



STEPHEN MINISTRY

*Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."
John 21:16b*

Summer 2017

Dear Riverside Friend,

Thank you for your interest in being a Stephen Minister! In this packet you will find a four-page application and a Stephen Minister job description. Following are the instructions.

1. All applications should be submitted by July 30. The sooner your application is submitted, the sooner an interview can be scheduled. If this date is a problem, please speak to a Stephen Leader.
2. All applications should be submitted to Babby Porter, Office Manager for Riverside. We prefer that you do not give it to a Stephen Leader or Pastor Dan. You have the following options to get your application to Babby. We recommend you put it in an envelope with her name on the outside for your own privacy if you drop it off.
 - Place in the "mailbox" on the side of the A/V booth in the church
 - Take to her office in the white house
 - Scan and email to office@rcovenant.org
 - Postal mail to Babby Porter/Riverside Covenant Church/1850 Woodland Avenue/West Lafayette, IN 47906
3. Once Babby has received your application, she will send you an email with additional information on the next steps and interview scheduling.
4. In the interview process, you will typically meet with one or two Stephen Leaders to discuss your application. Among the goals of this interview are to learn to know you better, address any questions or concerns you may have, communicate expectations, and for both you and the Stephen Leader team to begin our working relationship.

If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact us. Our group email is stephen@rcovenant.org.

God's grace and peace to you,

Riverside Covenant Stephen Leaders
Karen Hickman
Kevin Riggerbach
Rita Riggerbach

CONFIDENTIAL

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Home phone _____ Work phone _____

E-mail address _____

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6. Are you willing to commit to serve faithfully for a period of no less than two years? This includes:
- ▶ the initial 50 hours of training;
 - ▶ regular visits to your care receiver (weekly or a mutually agreed-upon frequency); and
 - ▶ twice-monthly Small Group Peer Supervision.

☐ Yes ☐ No

What changes would you need to make in your life in order to fulfill this commitment?

7. Describe briefly your relationship with Jesus Christ.

8. Please provide three references who are not members of this congregation.

a. Name _____
Address _____
Relationship _____
Phone number _____

b. Name _____
Address _____
Relationship _____
Phone number _____

c. Name _____
Address _____
Relationship _____
Phone number _____

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9. Have you ever trained and served as a Stephen Minister or Stephen Leader at another congregation?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please list where and when.

Please include the name and telephone number of a pastor and/or Stephen Leader there whom we can contact.

Name _____ Telephone Number (____) _____

10. Have you ever received treatment for any emotional or psychiatric problems?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, someone from the Stephen Leader Team will speak with you about this so that the team may better understand its significance in your life and ministry.

[Note: A great many caregivers have been made stronger in their caregiving ministry through the care they themselves have received, including care from mental health professionals. Your Stephen Leader Team affirms the work of mental health professionals, who have helped many individuals to experience growth and healing. Members of the Stephen Leader Team request this information because they want to be as fully informed as possible about their Stephen Ministers.]

11. Have you ever been charged with a crime?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, explain in detail, using additional paper as needed. Someone from the Stephen Leader Team will speak with you about this so that the team may better understand its significance in your life and ministry.

Please read and sign below.

The information I have provided in this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I agree to participate in Stephen Ministry training and in Small Group Peer Supervision and to function within the boundaries of Stephen Ministry as adopted by my congregation/organization. I give permission for the congregation/organization, if it deems necessary, to call my references, secure a police background check on me, and consult with the treating physician(s) or other mental health professionals regarding the nature of any treatment I have received for emotional or psychiatric problems.

Signature _____ Date _____

Thank you for completing this application.



Typically, you will meet with one or two Stephen Leaders for an interview and to go over your application. The goals of this interview are as follows:

- To learn more about you
- To address your questions
- To communicate the expectations
- To establish a relationship between you and the Stephen Leaders

Please indicate the best times you are available:

_____ Weekday mornings

_____ Weekday afternoons

_____ Weekday evenings

_____ Weekend days

_____ Weekend evenings

Stephen Minister Job Description

Stephen Ministers are congregation members who are recruited, selected, trained, and commissioned to provide one-to-one lay caring ministry to people in crisis or with other needs for care. They participate in Supervision Group twice a month. They initially commit to serve for two years including training and may renew their commitment.

► What Stephen Ministers Do

A defined cluster of activities make up a Stephen Minister's job description.

Pray

Stephen Ministers pray daily for their care receivers and strive to worship God always in word and deed. They reveal the love of God to those who most need to see it.

Care for the Care Receiver

Stephen Ministers are assigned to care receivers—people in crisis who need caring support. Stephen Ministers care for those in moderate difficulties. The Stephen Minister's care helps the care receiver resolve the difficulty and achieve growth.

Most Stephen Ministers meet once a week with their care receivers for about an hour at a time. They may also check in with the care receiver by telephone, particularly when the care receiver is going through a difficult time.

Stephen Ministers use special skills to care for their care receivers. Among the most important are the following:

Listening. Most care receivers need someone simply to listen—really listen—as they talk through their difficulties.

Dealing with feelings. Stephen Ministers reflect the care receiver's content, feelings, and ideas and ask open-ended questions to

help the care receiver recognize, express, and accept his or her feelings.

Sharing distinctively Christian caring resources. Stephen Ministers may share a prayer, a Bible verse or story, or other caring gestures that the care receiver would welcome.

Remaining process-oriented. Stephen Ministers do not try to fix the care receiver or his or her problems; they focus on the process of caregiving and rely on God to achieve results.

Relating assertively. Stephen Ministers respect both the needs of the care receiver and their own needs as well.

Maintaining boundaries. Stephen Ministers set appropriate boundaries in the caring relationship, helping the care receiver remain as independent as possible while being there for the care receiver as needed.

Recommending professional care when necessary. Stephen Ministers are not trained to care for those who are suicidal, severely depressed, abusive, or homicidal, or who are abusing drugs or alcohol. If Stephen Ministers recognize that their care receiver's needs exceed the care they are able to provide, they see that the care receiver receives professional care.

Maintain Confidentiality

Stephen Ministers understand that confidentiality is crucial in any caring relationship. The care receiver needs to know that what he or she says to the Stephen Minister will remain in confidence. Stephen Ministers maintain confidentiality and encourage other Stephen Ministers to do the same.

Help Identify People in Need of Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministers act as ministers of referral, helping to find people who would benefit from the care of a Stephen Minister.

Participate in Twice-Monthly Supervision and Continuing Education Sessions

Stephen Ministers participate faithfully in Small Group Peer Supervision and continuing education, coming prepared to every supervision session unless illness or emergency makes attendance impossible. Supervision provides Stephen Ministers with support, guidance, and accountability for their caring relationships. There are no unsupervised Stephen Ministers.

Help the Congregation Understand and Appreciate Stephen Ministry

Through their service, Stephen Ministers help the congregation appreciate Stephen Ministry and encourage members to become ministers of referral who help those in crisis receive the care they need.

► How the Congregation Supports the Stephen Minister

The Stephen Minister has responsibilities, and so does the congregation.

Training

Through its trained Stephen Leaders, the congregation supplies Stephen Ministers with 50 hours of training for this ministry before they are assigned a care receiver, and further supplies continuing education twice monthly for as long as the Stephen Ministers serve. The training is comprehensive, and Stephen Ministers can feel confident in their skills for this ministry.

Commissioning

The congregation formally commissions Stephen Ministers at one or more worship services. This allows the community to recognize their efforts, affirm and support

their ministry, and pray for them as they begin their caring ministry.

Supervision

Small Group Peer Supervision provides Stephen Ministers with encouragement and ensures that no Stephen Minister will ever have to carry the responsibility for his or her care receiver all alone.

Prayers

Stephen Ministers rely on the prayers of the congregation for keeping God's presence foremost in their caring ministry. Sometimes the going will be tough for both caregivers and their care receivers; the Stephen Ministers will need the additional support of knowing that others are lifting their needs as caregivers to God in prayer.

Stephen Leaders

By accepting Stephen Ministry as part of its overall ministry, a congregation agrees to supply the resources that allow for the training of Stephen Leaders. These Stephen Leaders in turn provide guidance for Stephen Ministers. They train them and ensure that the supervision and continuing education sessions progress smoothly. They are available to consult with Stephen Ministers when they have questions, face challenges, or suspect that the care receiver's needs exceed the care they are able to give. Stephen Leaders offer support, advice, and affirmation to the Stephen Ministers and ensure the smooth operation of Stephen Ministry in the congregation.

Recognition and Appreciation

The congregation recognizes and appreciates Stephen Ministers for the service they give the congregation.