



The First United Methodist Church of LaGrange

**Christ the King Sunday
November 21, 2021 • Eleven o'clock**

Good morning and welcome to this classical celebration of the historic Christian faith in the Wesleyan Tradition!

Thank You, Stephen Ministers!

As we enter Thanksgiving week, I am incredibly grateful to the special men and women who offer care to those who are hurting. Our Stephen Ministers personify St. Paul's directive to "**Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ**" (Galatians 6:2).

Stephen Ministry is an interdenominational, international program that trains lay people in distinctively Christian care. Stephen Ministers are simply Christians with a heart of care. The basic philosophy of the ministry, which is named for St. Stephen, one of the first Christian deacons and martyrs, is that **someone who is walking a difficult path should not have to do it alone**; that having a companion on the way, someone outside of the family dynamics, can make the journey more bearable.

Those we commission this morning have received more than **50 hours of training** in active listening, focusing on process rather than goals, keeping confidentiality, and tapping into Christian resources. The training has been led by our Stephen Leader, **Hank Dobbins**.

From this point forward, these and our other Stephen Ministers are available to be matched with someone in need of additional support. The relationship is **confidential** and individual. The Stephen Minister meets with the care receiver, usually for about an hour once a week, in person or virtually, for as long as needed. The Stephen Minister listens, reflects back what they are hearing, does not try to fix or solve, prays with and for the care receiver, and provides a reliable presence, representing Jesus for that person.

Please join me in giving thanks for all of our Stephen Ministers: **Hank Dobbins, Linda Frano, Debra Jackson, Elaine McCook, Bonnie Norrick, Tom Pirkle, Byron Reed, Kay Scarborough, and Cheryl Weldon.**

"MY Church, HIS Way" Stewardship Series

As we enter 2022, I hope you will join me in declaring that "**This is MY Church!**" Whether you prefer traditional worship, modern worship, virtual worship, or small group interactions, **there's a place for you at LaGrange First Methodist!** Our church is a movement of people following a loving God and doing things "**HIS Way**" as we seek to Make and Grow Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World. This week, we will examine how **Our Church Exists for Others**.

I hope you are prayerfully considering how you can make a commitment of your time, talent, and financial resources in the upcoming year and say, "**Yes, we are the church together!**"

Are You Feeling Weak, Downcast, or Sad? Start Giving Thanks!

Dr. Albert Schweitzer, in his book, "*Reverence for Life*," writes: "So, when you feel weak, downcast, and sad, start giving thanks. Things will then go better. Force yourself to do it. And if your heart angrily objects and asks: What's the good? don't let it rest. Make it search then and there for something, anything, to be grateful for. Once you have found the first thing, other things will follow, and finally you will find yourself giving endless thanks." **Happy are they who in gratitude to God are armed for life!**

May you be armed for life and filled with transcendent joy as you give thanks to the Lord with your family and friends this Thanksgiving.

Remember how much I love you ...
It's an honor to be your Senior Minister!


Dr. John Beyers

We're Better Together!