All inquiries are informal and confidential.

Index

- ❖ [What is Stephen Ministry?](#)
- ❖ [Current News](#)
- ❖ [Why Stephen Ministry?](#)
- ❖ [Who Are Stephen Ministers?](#)
- ❖ [On Call Ministry](#)
- ❖ [Do I Need a Stephen Minister?](#)
- ❖ [Testimonials](#)
- ❖ [History of Stephen Ministry](#)
- ❖ [How Do I Serve As a Stephen Minister?](#)
- ❖ [Prayer and Scripture](#)

What is Stephen Ministry? Stephen Ministry provides one to one Christian care giving to adult members of our parish. It is based on the idea that all Christians are ministers and are called to respond to Jesus' command to love one another. A person in need contacts the church and if Stephen Ministry is the appropriate place for them to receive care they will be assigned a Stephen Minister. Generally they will meet with their Stephen Minister once a week until they feel they no longer need the Stephen Minister's care. The duration of the relationship will vary based on individual need.

Current News

The following presentations are open to the parish and held in RM 51-53, Parish Life Center unless otherwise noted:

Check Back for upcoming events and news.

Why Stephen Ministry?

We have many needs for care in our parish: people experiencing loss, illness, marital difficulties, job loss, relocation, spiritual crisis, loneliness, and many other stresses and challenges. Often people suffer silently. They do not request or receive the level of care they really need. Sometimes they are angry at God and feel forsaken. With the size of our parish it is impossible for our priests to meet all of these needs. Stephen Ministry expands the care that our parish can offer by equipping members to provide Christian care to those in need.

Who are Stephen Ministers?

Stephen Ministers are members of our parish who have completed 50 hours of training in providing high quality Christian care to individuals experiencing a variety of life challenges. Once commissioned as Stephen Ministers they receive ongoing supervision and continuing education. Samplings of the topics they receive training in are: the art of listening, feelings, confidentiality, assertiveness, Christian care giving, depression, grief and many more. They are not problem solvers, therapists or even casual visitors. They are children of God who are trained to listen and companion their brothers and sisters in Christ through the rough places we all encounter in our lives. They do this in a structured one-on-one same gender caring relationship that is CONFIDENTIAL and COMPASSIONATE. Stephen Ministers are not there to judge or give advice. They come into the relationship and meet the individual in whatever place he or she is and then walk alongside that person until he or she is ready to walk alone, being ever mindful that Christ is always with us and that we are never truly alone.

On Call Ministry

Many of our Stephen Ministers attend additional training in hospital visitation. These ministers are then “on-call” to make a visit to any parishioner who is hospitalized. The On-Call minister extends the prayers and good wishes of the parish. If a healing sacrament is requested, the On-Call minister passes that information along to Fr. Phil or Fr. Dave. If you or a family member is hospitalized in an Indianapolis area hospital and wish for an On-Call Stephen Minister to visit, please contact the Church office at 849-9245.

Do I Need a Stephen Minister?

Many times the difficulty or crisis you are experiencing is one that in time you can overcome yourself. But it has been shown over and over again having a caring supportive presence walk alongside you during these times can make your journey shorter. Often having a companion on your journey can help you feel less isolated and also help you see things from a different perspective. You can experience Christ working through another person to help you. The care that a Stephen Minister can provide for you falls somewhere between the care that a friend would provide, and the care you might receive from a pastor or mental health professional. Stephen Ministers are trained to do some activities similar to those counselors do, such as listening reflectively, expressing empathy and dealing with feelings. Yet there are significant differences in the care that a Stephen Minister can provide and the care that a mental health professional can provide. Typically counselors or therapists will assist individuals explore thoughts and emotions at a deeper more intense level. Stephen Ministers are not qualified to diagnose mental or emotional disturbances. Mental health professionals address issues such as problems with active addictions, psychosis, suicidal situations, severe depression and other more in-depth issues that Stephen Ministers are not equipped or qualified to handle. It is our hope and our prayer that you will take advantage of this ministry. No need is too small, and if your need is too great for a Stephen Minister we will help you find the referral you need so you can feel better once again.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

--Psalm 46:1

Testimonials

"The loss of a loved one has got to be one of the most difficult things a person can experience. Speaking for myself, my marriage of 32 ½ years was one made in heaven. My love for this woman was something that I can only hope every married person has the good fortune to experience at least once in their life time. Having said that, the extreme sadness and sense of loss and well being, at the loss of my wife, was extremely difficult for me to come to grips with. I still haven't completely reconciled my loss and a part of me will probably always grieve the void that losing her has left in my life. Among a number of grief support services that I have consulted with, after her death, was Holy Spirit's Stephen Ministry. I had heard about the group and read about the group but I had not known anyone who actually had occasion to meet with anyone from the group. It was my good fortune to have been guided to the Stephen Ministry (by a friend) when I so desperately needed their support. In a nutshell, the Stephen Minister, who I have been meeting with for close to a year now, has been the rock that I needed to lean on. Always willing to listen and to then discuss with me the issues affecting myself and my life, as the result of the loss of my wife, my Stephen Minister has been a God send to me. This person has never once missed or rescheduled an agreed upon appointment. Never once, even after months of weekly meetings, has my Stephen Minister suggested that we have met to discuss my loss long enough. He has always been willing to spend his time meeting with and listening to me as a means to my facing and dealing with my loss. I cannot say enough good things about the experiences I have had meeting with my Stephen Minister for the past ten months. As a result of the support that I have received, I am confident that my healing process has been shortened and that I will come out of this grieving process a healthier individual than I might have had I not had the assistance of a Stephen Minister. Life is beginning to feel good to me once again. And I have a better understanding of what has happened to me in my life and why. I feel that I am probably a stronger individual mentally, emotionally and spiritually now than I was prior to the loss of my wife. I would encourage anyone, with an issue of any kind in their life, to not hesitate in contacting Holy Spirit's Stephen Ministry for help. You will be glad that you did."

History of Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry began in 1975 when Dr. Kenneth C. Haugk, a pastor and clinical psychologist, trained parishioners at his St Louis, Missouri church to help him meet the needs for care in his congregation. It was so successful that other congregations became interested and Haugk founded the Stephen Ministry organization now headquartered in St Louis, MO. It is a transdenominational ministry that serves 10,000 congregations worldwide, including all 50 states, 10 Canadian provinces and 23 other countries. These represent over a 150 different Christian denominations. The Stephen Series got its name from Saint Stephen, the first lay person commissioned by the Apostles to provide caring ministry to those in need (Acts 6). www.stephenministries.org Stephen Ministry at Holy Spirit was begun in 1999. Our Pastoral Associates Greg Bowman and Kathy Gurzynski went to Stephen Ministry leadership training in St Louis. Upon their return they trained and commissioned the first group of our parishioners to serve as Stephen Ministers. Since then we have had 17 other parishioners attend leadership training in St Louis and have trained and commissioned over 184 Stephen Ministers here at Holy Spirit.

How Do I Serve As a Stephen Minister?

Stephen Ministers are asked to give a minimum 2 year commitment of service to the ministry. A new class of Stephen Ministers is trained once a year beginning in September with commissioning occurring in April. The training class is scheduled to meet the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Tuesday evenings of the month. Once commissioned Stephen Ministers continue to meet the 1st and 3rd Tuesday evenings of the month for small group supervision and continuing education. If you are interested in serving in this ministry call Kathy or Greg at the Parish Life Center, 585-1257.

Prayer and Scripture

Whether you feel you or someone you know may be in need of a Stephen Minister, or maybe you are feeling the call to serve as a Stephen Minister, or perhaps you are just curious about this ministry the following prayer and scripture may help you discern the appropriate path.

*Lord give me the courage
To ask for help when I am in need.
And assist me in helping others when I am able.
Let no one fall alone;*

*For if their need is too great
For me to provide for,
Then have me guide them
To someone who can. AMEN*

Two can accomplish more than one, for the results can be much better. If one falls, the other pulls him up; but if a man falls when he is alone, he's in trouble. –Ecclesiastes 4:9-10