



The primary purpose of the Gulf Coast Stephen Ministry Network is to enable area Stephen Series Enrolled Congregations to expand and strengthen their skills through Network workshops by sharing ideas, exchanging views, thereby nurturing and enhancing their Stephen Ministry Programs

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Ministering To The Hospitalized Featured Article

HOSPITAL VISITATION PROGRAM MIDDLEBROOK PIKE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH KNOXVILLE, TN

About three years ago, our assistant minister asked if some of the Stephen Ministers from our first class would be willing to help with visiting members who are in the hospital. Nine ministers from that class plus the two leaders signed up to be a part of this ministry. A training session was held to further prepare us and we received badges that had our name, church, and "Visiting Minister" on them to wear when at the hospital. One person is assigned to be on duty each week and calls one of the ministers on Monday morning for referrals. After our second class graduated, seven more ministers joined the rotation. The pastors report that this service has been extremely helpful to them, assuring that hospitalized members receive care from a representative of the church, even when the pastors are out of town.

The program is easy to administer. All it takes is one person to do the scheduling and send a reminder a couple of days before the minister's duty week. This can all be done by e-mail. After each hospital visit, the visiting minister sends a short report via e-mail to the pastors giving information about the patient's condition and whether a follow-up visit is needed. Of course, the pastors continue to make visits to those who are facing serious surgeries or who are in critical condition.

Our group has also been called on to make visits to a member who had a lengthy recovery time at home and to assist the families of two members who were in hospice care.

Caregiving Care Quote

When we honestly ask ourselves which persons in our lives mean the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our

wounds with a warm and tender hand. The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing,

not curing, not healing, and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is a friend who cares.

*Henri J.M. Nouwen, in
Out of Solitude*

Bulletin Inserts for Stephen Ministry

When "Pull Yourself Together" Doesn't Work!

You've heard it time and time again: "Pull yourself together. . . Cheer up. . . Tough it out. . . It's not that bad." Perhaps people have said it to you. Or perhaps you keep saying it to yourself. But it hasn't helped. You are still hurting. Things are coming apart, not coming together. Here's the good news: You don't have to go through your struggles alone. Help is available. Our Stephen Ministers are trained caregivers who will walk with you, listen to you, and provide confidential one-to-one care as you search through the pieces and find what is truly in your heart. To learn more about Stephen Ministry for yourself or someone you know, talk with one of our Stephen Ministry Leaders: *[insert names of Stephen Leaders]*. **Our Stephen Ministers are ready to care for you.**

Stressed? Discouraged? Lonely? Sad? Don't Suffer Alone. Help Is Available.

Sometimes we fall into a trap where we think it's a sign of weakness to ask for help. So when we're stressed, discouraged, lonely, or sad, we try to keep our struggles hidden and are reluctant to ask for help. However, that's not God's plan. Galatians 6:2 says, "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." God wants us to care for others--and allow others to care for us in our time of need.

If you're sad or struggling inside, **don't suffer alone**. Ask for help. We've got a team of Stephen Ministers who are ready to provide confidential one-to-one care, encouragement, and support to help you through a tough time. Find out more about Stephen Ministry by talking with one of our Stephen Leaders: *[insert names of Stephen Leaders]*. **Our Stephen Ministers are ready to bring God's love and care into your life.**

Caregiver Training: "Taking Care of Both Caregiver and Care Receiver"

Council on Aging of West Florida and Santa Rosa Medical Center are partnering to present

"Taking Care of Both Caregiver and Care Receiver."

The training session is free and the public is invited. Our Council on Aging of West Florida Caregiver Training Manual will also be provided at no cost to each attendee. The manual will be used as the curriculum for the session.

WHERE: Santa Rosa Medical Center Locklin Education Center
6002 Berryhill Road, Milton

WHEN: Thursday, July 28, 2011 12:30 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.

*****Reservations are requested to (850) 432-1475 by July 25.**

For more information, visit

www.coawfla.org,
call (850) 432-1475
or email kholt@coawfla.org.

Thank you for your support.

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www.facebook.com/coawfla | www.twitter.com/coawfla | www.youtube.com/coawfla



Stephen Ministers are the "After People". They are ready to come alongside you, your friends, neighbors, coworkers, or relatives – and provide comfort and support for as long after as needed.



Prayer Thought for the Day

I need a friend, Lord, someone who will just listen. Not someone who will try to fix me or attempt to solve my problems, but someone who will accept me for who I am. Not someone who will become anxious, suspicious, or frightened when I share the deepest feelings of my soul, but someone who will accept me. Not someone who will give chatty advice or scold or judge me, but someone who will quietly point me to you. I need someone to listen, Lord, someone like you.

John Gugel
[Cries of Faith, Songs of Hope:](#)
[Prayers for the Times of Our Lives](#)



Stephen Minister Training Classes

Several Stephen Ministry training classes are looking to form in the fall or early January at several locations. Many of our congregations enrolled in Stephen Ministry experience difficulty holding training classes having only one leader and not enough people interested initially in taking the class. An effective training class needs a minimum of 10 to 12 trainees. In 2010 three congregations joined forces to enroll a class of 10 Stephen Ministers. The class was team-taught with 6 leaders from the combined congregations. This class experienced a wealth of knowledge & life experiences from a wide array of seasoned Stephen Leaders in the Network.

Enrolled congregations are encouraged to open their classes to other enrolled congregations who would like to receive the training but unable because of sufficient leaders, applicants, or other resources. If you have someone interested in joining a class to become a Stephen Minister, Contact one of the following Leaders for details.

January 2012

Phil Peterson (Pensacola)
850-474-1648
pmpete1@cox.net

Late Fall 2011

Ken Gay (Destin)
850-582-2548
Ken100@cox.net

Late Fall 2011

Lisa Dixon (Gulf Breeze)
850-512-9300
lisadixon50@yahoo.com

ARTICLES:

Guidelines for submitting articles are found in the Sidebar on page 4 of this Newsletter.

Stephen Leaders Available to Team-Teach

Phil Peterson

Grace Lutheran Church
850-474-1648
pmpete1@cox.net

Nick Thorpe

St. Paul Catholic Church
850-484-4854
nick.maryt@cox.net

Ken Gay

Destin UMC
850-582-2548
Ken100@cox.net

Continuing Education programs being Considered - Input Needed!

Continuing Education topics being considered are: Divorce; Alzheimer's; Addictions; Job Loss/Financial Difficulties; Ministering to the Hospitalized.

If any of these topics speak to you, or you know of others that have met with great success in other venues please let the Steering Committee know. **(See sidebar on front page for list).**

One of the objectives is that we hold these Workshops in different

locations within the Gulf Coast Network geographical framework. The Committee is open to any continuing education topics beneficial for our faith walk together. Network Congregations willing to host a quarterly workshop are needed. Many congregations have professional people who put on programs that we might tap in to. Some congregations might just host rather than be responsible for the program - some may want

to do both. Just think of the possibilities. Our Network has great people & facilities. Together we can create an experience for our Stephen Ministers that is not only God – pleasing but extremely beneficial to the Care Receivers. ****Note:** Rev. Teresa Leifur (West Florida Regional Medical Center) has offered to host a workshop on “Ministering to the Hospitalized” at the Hospital Complex. More details to follow!



*Hurts
Hurts don't go away because you wish them away or reason them away. In fact, nothing you as a caregiver can do will miraculously remove the pain. That's God's terrain. So don't expect that you will be able to provide just what the person needs to make it all better. You have been called to fulfill a role that is much more attainable--walking with the person, sharing and being Christ's love and compassion. When you do that, you will be making a significant difference in the suffering person's life.*

Kenneth C. Haugk, in [Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart](#)

Stephen Ministry Network Serving the Gulf Coast

NEWSLETTERS:

Will be published in January, April, July & October.

ARTICLES:

Articles for submission need to be: 75-125 or 175-225 words

DEADLINES:

Deadlines for material will be the 15th of the month prior to publishing. i.e. Dec., Mar., June, Sept.

SUBMIT TO:

Phillip M. Peterson
Newsletter Editor
Phone 850-474-1648
E-mail pmpete1@cox.net



REMINDER: Deadline for submission of articles for the October Newsletter is September 15th!

Leader's Training Course Update

2012 Leader's Training Course Schedule:

Date	Location	Early Registration Deadline
January 8-14, 2012	Orlando FL	November 30, 2011
February 5-11, 2012	Anaheim, CA	December 28, 2011
April 15-21, 2012	St. Louis, MO	March 7, 2012
June 10-16, 2012	Orlando, FL	May 2, 2012
July 8-14, 2012	Dallas, TX	May 30, 2012
July 29 – Aug 4, 2012	Pittsburg, PA	June 20, 2012

For details on upcoming leader training courses and locations copy & paste the following link in your web browser and press enter.

<http://www.stephenministries.org/stephenministry/default.cfm/1015>

Stephen Ministry Resources - *Spiritual Growth through Spiritual Gifts* (See sidebar for website)

An exciting eight-session small group curriculum, in which group members--

- Grow** spiritually through Biblical Equipping
- Discover** their own spiritual gifts through multiple activities
- Identify** practical ways to use their gifts
- Experience** the power of community
- Find** ways to serve in mission, drawing on the group's collective gifts

[*Spiritual Growth through Spiritual Gifts*](#) allows small groups to help members discover and develop their spiritual gifts and then decide on ways that they can use those gifts--as individuals and as groups--to serve God and the church. Based on [*Discovering God's Vision for Your Life: You and Your Spiritual Gifts*](#), the resource developed by Dr. Haugk for use in congregations, *Spiritual Growth through Spiritual Gifts* offers eight

90-minute sessions that explore the biblical basis for spiritual gifts and God's purpose in giving them. Group members participate in numerous spiritual gifts discovery activities, including the *Haugk Spiritual Gifts Inventory*. In each session participants gain a deeper understanding of spiritual gifts through Biblical Equipping, prayer, and worship. Members build community as they share insights and personal discoveries. The group can then explore possibilities for using the group's gifts most effectively and meaningfully in missional service. [*Spiritual Growth through Spiritual Gifts*](#) leads to gift-based ministry, and the more people serve using their primary gifts, the more fulfilling and joyful their service can be. The format for *Spiritual Growth through Spiritual Gifts* includes:

- Spiritual Growth through Spiritual Gifts Group Leader Guide*, used by the group leader to guide the group through the eight sessions.
- Spiritual Growth through Spiritual Gifts Group Member Manual*, which group members use during meetings, and which contains additional readings to enrich the group's understanding of spiritual gifts.
- The Haugk Spiritual Gifts Inventory*, Parts One and Two, which provides sound, thorough, and thoughtful insight into the group members' and leader's spiritual gifts.

Spiritual Growth through Spiritual Gifts offers small groups a great way to build community and equip one another for missional service that they are uniquely gifted to provide.

www.stephenministries.org