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# Care Giver

February/March 2010

Volume 14, Issue 1

Christ caring for people

through people

*Celebrate the Blessings of 20 Years of Stephen Ministry!*

*He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever He does prospers. Psalm 1:3*

In 1990, four leaders went to Stephen Ministry headquarters in St. Louis Missouri and left with the excitement and vision to lead us into a new era! Hope Lutheran started with its first class of Stephen Ministers in 1991 and since then we have trained close to 200 Stephen Ministers and have helped hundreds.

- WHO ARE STEPHEN MINISTERS? Stephen Ministers are members of the body of Christ
- WHAT DO THEY DO? They provide one-to-one caring ministry to people experiencing brokenness.
- HOW ARE THEY EQUIPPED? Stephen Ministers are given extensive training, approximately 50 hours.
- ONCE EQUIPPED, THEN WHAT? Stephen Ministers are prayerfully matched with people who are going through a stressful time or life difficulty.
- AND THEN WHAT? A Stephen Minister meets with this person once a week for about an hour to listen, care, encourage and pray.
- WHAT HAPPENS? The Stephen Minister brings Christ's presence into the person's life and also experiences Christ in the other person.
- WHAT IS STEPHEN MINISTRY? It's a life-changing ministry for both care receiver and the Stephen Minister.

We are blessed by God...we are blessed by 20 years of this caring ministry. Please come and celebrate His goodness with us!



*Eunice Thorson, first Stephen Ministry Program Coordinator and Bill Thorson, a member of the First Stephen Ministry class.*

## "CHIT CHAT"

*with Linda J*

Robert Olson, my 10th grade history teacher at Fargo North High, always used to say, "Rome didn't fall in one day. It took 300 years."

I always found that to be a profound statement, but it wasn't until I was out of college that I really grasped what he meant. Everything takes time and as time passes, we call that history. We learn from it and we recognize the people who were the catalysts in making that history. Hope Lutheran has a 50 year history. Another important history we are celebrating this month is the 20th anniversary of Stephen Ministry at Hope Lutheran.

Pastor John Elverum introduced this caring ministry to Hope Lutheran Church during the summer of 1990. One of his first duties was to create a job description and place an ad for a Stephen Ministry Coordinator in the church newsletter.

*Continued on page 2*



**Program & Time Capsule Reveal**  
 Thursday, February 4  
 7:00pm, South Campus

**"Stephen Ministry Sundaes"**  
 February 7, following the 11:00am  
 service, South Campus

Continued from front page

## "CHIT CHAT" with Linda J

"When I saw that job description, I thought that the Stephen Ministry program sounded very good," Eunice Thorson remarked. "I have always had the need to help others and I was ready for this kind of program to come along. So I filled out the job application and sent it in. The day I got a call from Pastor John, I thought he was going to thank me and tell me I didn't get the job, but instead he told me I got the job and I had been the only person who had applied for it!"

The next step was to organize a Stephen Leadership group that would travel to St. Louis, MO, for an intense two week Leadership Training program. Besides Pastor John and Eunice, the group included Nancy Elverum and Curt Tjon, who was already a Stephen Minister at his home church, Olivet Lutheran in South Fargo. Curt had offered to help the new group develop its program.

Back from St. Louis, the Leadership Team was highly motivated and began to organize its program. You can't have Care Receivers until you have commissioned Stephen Ministers, so the group started searching for potential Stephen Ministers. With God's help, the first Stephen Ministry class was composed of 32 men and women.

"Eunice was so pumped up about this program I decided I wanted to be part of it too," said Bill Thorson. The class was commissioned in 1991.

While the class was in training the Leadership Team started looking for potential Care Receivers.

"We advertised in the church newsletters and bulletins. And Pastors John and Chuck Olmstead kept their ears and eyes open for Care Receivers," says Eunice.

One thing the Leadership recognized was that for the program to be successful, they had to educate church members about the duties of Stephen Ministers and what they could and couldn't do.

"The Stephen Ministry Program was a new concept for people," Bill said.

People soon accepted this caring ministry and according to Eunice, "The success of the program was due to our commitment to confidentiality at all times." Today, this commitment to confidentiality between a Care Giver and a Care Receiver continues.

The Thorsons are huge supports of today's Stephen Ministry. Today's leaders include Pastor Mike, pastoral advisor; Amy Tronsgard, team coordinator/referrals; Lauri Kraus, supervision; Kim Youngquist, ministry enrichment; Chris Gauthier, training; and Connie Carlsrud, Congregational Awareness.

"Our Stephen Ministers have always been, and still are, very high-quality Christ-centered people," said Eunice. "When you are a Stephen Minister, it deepens your faith and helps you to have faith and trust that God is working in your caring relationship. God gives you courage." She concludes by saying, "Being a care giver means to do things not just talk about it because you are letting God work through you as a vessel."

Bill remarked, "Stephen Ministry is a way of growing in your own faith because it makes you look at yourself and it helps you develop spiritually; I found this to be true in my life. I have developed as a Christian over many years and one of the things that helped me was being a Stephen Minister. Being a Stephen Minister has been very rewarding," he continued, "it is very joyful when you see a miracle happen in your caring relationship, because sometimes it does happen."

We are thankful for all of the people who dared to make a commitment in starting a Stephen Ministry Program at Hope Lutheran Church 20 years ago. We thank the early Leadership and all of the Stephen Ministers and their Care Receivers, as they were the catalysts that started the program we enjoy being a part of today.

Now, if we were all sitting in Mr. Olson's History class right now, I think what he would be telling us is, "Hope Lutheran's Stephen Ministry Program didn't get built in one day it took 20 years!"

## Who Said That?

"The Ultimate Bible Fact & Quiz Book" by  
Martin H. Manser

Can you name the person who said the words below? If you're having trouble you can find the answers on the back page.

1. Which Old Testament prophet responded to the Lord's call with the words, "Here am I. Send me"?
2. Who instructed some servants, "Fill the jars with water"?
3. Who said to Elisha, "O man of God, there is death in the pot!"
4. Who was afraid and said, "What I did must have become known"?
5. Who said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God."

Answers on back page



## "Everyday Blessings"

Max Lucado

God's business is putting things right. Psalm 11:7

We don't see Jesus settling many disputes or negotiating conflicts. But we do see him cultivating inward harmony through acts of love:

- o Washing the feet of men he knew would betray him...
- o Honoring the sinful woman whom society had scorned...  
He built bridges by healing hurts.

# Stephen Ministry Christmas Gathering!

The Stephen Ministry Christmas party was a lot of fun with great people, good food, wonderful white elephant gifts and a lot of laughing.



Have you ever seen anybody so happy to get oatmeal? Guess we all know what to get Gin next year.



If there had been "The Cutest Couple Award" Nancy and Leo would have been the winners with their gift of mistletoe.



You know why Lauri looks so happy! She just received two vinyl albums featuring Sing-A-Long with Mitch and Lawrence



The "Newbie's," Stephen Ministers in training, participated in their first SM Christmas gala. (l to r) Carol, Lis, Denise and Andy



Priscilla, got the 50-pound poinsettia candle, it's the gift that just keeps on going and going to the SM Christmas party each year!



Do you know what Pastor Kevan is looking for? Yup, you guessed it he's looking for the 50-pound poinsettia candle.



Jessica and Amy

This group waiting in the buffet line was hungry yet chipper enough to smile for the camera. (l to r) Nancy, Pastor Mike, Amy and Chris waiting in the food line.



## Calendar for February/March 2010

Date	Time	Rm		Meeting	Subject	Treats	Dev
Feb 3	7:00-9:00pm	Rm 202	SC	Class	Module 15: pg 343-356		
Feb 4	7:00-9:00pm	Rm 208	SC	SM, Class, Guests	20th Anniversary/Time Capsule Reveal		
Feb 11	7:00-9:00pm	Rm 202	SC	Class	Module 17: pg 437-460		
Feb 13	8:00am-noon	Rm 202	SC	Class	Module 16: pg 373-381 (Part 1) pg 405-411 (Part 2)		
Feb 18	7:00-8:00pm	Rm 202	SC	Class/ME	Module 18: "Follow Me" pg 473-484	Kay S	Kay S
Feb 18	8:00-9:00pm	Rm 210	SC	Class			
Feb 18	8:00-9:00pm	Rm 202	SC	Class			
Feb 28	11:00am	Sanctuary	SC	Commissioning			
Mar 4	7:00-8:00pm	Fellowship Center	NC	ME	TBA	Connie	Connie
Mar 4	8:00-9:00pm	Fellowship Center	NC	Supervision			

### Happy Birthday

Priscilla Smith February 15  
 Jessica Kjelden February 23  
 Mike Toomey February 27  
 Claude Langton March 16  
 Kay Swenson March 18  
 Gin Mason March 19  
 Nancy Peterson March 20



Answers to  
 "Who Said That?"  
 1. Isaiah  
 2. Jesus  
 3. The company of  
 the prophets in  
 Gilgal  
 4. Moses  
 5. Nicodemus



*You are invited to...*

### *New Class Commissioning*

*We encourage all Stephen Ministers to take part in the commissioning of our new Stephen Ministers on Sunday, February 28, 11:00am, South Campus Sanctuary.*

*Let's show them our support by attending this blessed event!*

### A Valentine from God

God thinks you're wonderful. It may be difficult for you to believe that God knows your name...but He does. Written on His hand. Spoken by His mouth. Whispered by His lips. Your name.

You have captured the heart of God. He cannot bear to live without you.

God's dream is to make you right with Him. And the path to the cross tells us exactly how far God will go to call us back.

It is not our love for God: it is God's love for us in sending His Son to be the way. If you want to touch God's heart, use the name He loves to hear. Call Him "Father."

He thinks you're wonderful!

*I have written your name on My hand.* Isaiah 49:16

Excerpted from the Book, God Thinks You're Wonderful! by Max Lucado

### Leadership Team

#### Pastoral Advisor

Pastor Mike Toomey  
235-6629, x212

#### Supervision

Lauri Kraus - 297-5972

#### Team Coordinator/

#### Referrals

Amy Tronsgard  
(w) 235-6629, x221  
(h) 232-8100

#### Ministry Enrichment

Kim Youngquist  
(w) 297-0735/(c) 238-4234

#### Congregational Awareness

Connie Carlsrud - 282-3207

#### Training

Chris Gauthier (c) 866-5966

#### Caregiver Newsletter Editor

Linda Jemtrud (h) 293-0920

#### Small Group Facilitators:

Linda Jemtrud...293-0920

Gerard Seefeld...793-9183

Priscilla Smith...492-2848 (h)

235-6629 (w)