

COTRH ELDER'S WIDOW CARE

The following policy describes the care COTRH Elders intend to offer to the widows of our church body. The policy is intended as a minimum standard of care and is articulated here for two purposes: 1) the policy informs a widow of the oversight she can expect from COTRH Elders and wives. 2) The policy informs the Elder Couple of what is expected of them in caring for eligible widows.

1 Timothy 5:4-16

⁴ But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household and to make some return to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God. ⁵ She who is truly a widow, left all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day, ⁶ but she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives. ⁷ Command these things as well, so that they may be without reproach. ⁸ But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

⁹ Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband, ¹⁰ and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work. ¹¹ But refuse to enroll younger widows, for when their passions draw them away from Christ, they desire to marry ¹² and so incur condemnation for having abandoned their former faith. ¹³ Besides that, they learn to be idlers, going about from house to house, and not only idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not. ¹⁴ So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no occasion for slander. ¹⁵ For some have already strayed after Satan. ¹⁶ If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her care for them. Let the church not be burdened, so that it may care for those who are truly widows.

Immediate Assistance (first 7 to 10 days) – Assigned Elder Couple

Liaison:

In the immediate aftermath of a death there is often a landslide of support, a landslide that can be too much to bear. If desired, the Elder Couple may serve as liaison between the widow and the general public for the immediate season, protecting the grieving family from well-meaning but unwanted intrusion. The Elder Couple is available to the widow for the discerning of the family's needs and to speak to the general public on behalf of the grieving.

Meals:

If desired, ensure that someone is coordinating meals for the family.

Financial Assistance:

The Missions Committee holds \$1000.00 in reserve for immediate assistance in the case of a spouse's death. This money is available to the assigned Elder Couple to be used at their discretion. It is intended to provide immediate relief for outstanding bills, funeral expenses, family travel, etc.

First Year Assistance – Assigned Elder Couple

Process Details:

The Elder Couple is not responsible to perform these tasks themselves, only to ensure that they are being performed in a professional manor. Of course, the Elder Couple must also recognize that they are there to serve the widow in the absence of family. If the family is available to handle these details it is their privilege and responsibility. The Elder Couple must give deference to family.

- Help shut down deceased husband's business affairs
- Help process insurance issues
- Help process investment issues
- Help price and sell deceased husband's equipment

Financial Assistance:

If necessary, help the widow apply for financial support through COTRH Benevolence Committee.

Resources Evaluation:

Begin regular, ongoing interview style Resource Evaluations (see below)

Long Term, Ongoing Assistance (Quarterly) ... Assigned Elder Couple

We recognize there are many life changes that follow the death of a spouse and many of them are of a very personal nature. With this in mind, COTRH Elder Couples are happy to provide the following service but make eligibility contingent upon to prerequisites;

- *The widow must agree to the invitation of the Elder Couple.*
- *The widow makes herself eligible by annually renewing Covenant with COTRH*

Resources Evaluation:

A suggested interview style evaluation of the widow's current resources consisting of questions based on the four relationships in "When Helping Hurts" by Corbett & Fikkert:

- Are you receiving what you need from your relationship with God?
- Are you healthfully maintaining your own mind and body?
- Is your relationship with your friends and family mutually beneficial?
- Is your property and resources in good order?

Also, the Elder Couple will help them recognize what they have to contribute to the situations of their life by making them aware of their own assets (resources, skills, social connections, wisdom, etc).