

STEPHEN MINISTER TRAINING

Stories of Transformation and Growth

Stephen Ministers share about the personal and spiritual growth they gained through their Stephen Minister training.



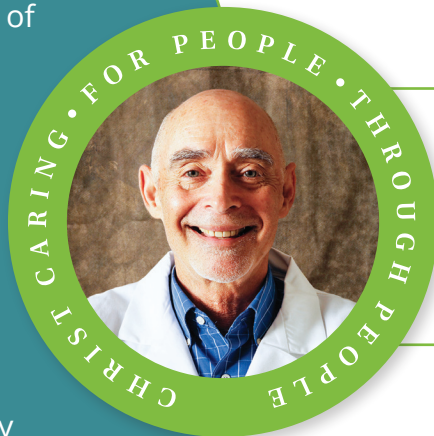


STEPHEN MINISTER TRAINING

As a physician, I've been taking care of people for decades. So I went into Stephen Minister training wondering, *Am I really going to learn from this?* The answer was yes!

This training has equipped me to experience the joy of being right where Jesus is working. It's one thing to tell others who Jesus is, but when you're caring for somebody who's hurting, you truly show Christ in action.

Serving as a Stephen Minister revitalizes my spiritual life every day. The training helped me improve my caring skills, and putting them into action is truly rewarding. I'm as busy as anybody, but I've found the time for Stephen Ministry—and I'm glad I did.



Bill

PHYSICIAN

Houston, Texas

“The benefits of Stephen Ministry training—especially learning how to help people understand Jesus in their hearts, not just their heads—are wonderful. You wouldn’t want to miss that.”



Shola

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

Greensboro, North Carolina



"I'm proud to tell people I'm part of Stephen Ministry. It's changed me so much for the better, and I'm really thankful for that."

After serving in ministry for years, I thought I knew a lot about what Jesus asks us to do. But my Stephen Minister training showed me more clearly than ever what caring really means.

Now I go beyond the smiles on the surface and really listen when people talk. I pause, think about what the other person may be holding onto inside, and then show genuine love.

Before the training, my children complained that I didn't listen; now, they see a real difference in me. I remember my daughter said once, "Mom, are you okay?" I asked, "Why?" She said, "I've been talking for the past ten minutes, and you haven't interrupted me!"



STEPHEN MINISTER TRAINING

Becoming a Stephen Minister was the best training I've ever experienced. It did a great job of building my confidence and equipping me to better care for others.

The biggest lesson I learned was the importance of listening—and it's helped me not only with my care receiver, but also with my husband and three kids. All the distractions we have today can get in the way of really having meaningful conversations, but Stephen Minister training has helped me to stop, listen, ask follow-up questions, and be more emotionally available.

Above all, I learned that God is the one who brings healing. I'm there to walk with my care receiver, listen, and be on the journey with her.



Abby

STAY-AT-HOME MOM

Ankeny, Iowa

"Whoever you are or whatever experiences you bring, you can learn valuable caring skills through Stephen Minister training."



Brad

MACHINIST

Fort Smith, Arkansas



"If someone asked me to go fishing a couple hours every week, I'd be there. So I figured I could make that kind of time to serve Christ."

At first, when people at church told me I'd make a great Stephen Minister, I thought they had the wrong guy. I couldn't see myself as a caregiver. But I thought about how much I've received from others, and I decided it was time for me to give something back.

The training experience was great—in fact, after it was done, I wanted to go through it again—and the results have been incredible. I interact better with my coworkers, and I've made a 180-degree turn in how I relate to family and friends. People have even told me, "Brad, you've really changed." I'm following Christ in a new way now; it's been a real blessing.



STEPHEN MINISTER TRAINING

I didn't know what to expect from Stephen Minister training, but I liked it a lot. Each class built on the one before it, with a lot of variety in the teaching methods. I really enjoyed the small group activities because they gave me the opportunity to practice skills and get to know the others in the class.

The training helped me mature in many ways. It not only taught me how to be a Stephen Minister, but also helped with my family relationships and my clients at work. I used to be the kind of person who rushed to try and solve people's problems, but now I'm much more comfortable with silent moments, following the other person's lead, and listening.



Tasuku

INSURANCE AGENT

Tokyo, Japan

“Stephen Minister training helped me understand how listening is more than just hearing the words someone says—it’s paying attention to their heart.”



Janet

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Brentwood, Tennessee



“Stephen Minister training really prepared me to be an effective caregiver. When I sat down with my first care receiver, I was so grateful for all I’d learned.”

My favorite part of Stephen Minister training was the camaraderie that developed in our group. We formed a deep bond and a rich fellowship—it was the highlight of my week to be with these wonderful people. Some of my best friends now are the Stephen Ministers with whom I went through training.

The training has also helped in my job. I supervise a lot of people and was the person who always had the answer or rushed in to fix a problem. Stephen Minister training has helped me slow down, listen to the people I supervise, ask good questions, and help them come up with a solution. That’s been really valuable.



STEPHEN MINISTER TRAINING

Stephen Ministry is one of the best things I've done with my life. I've grown so much in my faith, and I'm closer to the Lord now than I have ever been. God is working in me and through me to help others in this ministry, and that has made life so much more fulfilling.

Thanks to Stephen Minister training, I know I've changed for the better. I'm more open, ready to listen to and serve others. Plus, I'm seeing new ways to talk to people, be present with them, and care in all my relationships. It's just been a great experience—and I plan to keep on doing it!



Sharon

RETIRED FLORAL DESIGNER

Seal Beach, California

“Stephen Ministry changed my perspective. Now I’m so much better able to recognize how to care for people who are hurting.”



Brandon

CHEF

Oostburg, Wisconsin



“When I first heard about Stephen Ministry, it really spoke to me. Visiting my care receiver is a way for me to do the kind of one-to-one caregiving Jesus did.”

I really appreciated how interactive Stephen Minister training is. The skill practices and other exercises helped me gain knowledge and skills I wouldn't have gotten by just reading a book or hearing a lecture.

Professionally, I've grown quite a bit through my Stephen Minister training. Chefs are often known for being brutally honest and sometimes a little too direct. But I've learned that if I take a moment and step back—the plate can wait just a second—being honest and caring brings benefits I never could have imagined. It's helped me develop my staff and create a safe, caring environment where people feel more comfortable.



STEPHEN MINISTER TRAINING

Stephen Minister training helped me to make God a priority in my life, to dedicate myself to helping build God's kingdom here on Earth.

I've learned how to listen to people and empathize with them. I've learned that I don't have to fix anybody—I can just be present with them and trust God to do the rest. It's made me a better teacher, brother, friend, and person.

If you want to connect with others in a more authentic, Christ-like way, Stephen Minister training is for you. It's an opportunity to make a real difference in people's lives—to help them experience the life that God wants us to have.



Charles

TEACHER

New York, New York

"Stephen Ministry has taught me the power of presence—to just be there for someone. The experience has changed my life forever."



Ardeena

SOCIAL WORKER

Alberta, Canada



“I’ve learned to trust that God will do what he needs to do. As a Stephen Minister, I’m there to care—knowing God is the one who does the true healing.”

I’ve gained many good caring skills in my career, but I really appreciate how my Stephen Minister training gave me a whole new set of skills for spiritual caregiving.

This training has helped me put my caring relationships, both professionally and as a Stephen Minister, into God’s hands. When I don’t know what to say, I know I can turn to God for the right words. It’s amazing.

In the past, I’ve gone through my own crises without anyone to walk through them with me—and that was really hard. That’s why I became a Stephen Minister. The training is helping me help other people, and that makes it such a joy to be a part of this ministry.



STEPHEN MINISTER TRAINING

I was at a point in life where I was wondering, “Lord, where can you use me?” Then, one day at church, I saw a Stephen Ministry table in the lobby. It was perfect timing, like God was pointing me in that direction.

My Stephen Minister training taught me real caring skills I could use and apply in everyday life. I’d never encountered teaching that was so practical, spiritual, and transformative. I could feel the Holy Spirit changing me, helping me grow and learn.

All my life I’ve tended to give advice and try to fix other people’s problems. This training showed me it’s more about listening—and allowing God to work.



Gigi

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Durango, Colorado

“I’m so grateful for this remarkable training. It’s given me the information and skills I need to more effectively share Christ’s love with the world.”



Joseph

FINANCIAL ANALYST

Houston, Texas



"I've learned how to let go and lift things up to the Lord—to trust God instead of trying to control everything myself."

Stephen Minister training made me a better person—it transformed every aspect of my life and relationships. My manager at work even noticed the change. One day she said, "You've been handling things especially well with people in the office lately. I really appreciate that."

With today's technology, it's easy to feel cut off from the world, to feel like no one understands our needs. But Stephen Ministry helps us see we're not alone. While we all go through difficult things in life, we can use those experiences to help others.

I've volunteered for a lot of things, but Stephen Ministry is something special. It's added a huge sense of fulfillment to my life.



What Is a Stephen Minister?

A Stephen Minister is a layperson trained in his or her congregation to provide high-quality, one-to-one, Christ-centered care to a person experiencing a life crisis.

Since 1975, over 600,000 people from all walks of life have been trained as Stephen Ministers. These individuals, in turn, have brought God's healing love to millions of people going through difficult times in life.

Stephen Ministers are drawn to this ministry by the desire to make a difference during a time of great need in someone's life. What surprises many of them is the tremendous personal and spiritual growth they experience.

Stephen Ministers typically have one care receiver at a time and meet with that person once a week for about an hour. Caring relationships last for as long as people need them.





How Are Stephen Ministers Trained?

Stephen Ministers are trained by their congregation's Stephen Leaders—the clergy, church staff, and lay leaders who attend a Leader's Training Course and oversee the ministry. Stephen Minister training topics include listening, feelings, boundaries, assertiveness, distinctively Christian care, and caring in specific situations such as grief, divorce, terminal illness, and more.

Stephen Minister training blends a variety of teaching methods—lecture, video, skill practice, and small- and large-group discussion—for an engaging and enriching experience. The training incorporates biblical principles and sound psychology to equip Stephen Ministers to provide a high level of care.

For additional stories and information about serving as a Stephen Minister, visit stephenministries.org/SM.



Stephen Minister training equips Stephen Ministers with caring skills and helps them develop a solid spiritual foundation for their caring through prayer and community.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

Over 12,000 congregations from more than 170 denominations worldwide are now using Stephen Ministry to equip and empower laypeople—Stephen Ministers—to provide one-to-one, Christ-centered care to hurting people in the congregation and community.



To learn more about Stephen Ministry and the difference Stephen Ministers are making in the lives of those they care for, visit stephenministries.org. You can also contact us for a free packet of information about this ministry.

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