

**We are not all in the same boat.**



**We are all in the same storm.**

Dear Friends,

This wonderful illustration struck me as a perfect metaphor for what is happening right now. We are not all in the same boat. My boat is medium-sized and holds a husband as well as myself. My daughter's boat is larger: five of them fit inside (plus a cat). My friend's boat is very small; she's all alone in it. Another friend's boat is springing a leak. All of this is to say that everyone's reaction to the current situation of self-isolation and uncertainty is different.

I'm writing to you today to let you know that St. Paul's Stephen Ministry program — dormant the past couple of years — is alive and well and making a comeback! Our congregation's leaders have determined that some of us are really struggling with the worries that Covid-19 brings and that this extra help should be made available. You — or someone you know — may have issues of insufficient food, rent worries, job loss, or loneliness. You may be unwell yourself or caring for someone who is ill or you may be experiencing loss and grief. You may just need "someone to talk to."

Stephen Ministry is not counseling, and it does not replace contact with the Pastor. It is, instead, a program of Christian caregiving based on a model of active listening. It is completely confidential: only the referral coordinator and your Stephen Minister will know about the caregiving relationship. At present, Stephen Ministers will meet with folks by telephone, Skype, or FaceTime rather than in person.

If your boat is having difficulty navigating the current storm, or if someone you know is struggling with any of the difficulties mentioned above, a Stephen Minister may be able to be of help. I will be coordinating referrals and you can reach me by phone or email.

Remember how Jesus calmed the storm in Mark 4:35-41? Please give him a chance to calm the current storm for you through St. Paul's Stephen Ministry.

Nancy Stevens, Referral Coordinator

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