

## **What is the Stephen Ministry?**

- ☆ It is a one-to-one ministry by trained, caring lay people.
- ☆ It is a long-term helping relationship focusing on the unique needs of each person.
- ☆ It is a commitment to caring and supporting one another, to build a Christ-centered, sharing community.
- ☆ It is a meaningful way for our church to more fully use our talents in sharing one another's burdens and joys.
- ☆ It is a response to Christ's instruction... "to love one another as I have loved you."
- ☆ It is a religious and educational system of training and organization, which is working in many congregations throughout the country.
- ☆ It is a ministry named after St. Stephen, the first deacon in the early church, commissioned by the apostles to care for the community's needs.

## **Whose needs will the Stephen Ministry address?**

- ♥ People who are hospitalized, shut in, or institutionalized.
- ♥ People who are lonely or depressed.
- ♥ People who are separated or in the process of divorce.
- ♥ People experiencing the birth of a child.
- ♥ People who are dying, as well as the families of those who are terminally ill.
- ♥ People experiencing job crisis or financial setbacks.

♥ People and families of those who are in trouble with the law.

♥ People who are struggling with their faith with God.

...and many more

### **How are Stephen Ministers prepared for ministry?**

† A Stephen Ministry training program prepares interested men and women to become Stephen Ministers, equipping them to care for the many needs in our congregation.

† Their 50 hours of training includes topics such as: feelings, listening  
assertiveness training  
confidentiality  
crisis theory and intervention  
telecare,  
use of prayer, the Bible and other Christian resources  
being professional  
other specialized “needs” topics on grief, divorce, suicide, stress, depression, older persons, hospitalization, etc.

† Following training, each Stephen Minister is commissioned by our church into active, caring ministries.

† The Stephen Minister works in continual consultation with our clergy and receives on-going education in the helping ministry.

### **A Stephen Minister is...**

- † A caring Christian—desiring to offer his/her support to others in time of need.
- † A sharing Christian—bringing who he/she is to each helping relationship, as a partner in another's life experiences.
- † A trained Christian—having developed his/her helping skills through intensive course work.
- † A dedicated Christian commissioned by our congregation to confidential, in-depth caring.
- † A lay person, man or woman, who will develop his/her gifts for bringing Christ's healing love to people who are experiencing stresses in life.

### **A Stephen Minister is not...**

- ✗ A professional counselor or psychologist.
- ✗ A social worker providing physical services.
- ✗ An expert in law, finance, church doctrine, etc.
- ✗ A brief, superficial visitor, "touching base" with people now and then.

### **The Stephen Ministry at Work in Divinity Lutheran Church**

### **We learn about Someone's Need.**

- ✧ A pastor is contacted.
- ✧ A church member calls.
- ✧ A church staff person hears of a need.

### **We Respond.**

- ✧ An initial contact is made by the clergy or the Stephen Ministry Coordinator.
- ✧ A referral is made to a Stephen Minister.

### **Care Begins.**

- ✧ A telephone call is made.
- ✧ An initial personal visit occurs.
- ✧ Regular weekly visits continue as long as a need exists, during which the care giver:
  - ✓ listens

- ✓ prays with and for the person in need.
- ✓ offers resources/referrals as needed.
- ✓ offers Christian love and support.
- ✓ trust is built.

**God's Love Heals -  
Wholeness is Restored.**

## **Divinity Lutheran Church**

Stephen Ministry is a commitment to caring and supporting one another through a confidential one-to-one ministry by trained, caring parishioners.

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