



Messenger of Peace

"Where the Love of Christ is Shared"

June 2014

Peace Lutheran Church

91 Wernex Loop
Selah, WA 98942
Phone: 697-4353

Pastor

Mark Griesse

Office Hours

9:00 - 12:00

Tues - Wed. - Bethlehem

Thur.-Fri. - Peace

Afternoons by Appointment

Secretary

Tammy Peterson

9:00 - 1:00

Mon. - Fri.

Sunday Worship

9:00 AM

Sunday Bible Study

10:30 AM

Website

peacelutheranselah.org

Email

peacelutheran@fairpoint.net



Members & Friends of Peace,

Stephen Ministries is a not-for-profit Christian education organization founded in 1975 that produces training and resources known for their excellence, practicality, psychological integrity, and theological depth. These resources cover topics such as caring ministry, assertive relating, spiritual gifts discovery, grief support, spiritual growth, and more.

Congregations and other organizations use these resources to strengthen and expand ministry. Individuals use them to improve their ability to relate to and care for others, grow in faith, and journey through life crises. The Stephen Ministries 40-person staff is based in St. Louis, Missouri and is available for Stephen Leaders consultation.

The congregations of Peace Lutheran, Bethlehem Lutheran and Mt. Olive Lutheran are invited to take part in the training sessions this fall. The classes will be held at Peace Lutheran in Selah on Monday evenings beginning September 8th and continuing through February 9th. Pastor Griesse, Yvonne Griesse and Mike Phelps will be leading the instruction and dialogue.

Please contact Pastor Griesse by calling the church office 509-697-4353 to sign up for this exciting opportunity to "walk alongside those going through a life crisis."

~~~Pastor Griesse

*(You will find more information regarding Stephen Ministries on the following pages.)*



# “I Began to Feel God’s Love Again”

Recently, I was teaching at a Stephen Ministry event where someone introduced me to “Megan,” a woman in her early 30’s who wanted to tell me her story about receiving care from a Stephen Minister during a difficult transition in life. Megan prefers to remain anonymous—but she gave me permission to share her story with you so you’ll know about the powerful difference Stephen Ministry made in her life.

—Amity Haugk

**Amity:** What led you to receive the care of a Stephen Minister?

**Megan:** It all began soon after I moved to [a new city] to live near my family. I had just ended an eight-year relationship and was depending on them to be my support system. But a few months after I arrived, they unexpectedly had to move away—so I felt very, very alone. Not long after they moved, my grandfather passed away. It was one of the hardest times of my life.

I knew I needed to talk to someone, but I hadn’t lived in the city long enough to

develop close, comfortable friendships that I could depend on. But my new church had Stephen Ministry. When I found out what Stephen Ministry was, I talked to my pastor about getting a Stephen Minister.

**How did your relationship with your Stephen Minister start out?**

It started off a little bit slow. I wasn’t sure how I’d feel about sharing deep, personal things with someone I didn’t know very well. But her consistency, compassion, and care for me

really came through. I realized that my Stephen Minister was a safe person who wasn't going to share what I told her with anyone else. From there we developed a deep relationship until I felt like I could truly share anything with her.

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**“My Stephen Minister did a wonderful job of creating a warm, caring space for me to process my emotions and work through my issues.”**

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*What was it like to meet with your Stephen Minister?*

We met weekly. Sometimes she'd come to my house and we'd sit and talk, and other times we'd go walking together. During our visits, she just let me talk while she listened. As I was talking through things, I realized that it was helping me to make sense of everything that had happened and how I was feeling. She accepted my feelings, including the ones that seemed risky to share—and that was really helpful.

I actually didn't need advice from her—I needed acceptance and affirmation. I had a lot of loneliness, a lot of hurts, a lot of uncertainty inside. I needed to be validated and not put down. My Stephen Minister did a wonderful job of creating a warm, caring space for me to process my emotions and work through my issues.

*Could you tell me about a caring visit that stands out for you?*

Definitely. It was a few months into our relationship, and I'd begun to trust my Stephen Minister

with some of my most difficult issues. As we were walking around a track, with the wind blowing in my face, I suddenly realized that she was literally walking right beside me as I journeyed through my pain.

I'd been struggling with some spiritual wounds that were pretty intense and needed healing—things I didn't want to share with family and friends. But on that visit, as my Stephen Minister walked next to me, I felt safe and comfortable. So I shared my deepest hurts with her—some really painful things that I feared she might judge me for and that made me wonder if God could possibly love me.

After I told her those things, I was really nervous and dreading her response. I was worried that she would think I was an awful person. But instead, she put her arm around me and said, “I'm sorry you had to go through that.” And that was a turning point for me. To go from fear of judgment to a positive affirmation of care, empathy—and even sorrow for what I'd been through—it was so meaningful. That's when I began to feel God's love again.

*I've heard other care receivers say that their Stephen Minister helped them experience God's love. Could you tell me more about how that happened for you?*

The fact that God is invisible makes it hard for me to experience him sometimes. I'd been through some very negative experiences in life that caused me to question whether God even existed—and, if he existed, whether he loved me. I truly wondered, after all the things I'd done and the mess I'd been through, if God could still love me.

I somehow knew intuitively that I needed a person that I could see and touch. I think that's truly why I asked for a Stephen Minister. When my Stephen Minister was able to share her concern and her sorrow over my experiences, God was there loving me *through* her. I experienced



God's sorrow and God's compassion and God's love—and it made all the difference for me.

What I needed the most was her unconditional love—to know that no matter what I shared with her, no matter what I'd done, she cared for me. Her care showed God's love for me. I needed to know that there was one person in the world who knew everything there was to know about me—the good, the bad, the ugly—and still loved me. It was the tangible expression of God's love in my Stephen Minister that changed my life.

**How did your caring relationship come to a close?**

My Stephen Minister helped me get to a place where I was able to deal with my issues without her. As that happened, our visits tapered off from weekly to every other week to every three weeks. We decided to meet for the last time on my birthday, and that was a very special day for me.

**Based on your experience, how would you describe what Stephen Ministers do?**

Stephen Ministers do a lot of listening and ask really good questions that help you talk through

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**“I realized that my Stephen Minister was a safe person who wasn't going to share what I told her with anyone else.”**

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your thoughts and emotions. Stephen Ministers are there for you when it seems that no one else is. Just having someone to talk to—week after week—to bounce ideas off of, can help bring clarity into your life and help you sort through whatever it is you're dealing with.

The most important thing my Stephen Minister did for me was to provide spiritual care that led to spiritual healing. Doctors can take care of our physical needs, and counselors can help with our emotional needs. Pastors focus on spiritual needs, but can't possibly care for every person in their congregation who needs it. So sometimes there's a real gap when it comes to meeting spiritual needs. My spiritual wounds were the gap for me—the neglected part inside me that hadn't been taken care of. God used my Stephen Minister to really fill the spiritual gap.

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**“What I needed the most was her unconditional love—to know that no matter what I shared with her, no matter what I'd done, she cared for me. Her care showed God's love for me.”**

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## **“Stephen Ministers help those they care for experience God during those times in life when they might be wondering, *Is God even there?*”**

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### **How do you think Stephen Ministers help fill that spiritual gap?**

God's love is always there, but sometimes it can be really hard to feel it, especially when you're going through a crisis. That's probably when people doubt God's presence the most, when their faith is the most vulnerable. But a Stephen Minister is Jesus' hands and feet, just being there and caring for a hurting person. Stephen Ministers express God's love in a tangible way that care receivers can feel. Stephen Ministers help those they care for experience God during those times in life when they might be wondering, *Is God even there?*

### **What would you say to someone who's considering receiving care from a Stephen Minister?**

Asking for a Stephen Minister is the best thing I could have done for myself. Stephen Ministry is transformational. As a care receiver, you'll grow so much through your Stephen Minister's care, concern, and compassion for you—you may not even recognize yourself afterward! And you'll be a lot better off for it.

I would encourage anyone who is suffering, discouraged, or going through a difficult time to ask for a Stephen Minister. And if someone offers a Stephen Minister to you, say, “Yes!” It really is life-changing.

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## **Stephen Ministry**

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Stephen Ministry is a lay caring ministry being used by thousands of congregations to increase care and outreach to hurting people.

Through Stephen Ministry, congregations are able to equip and empower a team of laypeople—Stephen Ministers—who provide one-to-one, Christ-centered care to people experiencing grief, unemployment, hospitalization, loneliness, divorce, financial stress, a terminal illness, or other life difficulties.

Visit **[www.stephenministries.org](http://www.stephenministries.org)** to learn more about Stephen Ministry and to watch online video stories about the difference Stephen Ministers are making in people's lives.

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The next Men's Bible Study Breakfast will be held at Mt. Olive Lutheran starting at 8 a.m. on Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup>. Come yourself and bring a guest(s) and share in the fun, food, and fellowship of this exciting ministry for men. For further info contact Gary Treece, 833-9725 or email at [glt528@charter.net](mailto:glt528@charter.net)

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## **Summer Starts**



**June 21<sup>st</sup>**

## **VOTER'S MEETING**

There will be a Voter's Meeting on Sunday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> at 5:00 p.m. All members are encouraged to attend the meeting.



## **O.W.L.S. Lunch**

**Friday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 a.m.  
at El Caporal in Selah**

**Please contact Marcia Shotwell at 697-4543  
to let her know if you plan to attend.**



Every Wednesday morning at 6:30 a.m. men from Bethlehem Lutheran meet at Denny's Restaurant in Union Gap for a Men's Breakfast. They would like to invite the men from Peace to join them for breakfast and fellowship! All you have to do is show up!

## **NEW MEMBERS**

Welcome to new Peace members Ralph & Dottie Miles. They come to us by transfer from Mt. Olive. Be sure to introduce yourself and welcome them to our church family!

## **ADDRESS CHANGES:**

**Leona Fischer  
201A Valleyview Ave. #3  
Selah, WA 98942**

**Ray & Bev Wondercheck  
1729 Scarborough Dr. #2Q  
Bellevue, NE 68123**



We received an email from Bev Wondercheck this past week and would like to share it with members and friends of Peace . . .

*"Our new address is 1749 Scarborough Dr., Bellevue, NE 68123. Our cell phone is the same. We have lived through our first Nebraska storm, with sirens blasting, rain, wind, and tornado warnings. We were safe in our granddaughter's basement. We do have a storm shelter in our apt. building. Love being with all the family here, our social life is in full swing with family dinners, shopping trips, meeting for coffee, and tonight we are being welcomed to NE at a wine bar.*

*We are looking for a church. Pilgrim Lutheran is very close by so we will visit it Sunday morning. We have a Walmart market across the street, and a gas station. We don't have our furniture yet, will come to Selah later this month for it, but thanks to family we have lawn chairs in the living room, a blow up mattress in the bedroom, and all the dishes and pots and pans out of the camper, so we are comfortable.*

*We think of all of you often and pray for you, and we talk about the good times we have spent with you.*

*Please keep us in your prayers,  
Ray and Bev"*

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## **Let's Mow Lawn!**

It's lawn mowing season once again, and we are in need of volunteers to mow the church lawn. All the needed equipment is at the church. There is a calendar on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall where you can sign-up to mow. If you are able to volunteer just write your name on a weekend and then mow the lawn on either that Friday or Saturday. For questions contact Cal West or Mike Phelps.





***Thrivent Financial  
for Lutherans®***



# **A Mobile Food Bank**

**is coming to your area soon!**

## **Peace Lutheran Church and Yakima County Chapter Board of Thrivent**

- Free produce and perishable products for low-income families and those in need of food assistance
- No appointment or documentation necessary to participate
- Must have note from recipient in order to receive product for them if absent
- Held rain or shine

**WHEN: Wednesday, June 25th, 2014 12 – 2pm**

**WHERE:**

**Peace Lutheran Church  
91 Wernex Loop Rd.  
Selah, WA 98942**

**For more info please call: Church office (509) 697-4353 or  
24 hr. Mobile Food Bank Information line (509) 252-6270**

**\*\* PLEASE BRING A BOX FOR YOUR FOOD \*\***



# LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces



## Serving Those Who Serve

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's (LCMS) Ministry to the Armed Forces (MAF) is authorized as the mission arm of the Synod to support and serve all military chaplains — active and reserve — their families and the veteran population. MAF recruits, interviews and endorses all military chaplains; sponsors annual training for all chaplains; and maintains close, pastoral relationships with chaplains after endorsement, offering counsel, training and advice throughout their entire careers.

### Resources and services:

- Ecclesiastical endorsement, annual training and career management for chaplains
- Operation Barnabas
- "Ministry-by-Mail"
- Armed Forces Sunday resources
- Quarterly Armed Forces newsletter *So Help Me God*

### How to get involved:

- Watch videos at <http://video.lcms.org/archives/category/armed-forces-ministry>
- Download resources at [www.lcms.org/armedforces/resources](http://www.lcms.org/armedforces/resources)
- Give a gift [www.lcms.org/givenow/maf](http://www.lcms.org/givenow/maf)



**Witness Always**

Mark Schreiber CAPT, CHC, USN (Ret.), director,  
LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces | 888-THE LCMS | [Mark.Schreiber@lcms.org](mailto:Mark.Schreiber@lcms.org)  
[www.lcms.org/armedforces](http://www.lcms.org/armedforces) | [www.lcms.org/operationbarnabas](http://www.lcms.org/operationbarnabas)

# Standing Ready with the Gospel

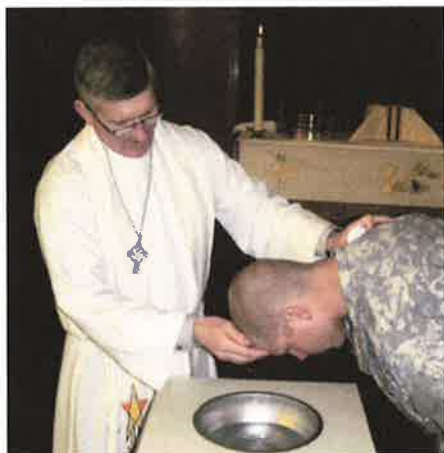
by Pamela J. Nielsen

In bunkers and fighter jets, on battleships and bases, in field hospitals and training camps, the men and women of the United States Armed Forces stand at the ready in service to our country.

With them are the 160 active and Reserve LCMS Armed Forces Chaplains stationed around the world. These pastors proclaim the Word of life, in environments often shrouded in death. Their flocks frequently come and go, providing scant opportunity for long-term ministry. Their work takes place in some of the most difficult situations any pastor could ever face, where lives can be unraveled in an instant.

Upholding these faithful servants is the Ministry to the Armed Forces (MAF), the LCMS effort to care for and support military chaplains and, through them, our LCMS members and their families in uniform.

Retired U.S. Navy Chaplain Rev. Dr. Mark J. Schreiber, CAPT, CHC, USN (Ret.), MAF director, explains



A young soldier is baptized into Christ by Chaplain Jim Watson.



Chaplain Mike Sneath conducts a service in Afghanistan.

## Get Involved!

- Order MAF bulletin inserts
- Attend an Operation Barnabas District Workshop

that the MAF exists to recruit, prepare, endorse and support LCMS chaplains in their service to God and country.

Authorized by the Synod and registered with the Department of Defense, Chaplain Schreiber is the endorsing agent for LCMS military chaplains. Noting the "lifelong marriage" between his office and our chaplains, he describes the ongoing contact he has, including an annual visit with each chaplain. Through these visits and regular reports by phone and email, MAF helps the chaplains to stay connected with their church.

Each year, MAF gathers the chaplains at one of three pastoral

conferences, providing a rich opportunity for Lutheran worship, fellowship and study with LCMS seminary professors. Conversation is focused on the unique challenges of military chaplaincy.

## Operation Barnabas

Operation Barnabas, an extension of MAF, provides a network of care through trained congregations that want to reach out to members of the military, their families and the veterans in their congregations and communities.

When a parish pastor is called to active duty in a Reserve unit, Operation Barnabas supports the mobilized pastor, his family and his congregation, working through counselors they have trained and the pastor's district president.

America's sons and daughters are in harm's way in faraway lands, and our chaplains go with them. Their families wait in our communities, where the people of God support and care for them in our life together.

**Office of  
International Mission**

**Ministry to the  
Armed Forces**

**Annual  
Investment:  
\$600,288**

