

# OUR STEPHEN MINISTERS

## **PAM COON** Stephen Leader since 2019

"One reason I became Stephen Leader is because I am so appreciative of the Stephen Minister who helped me through the loss of a close friend. A challenging time in my life was when I was a single parent. I am thankful for that time spent with my four children. Recently, Tim and I welcomed Noodles, a mini bernedoodle, into our family."



## **ERIC ELSASS** Stephen Minister since 2022, Leader since November 2023

"I became a Stephen Minister because I wanted to find a way to become active in the church again after many years of coaching CYO basketball. I know there are many people who don't have someone they can turn to during difficult times and I want to be there and listen. I collect St. Joseph sports and school memorabilia which consists of pictures, banners, varsity jackets, and other items."

## **BOB SCHERGER** Stephen Minister since 2020

"My wife, Polly, was one of the original Stephen Leaders back in the 1990s. Upon her death in 2018, I could think of no better way to honor her memory or her legacy than by becoming a Stephen Minister in 2020. Life's journey can be difficult at times. Stephen Ministers are here to walk alongside."



## **BARB BRANDS** Stephen Minister since 2005

"I became a Stephen Minister because I have always wanted to help people who were suffering. I am also a nurse. One challenging time for me was when my husband of 27 years died. I am now married to my high school sweetheart."

## **THERESE FAHNCKE** Stephen Minister since 2024

"I discerned the call to become a Stephen Minister to walk with those seeking hope in times of despair and a newfound peace and joy following loss, change, betrayal or any number of hurts and disappointments in life. I myself had to come to grips with a major change in my life after my sons left for college and the house became very quiet, particularly without someone playing the piano at all hours of the day! Change can bring much joy, however, as my husband and I have been blessed as grandparents and are able to enjoy spending significant time with our twin granddaughters after raising two sons."





**DAVE & RITA PLATFOOT** Stephen Ministers since 2022

"Dave and I heard a Stephen Minister give a testimony at church. Dave heard the Holy Spirit say, 'This is what you and Rita can do to serve me!' We both have grown in our faith through the Stephen Ministry training. We use those skills as we listen and support others during difficult times; revealing Christ through our presence. What an awesome ministry to be a part of. We are truly blessed."

**JOYCE PLATFOOT** Stephen Minister since 2026

From serving as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Community for the homebound for many years, working as a caregiver for Visiting Angels, and working as a parish staff bereavement minister, I feel blessed to have met so many wonderful people with a variety of needs. After ten+ years of being a parish catechist, with still a desire to serve, I decided to step away from teaching and learn about Stephen Ministry. My husband and I are blessed with nine children and their spouses and 39 grandchildren.



**MARY ELLEN FRY** Stephen Minister since 2022

"Hello, my name is Mary Ellen Fry and I have been a member of St. Joseph since 1972. As a Stephen Minister, I have learned how to effectively listen without judging and how to accept whatever is told to me in confidence. Everyone who is suffering a loss of any kind needs to ask for help."

**TERESA POEPELMAN** Stephen Minister since 2020

"I was invited to become a Stephen Minister in 2020 as I was planning what to do after retirement. I have always enjoyed working with people and this offered a way to do this in a helpful and positive way. I am now retired and am enjoying spending my extra time with family, friends, and my two dogs. I am so glad I accepted the invitation to become a Stephen Minister as it continues to be a truly rewarding experience."



**JILL KEITH** Stephen Minister since 2022

"Faith has always been a big part of my life. My faith has gotten me through a lot of things, including my recent issues with my pacemaker. Becoming a Stephen Minister has been a wonderful thing. It has enabled me to help others who may just need someone to share their thoughts and feelings with. I listen without judging. My care receiver is confident that I hold our conversations in strict confidence. In my spare time, I love to crochet, bake, and read."