

## 4. Being a Stephen Minister

### The nuts and bolts:

- Trained to serve: Since the training is thorough, *each Stephen Minister is well equipped to serve.*
- Serving is one-to-one: In other words, *each Stephen Minister only works with one person at a time.* Another caring relationship will not begin until the current caring relationship has concluded.
- Serving is once per week: That is how often a Stephen Minister meets with his/her Care Receiver. By the way: a man ministers to a man, while a woman ministers to a woman.
- Serving is 1-hour per week: We are each blessed with 168 hours each week, so 1-hour per week is minimal, *yet God can work in amazing ways.*
- Monthly supervision meetings: They include the Stephen Leader, Pastor, and other Stephen Ministers – *and result in being a great source of encouragement, continuing education, and guidance.*

**The joy:** In the face of a seemingly impossible situation, Jesus said, *“With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible”* (Matthew 19:26 NAS-95). *Imagine how God can work through you to transform a hurting person into a happy person.*

## Conclusion

**God has planned certain good works for each Christian:** Paul wrote, *“...we [believers in Jesus] are [God’s] workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them”* (Ephesians 2:10 NAS-95).

**Now, ask yourself:** Is Stephen Ministry training part of God’s will for MY life?

### What are your next steps?

1. Find out more – *by talking to Norma Sweeny* (mobile: 216-406-4871).
2. Signup for the training – *through Norma.*
3. Complete the training – *as Norma leads you through 50 hours of instruction and skill development.*
4. Prayerful consideration – *near the conclusion of the training.* Since God certainly has a plan for you, *prayerfully consider if He is leading you to be commissioned to serve at Bethlehem as a Stephen Minister.*

**Thanks for reading!** *May the Holy Spirit grant you clear guidance about God’s will for your life in Christ!*

## Connect With Us

**Website:** [www.BLC7500.com](http://www.BLC7500.com)

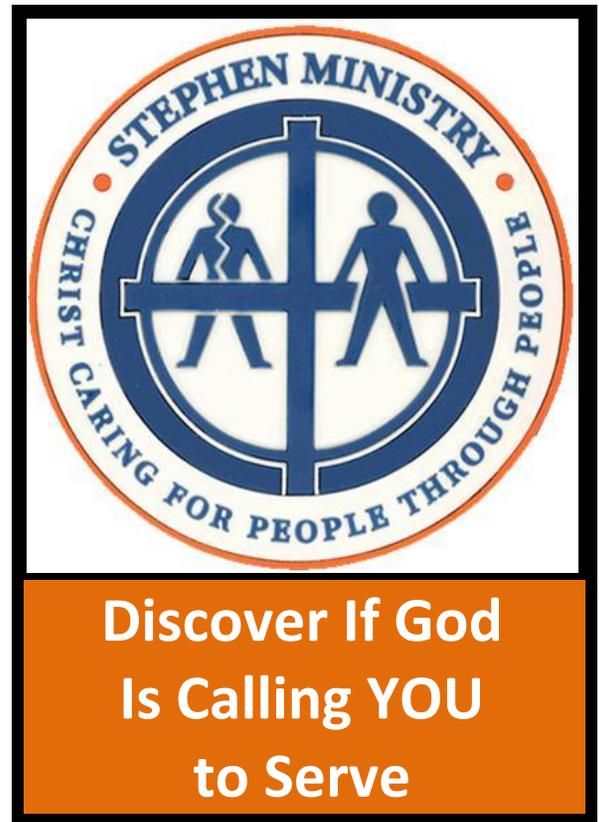
**YouTube and Podcast:** Benefit from the Bible

**Facebook:** Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma

**Schedule:** Saturday 4; Sunday 9; 440-845-2230

**Location:** 7500 State Road, Parma, OH 44134

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## Introduction

Dear Friend: Thanks for being open to the work of the Holy Spirit **in your life** and, possibly, **through your life** to others as a Stephen Minister.

## Four Basic Steps

1. Find out more.
2. Receive the training.
3. Prayerfully seek God’s will.
4. Being a Stephen Minister.

**Please keep reading to learn more about each of the four basic steps...**

## 1. Find Out More

**What are Stephen Ministers?** They are lay congregation members trained to provide one-to-one care to those experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, or relocation.

**Stephen Ministers are there:**

- **after** the funeral, when everyone has left.
- **after** the relationship falls apart.
- **after** the doctor says, “I’m sorry, but there’s nothing more we can do.”
- **after** the nursing home director says, “Welcome to your new home.”
- **after** your family and friends have heard your story one too many times, but you still need to talk it out.

Norma Sweeny is our Stephen Ministry expert – *since she has taken the Stephen Leader training course and taught through the 50-hours of Stephen Minister training multiple times.* Norma would be glad to help you learn more about Stephen Ministry.

## 2. Receive the Training

**Taking the training does not mean you are committing to serve as a Stephen Minister:**

Instead, it is recommended that you first take the training for your own personal benefit – *since the training touches on many important areas of life.* As you learn, you will increase your knowledge and acquire skills to help you in many areas of your own life.

**What is a good way to summarize the training?** It is an engaging, energizing experience that features a mixture of presentation, video, group discussion, skill practice, and spiritual growth activities.

**Stephen Minister training will:**

- Teach you principles and skills to equip you to provide high-quality, Christ-centered emotional and spiritual care to others.
- Give you new insight into the thoughts, feelings, and actions of people who are hurting.
- Equip you with relational and caring skills you can apply to all aspects of your life.
- Help deepen your faith as the Holy Spirit fashions you into a Christ-centered caregiver.
- Build a special bond of Christian community and friendship among all those in your class.

**What some have said about their training:**

- “God gave me a heart for other people. Stephen Minister training gave me the skills I needed to minister to people and bring God’s love into their lives during a time of deep need.”  
Charlotte | Manager-Care/Case Management | Pittsburgh, PA
- “One of the biggest things I learned is that it’s not about me, it’s about God. I am the caregiver, and God is the cure-giver. My job is to listen... and rely on God to bring about healing.”  
Paul | College Student | Clinton, SC

- “Stephen Minister training has helped me relate better to family, friends, neighbors—everyone I meet!” Maria | Mother | Ridgefield, CT

## 3. Prayerfully Seek God’s Will

This section includes some very important things to remember and consider as you prayerfully seek God’s will.

**Be encouraged by this verse:** “[Now to Him \[that is, God the Father\] who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us \[that is, God the Holy Spirit\] \(Ephesians 3:20 NAS-95\).](#)”

**Think about that verse...**

- If we ask of God: “Please use me in this way,” *God can do that AND much more!*
- If we think of something that seems impossible: *God can do that AND much more!*

**How does God work through us?**

- We are the tool: As we could use a hammer to drive a nail, *so God wants to use us to help someone in need.*
- God is the skillful carpenter: When we are open to His will, *He can work through us in amazing ways.*
- God and us: When we know what God can do and we are willing to live by faith, *we can respond like Isaiah: “Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?’ Then I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’ (Isaiah 6:8 NAS-95).*