

GREEN MOUNTAIN UMC

STEPHEN MINISTRY

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A Stephen Minister is a congregation member who...

- Cares and supports, listens, has been trained in the art of setting boundaries and practicing confidentiality
- They attend supervision meeting for support and other viewpoints, but names are never mentioned nor are unique points that could identify people
- This is one on one ministry where you can talk out your problems and know it will go no further

Stephen Ministers stand ready to help in these and other crises

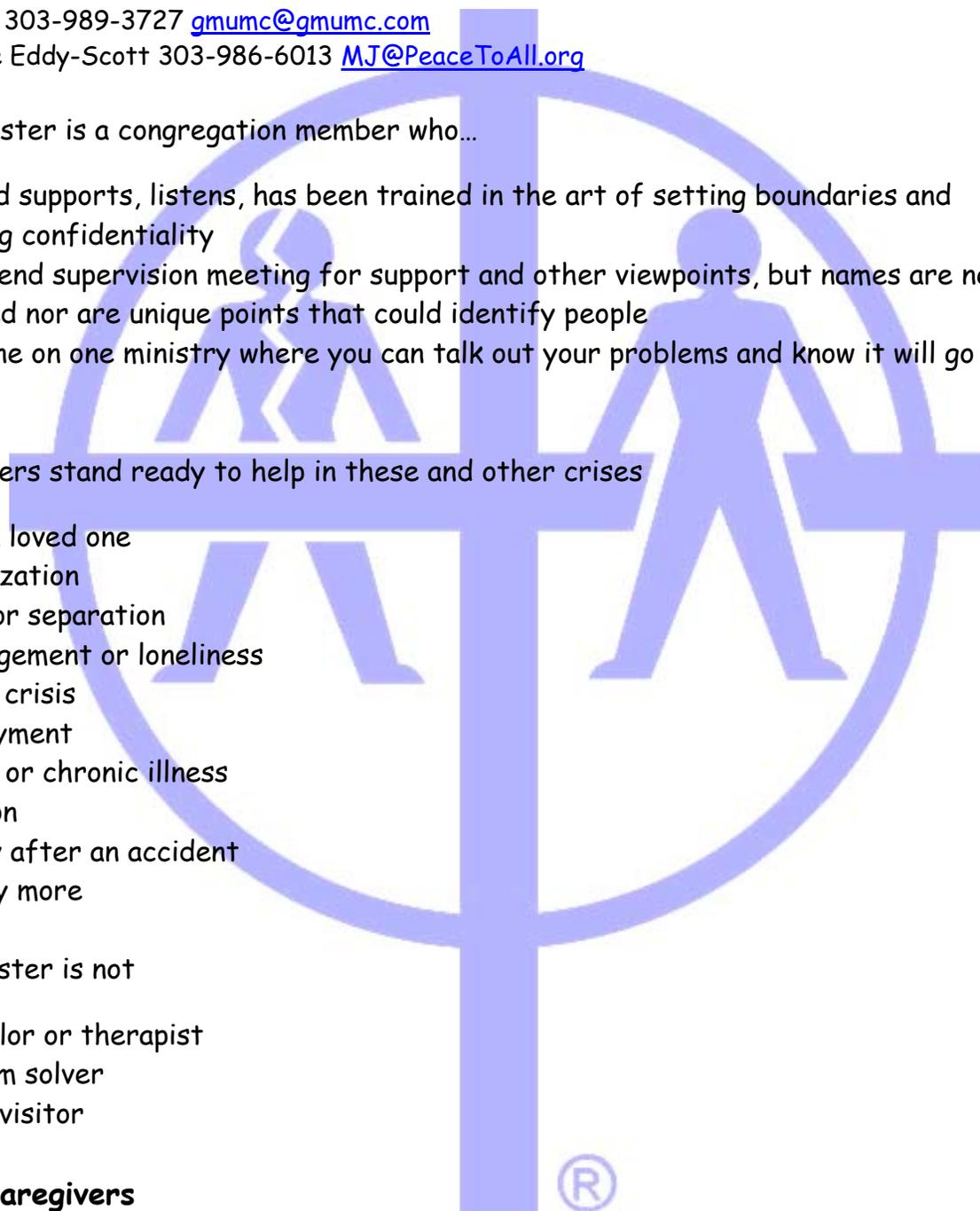
- Loss of a loved one
- Hospitalization
- Divorce or separation
- Discouragement or loneliness
- Spiritual crisis
- Unemployment
- Terminal or chronic illness
- Relocation
- Recovery after an accident
- And many more

A Stephen minister is not

- A counselor or therapist
- A problem solver
- A casual visitor

We are the caregivers

God is the cure giver



Stephen Ministers: The After People

Frequently friends will ask, “I know you’re involved in Stephen Ministry. Can you tell me exactly what a Stephen Minister is?” I like to explain that Stephen Ministers are “After People.”

Stephen Ministers are there:

- ... **after** you’ve washed and returned the last casserole dish.
- ... **after** the divorce papers have been served and the bottom falls out of your life.
- ... **after** the last child honks the horn, waves, and drives away—and the house suddenly seems incredibly empty.
- ... **after** you arrive home following the funeral service and the emotions you’ve held at bay come crashing in on you.
- ... **after** the relationship has ended but the wounds are still bleeding and painful.
- ... **after** the doctors have said, “There’s nothing more we can do.”
- ... **after** the door has slammed shut—for the very last time.
- ... **after** the phone call you’d always hoped you’d never get.
- ... **after** you realize the hands on the gold watch you received at your retirement party move more slowly than you ever imagined.
- ... **after** the nursing home director shakes your hand and says, “Welcome to your new home.”
- ... **after** the gavel goes down, the handcuffs go on, and your loved one is led away.
- ... **after** the baby has arrived, putting more demands on you than you ever dreamed possible.
- ... **after** you find the pink slip inserted with what is now your final paycheck.
- ... **after** your family and friends have heard your story one too many times, but you still need to talk it out.



Stephen Ministers are the “After People.” We are ready to come alongside you—or your friends, neighbors, coworkers, or relatives—and provide comfort and support for as long “after” as we are needed.

Adapted from a presentation made during a worship service by Enie Bourland, a lay Stephen Leader at Houston’s First Baptist Church in Houston, Texas.

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