

About the Stephen Ministry at Blessed Trinity Parish in Cleveland

In August 2018 the parish selected and sponsored the training of four lay leaders for a one-week Leader's Training Course, taught by the Stephen Ministries St. Louis professional faculty. They learned how to implement the Stephen Series for the parish. Since then, these Stephen Leaders initiated and directed the Stephen Ministry:

1. Create the vision statement for the parish ministry
2. Launch an awareness campaign to inform the congregation of the mission and plans
3. Interview and qualify applicants who are called to the ministry
4. Train Stephen Minister candidates and initiate continuing education
5. Interview and qualify potential care receivers and assign them to the commissioned Stephen Ministers.

Stephen Minister training topics include listening, recognizing feelings, being assertive, maintaining absolute confidentiality, and ministering to people in specific crisis such as divorce, terminal illness, grief, job loss, fear of deportation, and childbirth, to name a few. Care is not provided to people who have severe depression or threaten harm to themselves or others. Stephen Ministers also are trained to recognize when a care receiver's needs go beyond the care that a Stephen Minister can provide, and how to refer the care receiver for professional care.

At the end of the training, the Stephen Ministers are commissioned by the congregation. The Stephen Leader Referrals Coordinator then links each Stephen Minister with a care receiver—a person in need of one-to-one Christian care. Assignments are confidential; who is receiving care and who is assigned is known only by the Referrals Coordinator making the assignments and our pastor. Our Stephen Ministers are assigned to only one care receiver at a time and meet with that person for about an hour each week.

Stephen Ministers also meet monthly for peer support and continuing education. In these meetings, a process of reporting and mutual aid is conducted to maintain visibility and discuss challenges in the weekly caregiving meetings. Absolute confidentiality is maintained in these meetings by minimizing detail that could infer who was receiving care.

Caregiving continues until the needs of the care receiver have been met, or referred to professional care.

Stephen Leaders:

Team Coordinator	Education Coordinator	Referrals Coordinator	Awareness and Peer Group Coordinator
Margie Pavone	Bob Turton	Hannah McMonagle	Bob McRae

Stephen Minister candidates:

Duane Abarca	Bob Farmerie	Laura Kuhn
Janet Abarca	Jan Farmerie	Carol Masek
Kathy Allen	Heather Forsythe	Ron Ruble
Al Delattre	Toni House	Teri Thayer