

Stephen Ministry

When dealing with deep personal issues, it is important to have a good understanding of what a Stephen Minister is and does. The following information is provided to help you make an informed choice about receiving care from a Stephen Minister.

[What does a Stephen Minister do?](#)

A Stephen Minister gives one-to-one, lay Christian care.

One-to-one: Stephen Ministers meet privately with one care receiver of the same gender.

Lay: Stephen Ministers are trained and supervised lay volunteers, not professional counselors or therapists, pastors, or physicians. Stephen Ministers are not authorized to give legal, medical, financial, or any other advice, but Bible-based encouragement.

Christian: Stephen Ministers are Christians who care in the name of Christ. They are willing to talk about spiritual issues but won't force them

Care: Stephen Ministers care by listening, supporting, encouraging, praying, being dependable and trustworthy and maintaining confidentiality in their caregiving.

[Confidentiality](#)

Stephen Ministers keep personal information confidential. Therefore, you can feel free to share with your Stephen Minister without worrying that everyone else will know about it. There are rare occasions when a Stephen Minister must share confidential information in order to save a life. Those occasions are suicide, homicide, or abuse.

[Small Group Peer Supervision](#)

Stephen Ministers meet twice a month in small groups to give and receive peer supervision, which is necessary to help them provide quality care and grow as caregivers. In supervision, Stephen Ministers talk about their caring relationships and their own feelings about caregiving. They may share small amounts of information about their care receivers, but they never tell the care receiver's name and they do not share

information that would reveal the care receiver's identity. Stephen Ministers may also receive individual supervision from a Stephen Leader or pastor, but the same rules apply.



Professional Consultation

On rare occasions, a Stephen Minister, in consultation with a Stephen Leader or pastor, may decide that the best way to care for a care receiver is to consult with a mental health professional. In such cases, confidentiality is strictly maintained.

Referral to Professional

Some care receivers end up needing professional care. In such a case, a Stephen Minister or Stephen Leader will inform the care receiver and help him or her obtain the care he or she needs. That may mean the caring relationship with the Stephen Minister will be interrupted or even have to end. When a care receiver needs professional care, the relationship with the Stephen Minister may only continue after the care receiver has met with the professional and the professional has given permission for the Stephen Ministry relationship to continue.

Miscellaneous

When you are receiving ministry from a Stephen Minister, it is important to honor the commitment you have made to meet with your Stephen Minister, and to take an active role. Stephen Ministry works best when you and your Stephen Minister develop a good relationship based on mutual trust, honesty and respect.

Seaside United Methodist Church cannot guarantee any results from Stephen Ministry. There may be some risks associated with

receiving care. For example, you may discover things about yourself or experience memories that are uncomfortable. If you are discussing a traumatic event with your Stephen Minister, sometimes the feelings get more intense.

You have the right to terminate your relationship with your Stephen Minister at any time. In that event, the Pastoral Care Ministries staff is willing to help you locate alternative sources of help.

Contact Us

Stephen Ministry

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[Click to see videos about Stephen Ministry on their official video site.](#)



Stephen Ministry Team for 2014



The 2014 Stephen Ministry Class, with teachers, Rev. Mary Jane Wilson-Parsons and Dr. Dina Braddy