
Mission

The Visiting Stephen Minister (VSM) Program exists to supplement the care giving resources of the Senior Pastor and Diaconal Minister.

Overview

The mission is accomplished by utilizing Christ Lutheran Church's trained Stephen Ministers and the other care giving resources of the congregation to care giving needs of the congregation. A relationship is established by the Senior Pastor or Diaconal Minister. The Visiting Stephen Minister will support the care receiver through the Hospital, Nursing Home, or home care process. The activities of the Visiting Stephen Minister will include: care giving, communication with the Senior Pastor or Diaconal Minister as necessary, referral by the caregiver to other caring resources such as: transportation for doctor visits and shopping, food delivery to home, work with congregational Shepherding Group of the care receiver for services beyond six months. The Visiting Stephen Ministers will receive monthly supervision and support throughout the care giving process.

Who is served?

Currently, those served will be members of the Christ Lutheran Church family.

Visiting Stephen Minister (VSM) Training

The VSMs receive 50 hours of training as regular Stephen Ministers and two more hours of Visiting Stephen Ministers

How is a match between care receiver and VSM made?

The Pastor or Diaconal Minister, in conversation with the care receiver, makes the match. The match may be changed by either the care receiver or VSM by working with the VSM coordinator or the Pastor or Diaconal Minister.

Expectations for the VSM Relationship

The Visiting Stephen Minister meets or communicates with the care receiver weekly for one to two hours per visit, including transportation to and from the visit. The number of weekly visits will vary with the needs of the care receiver and the availability of the Visiting Stephen Minister. A face to face visit may be replaced with telephone contact depending on the availability and circumstances of the Visiting Stephen Minister or the care receiver. The caring relationship should normally last from one to three months based upon the needs of the care receiver. Relationships lasting beyond the six months are handled on a case by case basis. The relationship may end sooner if the care receiver is able to return to a relatively normal life of independence.

What care is given by the Visiting Stephen Minister?

The Visiting Stephen Minister's main purpose is to provide caring through the following activities:

- Active listening to understand the needs of the care receiver
- Weekly visits, where possible, or telephone calls
- Prayers with the care receiver and prayers during the week
- Provide occasional flowers when available
- Provide Christ Lutheran Sunday Service bulletins
- Provide Christ Lutheran Sunday Service copies on CD
- Provide devotional time with bible and other study aids
- Arrange for other services as needed:
 - Lay Eucharistic Ministry Communion
 - Assist in having a regular Stephen Minister assigned to the care receiver should conditions change.
 - Transportation for doctor visits or shopping
 - Food during brief periods of transition to home care
 - Use of Home Care Equipment from church inventory
 - Ongoing support by the care receiver's Shepherding Support Group

What the VSM DOES NOT do

- Provide the services of a full time caregiver
- Provide visits beyond geographical boundaries of the program:
 - More than two weekly hospital visits of more than 25 roundtrip miles to hospital
 - More than two months of skilled nursing home visits of more than 25 roundtrip miles to the nursing Home
 - Home visits beyond the membership range of Christ Lutheran Church regular active Members
 - Run errands, provide transportation for shopping or doctor visits

The Importance of “Team Visits”

A “Team Visit” is when the primary VSM invites another VSM to accompany them on a visit to the care receiver. The team visit provides two important benefits over a one-on-one visit. First it enables the care receiver to be acquainted with another VSM who may notice things about the care receiver that the primary VSM may have overlooked. The second benefit is that if the primary VSM is “out of town” for longer than a week, the team Visiting Stephen Minister can visit the care receiver in their absence.

How do I arrange for a VSM for my upcoming surgery/hospitalization?

Contact the Pastor, or in his absence the Diaconal Minister, and tell them about your situation:

- What dates will you be hospitalized?
- Date and time of Surgery/Treatment?
- Expectations for recovery?
- Discuss with them the caring services you will need?
- Review the expectations for a VSM caring relationship with the Pastor or Diaconal Minister.
- Upon agreement with the VSM caring relationship expectations, review the available VSMs and make a selection.

More questions?

Contact a Stephen Ministry Leader, the Pastor, or the Diaconal Minister.



481 Snead Drive
Fairfield Glade, TN 38558
(931) 484-7273
Website: www.clc-ffg.org

CHRIST LUTHERAN



Visiting Stephen Ministry Program