

Media Fact Sheet

Stephen Ministries St. Louis

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History: Stephen Ministry began in 1975 when the Rev. Kenneth C. Haugk, Ph.D., a pastor and clinical psychologist, trained nine laypersons at his congregation in St. Louis to be *Stephen Ministers*. They assisted him in providing distinctively Christian care to members of the congregation and community. These trained caregivers were so enthused about their ministry, they encouraged Dr. Haugk to offer *Stephen Ministry* to more congregations.

Over the next few years, Dr. Haugk traveled to congregations and trained Stephen Ministers. This quickly proved to be inefficient, since he could visit only a limited number of congregations, and these congregations were then dependent on him to train additional caregivers. There also was little organizational structure to supervise Stephen Ministers after they were trained. So in 1978 Dr. Haugk held the first Stephen Series Leader's Training Course and trained the first *Stephen Leaders*—representatives of various churches who then returned home to train and supervise their congregation's Stephen Ministers. Since that time Stephen Ministries St. Louis has specialized in "equipping the equippers" through the Stephen Series ministry system.

Definition of the Stephen Series: The Stephen Series is a complete system for training and organizing lay people to provide one-to-one Christian care to hurting people in and around your congregation.

The Organization: Stephen Ministries St. Louis is a not-for-profit, transdenominational, religious and educational organization founded in 1975. The St. Louis-based staff of 45 includes five pastors. Dr. Haugk, who is also a mental health professional, serves as the executive director.

The Name: The name *Stephen* comes from St. Stephen, who was the first layperson commissioned by the Apostles to provide caring ministry to those in need (Acts 6).

Stephen Ministry Statistics

These statistics are updated annually on September 1. If these figures are more than a year old, up-to-date statistics can be obtained by contacting Stephen Ministries St. Louis (314-428-2600) or by accessing www.stephenministries.org on the World Wide Web.

Congregations: More than 10,000 congregations are enrolled in the Stephen Series. These congregations represent more than 150 different Christian denominations and come from all 50 states, 10 Canadian provinces, and 21 other countries.

People: More than 50,000 individuals (pastors, church staff, and laypersons) have been trained as Stephen Leaders at Leader's Training Courses. These Stephen Leaders have returned to their congregations to train more than 450,000 laypersons to be Stephen Ministers. It is estimated that since 1975 Stephen Ministers have provided distinctively Christian care to more than a million people through formalized one-to-one caring relationships and have used their caregiving skills to touch the lives of millions of others in an informal way.

The Stephen Series Logo: The logo Stephen Ministry congregations use consists of a cross and circle, together with a broken person and a whole person. The broken person stands



behind the cross, symbolizing the brokenness in our lives as a result of our sin. The whole person stands in front of the cross because it is through the cross of Jesus that we again are made whole. The circle symbolizes both the wholeness we receive through Christ and God's unending love for us.

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How the Stephen Series Works: Pastors, church staff, and lay leaders from a congregation attend a seven-day Leader's Training Course, taught by the Stephen Ministries St. Louis faculty, to learn how to implement and direct the Stephen Series in their congregations. These trained *Stephen Leaders* then return to their congregations to set up and administer a Stephen Ministry program.

Stephen Leaders recruit and select laypeople from the congregation to serve as Stephen Ministers and provide them with 50 hours of training in Christian caregiving. Some of the training topics include listening, feelings, assertiveness, confidentiality, and ministering to people in specific situations such as divorce, terminal illness, grief, and childbirth. Stephen Ministers also are trained to recognize when a care receiver's needs go beyond the care a Stephen Minister can provide and where and how to refer the care receiver for additional care.

Upon completion of the training, these lay persons are commissioned as *Stephen Ministers*. Stephen Leaders then link each Stephen Minister with a *care receiver*—a member of the congregation or community who is in need of quality Christian care. A Stephen Minister normally is assigned to only one care receiver at a time and meets with the care receiver for an average of about one hour each week.

Stephen Ministers also meet twice monthly for peer supervision and continuing education. Stephen Ministers initially commit to two years of service, but after those years many recommit to serve additional years.

Terminology: The organization, based in St. Louis, is *Stephen Ministries St. Louis*. The lay caregiving ministry system congregations implement is the *Stephen Series*. Once the Stephen Series is implemented in a congregation, it is usually called *Stephen Ministry*. The pastors and laypersons trained at a one-week Leader's Training Course (LTC) to direct Stephen Ministry in their congregations are called *Stephen Leaders*. Those who are trained to provide one-to-one care to those in need are called *Stephen Ministers*. Those who receive the care of Stephen Ministers are their *care receivers*.

Important to Note

- Stephen Ministers are not counselors. They are trained Christian caregivers. Their role is to listen and to care—not to counsel or advise. Please do not refer to Stephen Ministers as counselors.
- Stephen Ministry is a supervised ministry. Stephen Ministers engage in twice-monthly supervision to ensure that they are providing the best quality Christian care for their care receivers.
- Stephen Ministry is a confidential ministry. What a care receiver tells a Stephen Minister remains confidential. Even in supervision, the names of care receivers and specific details are never discussed.
- Stephen Ministers do not make cold calls. They are assigned only to people who agree to receive the care of a Stephen Minister.

Other Ministry Systems and Resources

Stephen Ministries St. Louis offers a number of ministry systems and resources to enhance ministry in congregations. Besides the Stephen Series, Stephen Ministries offers the ChristCare® Series—a complete system that provides congregations with the training, resources, and ongoing support they need to direct and grow a ministry of Christ-centered, life-transforming small groups.

Stephen Ministries also offers a **Breakthrough Leadership Conference** to equip pastors and lay leaders to provide strong Christian leadership in their workplace, church, community, and elsewhere in life.

In addition, Stephen Ministries offers a number of other ministry resources:

- *Christian Caregiving—a Way of Life*
- *Caring Evangelism: How to Live and Share Christ's Love*
- *Antagonists in the Church: How to Identify and Deal with Destructive Conflict*
- *Caring for Inactive Members: How to Make God's House a Home*
- *Discovering God's Vision for Your Life: You and Your Spiritual Gifts*
- *Journeying through Grief*
- *Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart: How to Relate to Those Who Are Suffering*