



Woodlake United Methodist Church

November 8, 2011

Dear Members of Woodlake United Methodist Church,

We are so very blessed!

God has given us the greatest gift of all – eternal life and unconditional love in Jesus Christ! As we prepare for Thanksgiving, we are reminded of the importance of saying “thank you”. It’s polite to say thank you when you receive a gift.

How can you say thanks? One way is to share the love you have received with others who may feel unloved and alone in their troubles. Stephen Ministers say thanks to God by caring for others.

Earlier in September, Woodlake UMC commissioned our two Stephen Leaders and 10 Stephen Ministers, who have become an important part of the caring ministry here at Woodlake UMC. Since then, our Stephen Ministers and Leaders have continued our training and supervision, so that we may provide distinctive, one-to-one Christian care to persons in need on behalf of the congregation.

Stephen Ministers are trained to walk with a care receiver through a difficult time. Stephen Ministers are trained to listen and focus only on the care receiver’s issues and provide God’s compassion and love. Our Stephen Ministers, who are trained lay people, serve as the care givers - because only God is the cure giver! It is an intentional and confidential relationship that a Stephen Minister has with a care receiver, based on the four key compass points of the Stephen Ministry (compassionate, full of faith, skilled, and trustworthy).

As more and more of our congregation learn about and confidentially benefit from the Stephen Ministry offered here at Woodlake UMC, we are in need of more Stephen Ministers. So we must add an additional group of lay people from our congregation to undertake 50 hours of training in Christian caregiving. If you are filled with a desire to show compassion and allow your faith in Jesus Christ to humbly, confidentially and gracefully support others who are hurting – please prayerfully consider becoming a Stephen Minister.

Dan Long will be the Stephen Leader facilitating our upcoming training session, which is scheduled to begin in January 2012 and conclude in late March 2012. For more information about becoming a Stephen Minister, please attend a **Stephen Ministry informational meeting on Sunday November 20th at 12:30 pm Hampton Park** (Room 101) and/or contact me at 804.739.4535 ext. 32.

For God’s Glory,

Julie Warren

Julie Warren, RN

Director of Congregational Care