

# Stephen Ministry

## At Open Door Presbyterian Church

Stephen Ministry provides confidential, one-to-one Christian care to individuals facing divorce, illness, job loss, loneliness, relocation, and other life difficulties. Our Stephen Ministers are laypersons who've received 50 hours of training, covering foundational topics such as listening, feelings, assertiveness, and providing Christian care—as well as specialized topics such as ministering to the divorced, hospitalized, and bereaved.

### WHAT DO STEPHEN MINISTERS DO?

- Meet with their assigned care receiver on a regular basis.
- Provide care, support, and encouragement for the care receiver.
- Listen and accept using a Christ-centered model.
- Assist the care receiver in processing thoughts and feelings.
- Pray with and for the care receiver, keeping God in the forefront.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries and confidentiality.
- Participate in regular, confidential peer group supervision to ensure the highest quality of care.
- Refer to a mental health professional or other care ministry when appropriate.

If you are facing difficulties in life, open your heart to God's love and grace through another person. Stephen Ministry offers the gift of a confidential relationship with someone who will listen to you and provide you with care and encouragement—and all the while, Christ will work in you both, sharing His love and peace.

Our Stephen Ministers are ready to care for you!

### MEET OUR NEW STEPHEN MINISTERS

We asked our new Stephen Ministers these three questions:

1. How long have you attended Open Door?
2. What drew you to become a Stephen Minister?
3. What do you hope for people receiving care through Stephen Ministry?



#### Anny

1. Three years.
2. I want to be the kind of caring friend to someone else that I wish I would have had walking beside me during difficult times in my life.
3. I hope that the people receiving care will know and trust that they do not have to face their situation alone.

#### Sharon

1. Six years.
2. This ministry is a perfect fit for me because I can utilize my background as a social worker and my gifts of mercy, faith, and exhortation.
3. I want those I care for to know they are not alone—that God loves them and desires to carry and lift them up through their struggles, bringing hope and healing.

#### Minnie

1. Two years.
2. During the new member class, I learned about Stephen Ministry and was instantly drawn to it.
3. I hope that God works through me to give care to people and that they will be able to see just how important each of them is. God provides!

#### David

1. Two-plus years.
2. Ever since I saw the first Stephen Ministry video, I've felt like this was where God was leading me to serve. Plus, I figured the training could help with my own walk with God.
3. I hope that people receiving care (along with myself) will just rely on Jesus.

#### Tim

1. Six years.
2. I knew God wanted me to serve somewhere, but I wasn't sure where. Later, I sensed God calling me to listen to and encourage people in Spirit, truth, and love, which led me to Stephen Ministry.
3. I'd like to help people move beyond the status quo and claim daily victories in Jesus Christ.

#### Jen

1. Seven years.
2. I felt a calling to serve at ODPC after I saw a video presentation about Stephen Ministry. I knew it was the right fit for me and my gifts.
3. I want hurting people to feel whole again.

#### Kil-Jae

1. Ten years.
2. The ministry's mission to care for one another.
3. I want to help people find peace and know they are loved by their Christian brothers and sisters.

#### Sharon

1. Eleven months.
2. I heard a Stephen Ministry announcement on Sunday, and God used it to shout out to me loud and clear. I had been looking to serve God in a way that would use my life experiences and would help others. I found a fit in Stephen Ministry.
3. Stephen Ministry is a ministry of presence. I hope that care receivers will see that it is not so much the Stephen Minister who helps them through difficult times—rather, it is God.

This article originally appeared in the December 2012 edition of the *Threshold* newsletter of Open Door Presbyterian Church in Herndon, Virginia. Reprinted with permission.