



**Stephen Ministry** is an international non-denominational Christian ministry providing care for the needs of people like you.

**Are you in need of:**

- Someone who cares?
- Someone who encourages?
- Someone who listens?
- Someone who is trustworthy?



**Purpose of Ministry**

The purpose of this ministry is to provide trained, Christian caregivers to persons in our congregation and community who are experiencing problems or difficulties in their lives.

Stephen Ministry is a confidential ministry. Our trained Stephen Ministers are paired, one-to-one, with a person (care receiver) of the same gender who has indicated a need for such a caregiver.

Stephen Ministers and their care receivers meet on a regular, mutually agreed basis, usually about an hour a week. Stephen Ministers provide support and encouragement to their care receivers using their training, “spiritual tools” (e.g., prayer, Scripture), and faith in Jesus Christ as the “Cure Giver” to help the person cope with the difficulties they may be experiencing.

**What is a Stephen Minister?**

A Stephen Minister is:

- A listener
- Dependable
- Christ centered

**Stephen Ministers care for those who are:**

- Hospitalized / recently discharged
- Terminally ill
- New to the community
- Grieving
- Shut-in
- Experiencing a job crisis or financial difficulties
- Experiencing a loss due to aging
- Disabled
- Needing the support of a friend
- Facing a life transition
- Coping with divorce
- Expecting or adopting a child
- Struggling with their faith in God

*Stephen Ministers come alongside you and provide comfort and support for as long as we are needed.*

**How does the referrals process work?**

- A person—you, a relative, or a friend—is in need of Christian care.
- The Pastor or a Stephen Minister learns about this need from you.
- The Referrals Coordinator meets with the person to discuss Stephen Ministry.

- With the person's permission, the Referrals Coordinator assigns a Stephen Minister to meet on a regular basis with the person.
- The Stephen Minister continues to provide distinctively Christian care for the person with strict confidentiality until the person is ready for closure.

**Interested in becoming a Stephen Minister?**

An initial 50 hours of formal classroom instruction using materials provided by Stephen Ministries is provided to members of a congregation that is enrolled in the Stephen Series. Following this training, Stephen Ministers are formally commissioned by their church to provide care. In addition, monthly Continuing Education/Supervision sessions are held to provide additional support and training to Stephen Ministers.

Please continue to check this website for future training information.

Additional information on Stephen Ministry can be obtained online at <http://www.stephenministries.org>

**Stephen Ministry at SUMC**

Since the commissioning of the first class in 2004 and combining Avon and Simsbury, our trained Stephen Ministers have provided distinctively Christian care for 70 people (at SUMC, Avon UMC, and in the community). Since the beginning of the ministry, more than 3500 hours have been spent visiting with and ministering to care receivers!

At the present time we have 20 trained Stephen Ministers and Stephen Leaders, and 2 very involved pastors at SUMC.

Stephen Ministers and Leaders attend Supervision/Continuing Education sessions on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 7:00 pm in the Annex.

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**For More Information**

Would you like more information about Stephen Ministry? Need a Stephen Minister or know someone who does? [Click here to send an email](#). Please be assured that your request will only be viewed by the Stephen Ministry Referral Coordinator. Be sure to include either your phone number or your email address.

Alternately, you may call the church office at (860) 651-3356 and ask to speak to a pastor.