



buzz

“I Can’t Be a Stephen Minister!”

Maybe you haven’t said this aloud in a crowd, but you may have spoken it to yourself in a mirror—or at least thought it. Any time a new challenge shows up, the “I can’t” phrase is bound to be nearby.

You are aware of our congregation’s Stephen Ministry, sense you have the gifts, the commitment, and the desire to be a Stephen Minister, and you even may have felt God’s tap on your shoulder. But you still aren’t sure.

What are some of the reasons you’ve given yourself for not becoming a Stephen Minister? The following are some likely candidates:

“I’m not qualified to be a Stephen Minister.”

What qualifications are needed to become a Stephen Minister? You need to be a caring person who is willing to learn, grow and serve. You must be willing and able to maintain confidentiality. You need to make a commitment to training, ministry and supervision.

Stephen Leaders will equip you with training, support, encouragement, care and prayers.

“I don’t know what to say or do in a ministry situation.”

Stephen Ministry training is thorough and practical. It includes listening, dealing with feelings, assertiveness, confidentiality, maintaining boundaries, how to begin and end caring relationships, and how to care for people who are grieving, dying, aging, divorcing, and experiencing other life crises. The goal of training is to prepare Stephen Ministers for whatever they might encounter when working with care receivers. Through reading, lecture, questions and answers, and skill practice you will learn what you need to know to succeed as a Stephen Minister. After being assigned a care receiver, Stephen Ministers participate in

continuing education and Peer Supervision Group sessions. This is where they care for and support one another, and sharpen their caregiving skills.

“I have problems in my own life. How can I help other people with their problems?”

Some problems are so big that you need to address your own needs and wait until later to be a Stephen Minister. After you have worked through your own problems, however, your experience of finding God’s help and care in your struggles is some of the best preparation you’ll ever receive for caring for others during their tough times. Stephen Ministers’ job is to walk beside another person as that person works through his or her struggles. The Stephen Minister brings stability, prayer, and Christ’s love to the care receivers.

“I don’t have enough time to be a Stephen Minister.”

There’s a way in which this is true for everyone—time is a precious commodity. As a matter of fact, time is so precious that it only makes sense to use it on activities that make a real difference—in others’ lives as well as in your own life. When you make the commitment to be a Stephen Minister, you will find the hours you need to devote to it. Stephen Ministry becomes a priority among the many activities you’re involved in. The time investment is significant, but so is the contribution you will be making to building God’s kingdom.

Feel free to converse with our current Stephen Ministers: Helen Bowman, Rachel Brenneman, Marge Gingerich, Cynthia Kauffmann, Kay Miller, Anita Myers and Gary Shetler, who can share their personal stories with you—stories of how God has poured blessings into their lives through their service as Stephen Ministers. In another year, one of these blessing stories may be your own.

— The WMC Stephen Leader Team



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The *Waterford Buzz* is normally published weekly for members of Waterford Mennonite Church. Items for inclusion should be sent to the editor by 5 p.m. Monday preceding publication.

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Thank You

Hello Waterford! A few weeks ago, I shared about a marathon that my best friend Jonathon and I were running in support of SEMILLA Latin American Anabaptist Biblical Seminary in Guatemala. Thank you to all who donated! The marathon was an amazing success! If you would still like to donate the link is here: <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E230670&id=1> or you can send a check to:

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— Félix Pérez Diener

Thank You

Thank you Church friends for your many, many thoughts, prayers and cards when my Connie passed away. Thank you too, for the beautiful flower arrangement. I appreciate your love and support. Blessings to you.

In Christ, Joan Walsh

Thank you for your generous giving so far this year. Four months into the fiscal year, giving toward the Waterford budget totaled \$231,523 at the end of August. That compares to \$275,763 at the same time a year ago. The YTD expense budget at the end of August is \$280,611.

