

Immediate Support for the Newly Widowed

Needs Checklist

STEP 1: Immediate Needs to complete **with** the Worthy Widow:

- Funeral Arrangements / Memorial Service
- Deceased spouse's cell phone: notify people on contact lists (phone, email, Facebook, and other contact lists).
- Does the Worthy Widow want to use her spouse's cell phone? Take the phone to cell provider and have them merge the two phones for her.
- Are there any voicemail messages on either phone from her spouse? They may be lost in merging, so secure them first by saving on a voice recorder app AND attach them to an email so they are saved/can be accessed in multiple ways.
- Help her review her finances or help her reach a trusted person to help her. Refer to the "Financial Checklist Suggestions" on page _____.

STEP 2: Immediate Needs to complete **for** the Worthy Widow:

- Create a Worthy Widow support fund - cheques, gift cards, paid utility bills, etc. - to help her through the first several weeks.
- Go grocery shopping for her - purchase the staples (milk, bread, eggs, coffee, toilet paper, etc.). Stock up on items that are easy to "heat and eat" or healthy options such as pre-made salads. Think about what you would need daily and specifically ask her if she has run out of those items.
- Set up a meal delivery plan such as "Meal Train" or "Take Them a Meal."
- Does she have young children who need care? Or older children who need a ride to various places? Offer to entertain children (take them out to a movie, have them over for a movie at your house, bake cookies, do crafts, games, etc.).
- Offer to get her out of the house. Take her out for coffee, dinner, a movie, or a walk in the park. Take her to your home for dinner or stay at her home and share a cup of coffee or a meal. Be available for her.
- Household chores - what needs to be done? Don't forget important matters like laundry, cleaning the bathrooms, vacuuming, and doing the dishes.
- Spouse's belongings - offer to help box them up for the Worthy Widow to go through at a later date. She may not want anyone touching anything just yet, and that's okay. Offer to help whenever she is ready.
- Anything broken down in the home? Does she have a repairman already established? If not, help her find one.
- Yard maintenance - does she now need someone to manage the yard? Help with this as well.

* NOTE: When you need to use a paid service, find sponsors who may be willing to pay for such services. Reach into your network of friends to find skilled help; don't be afraid to negotiate work on the Worthy Widow's behalf.