



2025-2026 OSLC Stephen Ministry Program Report

(a program of the Congregational Care Ministry)

Stephen Ministry Training Course (SMTC). OSLC offered its first SMTC from October 8, 2025 to April 15, 2026. Enrollment was initially offered to members of OSLC and other ELCC (“Charter”) churches who wanted to become Stephen Ministers, but when no outside applications were received, the course was opened to all OSLC members interested in growing in faith and learning new skills. Thirteen students completed the course, and four discerned a call to become Stephen Ministers. Student evaluations reflected strong appreciation for the meaningful content and the rich faith-building experience. A good time was had by all!

Stephen Ministry Sunday. On April 26, 2026, the congregation celebrated our first Stephen Ministry Sunday, honoring everyone who helped launch this ministry—guest teachers, *volunteer* students, consultants, advisors, writers, editors, assistants, a balloon-blower-upper, and a website guru.

Stephen Ministers. We commissioned **Ann T., Barbara F., Jen W., and Sandy A.** to serve as Stephen Ministers for an initial two-year term. They will soon be matched with Care Receivers and begin confidential, one-to-one caring relationships. In these safe, compassionate, and nonjudgmental interactions, individuals facing difficult times receive emotional and spiritual support from their Stephen Ministers on a weekly basis. Stephen Ministers gather together regularly for guidance, prayer, and mutual aid in Peer Supervision. Care Receivers’ identities and concerns remain confidential at all times.

Continuing Education. Stephen Ministers will receive quarterly continuing education, with classes also open to graduates of the 2025–26 SMTC. Occasionally, more general topics may be offered to the wider congregation.

In the coming months, we will invite members of OSLC (and possibly the Issaquah community) to become Lookouts—individuals who receive a brief 20-minute training on the confidential Referral Process and how to gently approach hurting people with the topic of Stephen Ministry.

Short presentations can be arranged for your committee or small group to provide a better working knowledge of Stephen Ministry and explore how we can collaborate.

The next SMTC may be offered in fall 2027.

Sustaining and Growing Stephen Ministry. We celebrate having four newly-commissioned Stephen Ministers—but this is only the beginning! We hope all members and friends of OSLC will ask questions and learn more about Stephen Ministry so you will feel safe requesting a Stephen Minister for yourself or sharing about the confidential nature and benefits of this ministry with others. With God’s grace and your support, we will train additional Stephen Leaders and prepare future Stephen Ministers to meet the needs of our congregation and wider community. Your private and corporate prayers for the Launch Team, our Stephen Leader, and each Stephen Minister are deeply appreciated.

Submitted by Jen W., OSLC Stephen Leader