

# 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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