

Dear W.C.,

I am requesting assistance for a woman that attends my church. I used to see her every Sunday and at every church function. We became friends over the years and often sat together. She is a widow and has a daughter that is a missionary overseas. About eight weeks ago she stopped coming to church. I noticed she was on our prayer chain list but I still did not know what happened to her. Since we didn't really know each other outside of church I couldn't call her or visit. I finally asked our Pastor about her and he confided she was having some health problems but could not share with me the details. I gave him a letter containing my phone number to call me if she would like someone to visit or pray with her. After several weeks she finally called me. She was much sicker than I could have imagined. She told me she had been struggling with diabetes since she was a child. Due to the diabetes she has Peripheral Arterial Disease that caused the blood flow to stop to one of her legs. She had her leg amputated and has had a few setbacks since the surgery. I went to visit her and was upset by the condition I found her in. I had brought over several meals that would be easy for her to warm up on her own. When I put them in her refrigerator I did not see any food. I asked her if she had anyone to do shopping for her but she would not answer. All she kept saying was she is fine. I also noticed it was cold in her home. It was cool outside when I visited so I was surprised she did not have any heat on. When I mentioned the chill in the air she told me she liked it cold, but I noticed the blanket wrapped around her. I really wish I could help this woman. She has had a lot of hardship in her life and I know she is a very good person. She raised her daughter on her own after her husband's death in a motorcycle accident years ago. Her daughter will not be home for another six months yet as she is serving the poor in India. I doubt her mother told her how serious things are at home. This woman had two part-time jobs before her amputation but she has had to quit since the surgery. Could you please check in on this woman as I know she is hiding what you call the "pains of poverty" .

Dear Readers,

There are so many in our community that continue to struggle in poverty. If our caring and sharing neighbors do not bring them to our attention our fellow creations are suffering behind closed doors in the pains of poverty. I commend this friend, only an acquaintance actually, that took the initiative to check on this woman. She followed her intuition that told her something was not right. She was not as bold as I am in asking questions and persistently seeking out answers but she took the time out of her busy schedule as a full-time employed single mother to check on someone she knew was less fortunate. She took the time to notice a fellow creation in need.

I met our letter writer at the address she provided. After introducing ourselves we walked together up the steps to the woman's home. I noticed the obvious signs of neglect and deterioration of the older home. I also noticed the older windows and doors that no doubt made the home impossible to heat or cool efficiently. There also was the issue of the stairs leading to the entrances on both the front and rear of the home. How could a woman recovering from an amputation be going up and down these steep stairs? I knew this would

not be an easy visit and transformation. This woman would indeed need a transformation to her life as she had been living it.

We knocked on the door and waited patiently for the woman to answer. We soon heard the shuffle of a walker slowly making its way to the door. We saw the curtain pulled aside on the window next to the door and then the door opened slowly. The friend from church stepped through the door first and introduced me to the woman. I could see the confusion and embarrassment on the face of the woman as she leaned on her walker. She politely invited us both inside, still not knowing why I was there. The friend from church explained who I was and about The Time Is Now to Help. The woman looked surprised at first but then I saw the tears threatening to fall. Not wanting us to see her tears fall the woman turned and shuffled her walker to the next room. We followed the woman into her small home. I watched as she tried to maneuver her walker around an old overstuffed chair and large dented coffee table. She struggled to get through the small rooms that were far from ideal for her current medical state. I also noticed the chill in the air and the fleece jacket the woman wore inside. I would find out the real needs of this woman as I rarely take no or "I'm fine" for an answer.

We finally sat and I watched the look of relief and fatigue on the woman's face. She rubbed her shoulders and arms as they were probably sore from their constant use to keep her balance and mobility. I asked some polite questions about the women and the church they attended. I asked how long they had known each other and what were their favorite events they attended together. Then I told the woman with the amputated limb about her friends concerns for her wellbeing. The woman looked surprised but did not deny any of the things her friend was worried about. I asked about her food insecurity, her utility conservation and her job loss. I told her how I needed to know everything about her finances if I was going to get her the help she required. After some more conversation and many questions the woman finally agreed she was in need of help. She broke down into tears as she shared her distress and fear. She directed her friend to where her bills and checks were kept and asked her to get them for her. The friend offered to leave so we could talk in private but the woman said, "You brought The Time is Now to Help here to check on me. You are a true friend. I would like you to stay if you don't mind."

While I looked over her finances the friend prepared a plate for the woman with the food she had brought for her. She had taken the extra precautions to follow her strict diet plan required by her diabetes. We both noticed how the woman ate quickly as if she had not eaten for days. The friend said, "I'm sorry I have not been here to drop off food for the last few days. Both my kids were sick and I did not want to bring over their bug. I also had to take off work while they were sick and I have already used up all my sick days." The woman answered, "You do not have to bring me food every day. You have enough to worry about raising those children on your own. I am so grateful for all you have done for me already." I watched as the women reached out and held each other's hand with tears in their eyes. The friend asked the woman why she had not allowed anyone else from the church to help. The woman said, "I am not always a wise woman. I went to church every week and listened to the word of God. I thought I was being a good Christian and volunteering at church. But I did not know how to accept help when it was offered to me. I am so grateful you both intervened and showed me how I can receive as well as give. I let my pride get in the way." The woman

vowed to be open to help in the future not only from The Time Is Now to Help but also from her church family.

After the woman had eaten a good meal and I was done reviewing her financial position I had a better understanding of her needs. I saw she owned the home and was still struggling to make payments on it, to the point of skipping meals, shutting off utilities and missing out on other daily necessities in order to make the payments. I knew she needed to get into an apartment she could easily afford with her disability payments when she was hopefully approved. I asked the woman if she had considered this option and she said she had. The woman said, "I have been so overwhelmed as this happened so fast. I did not really have time to prepare. I thought I would always be able to afford this old place but it is time for me to move on. It will be months before I can safely maneuver those steps and the utility bills are so high." I asked about the daughter and the woman shared her daughter would not be back for six months and then she was planning on going to work at a camp for children with disabilities. She was very proud of her daughters caring and sharing heart and did not want her to feel she needed to give up her dreams to stay home and care for her. I could see the woman did need help though so I suggested two volunteers that I knew would be perfect for this woman's needs. They both had experience with disabilities and one was a retired RN. They could help in addition to any volunteers she would now accept from her church family.

I made my list of assistance and went over it with the two women. I suggested a budget friendly one bedroom first floor apartment. I also suggested giving away some of the large bulky furniture. The friend suggested several families at their church that could use some furniture. After a brief tour around the apartment I noticed the need for a new bed, she was sleeping in the same mattress she had slept in for forty years. I added a new bed to be delivered once she was moved in her apartment. I told the woman how we would be paying her overdue utilities and providing some nutritious food and desperately needed toiletries. The woman told me her neighbor had been asking her for years if she wanted to sell her home. His son was a carpenter and wanted to live next door to his parents. The woman said she would contact the neighbor about selling her home. These changes would give her the life changing assistance she needed to remove her pains of poverty. This would also allow her to concentrate her efforts on healing and learning to eventually use a prosthetic. The woman was enthusiastic about this prospect and even was hopeful to get a part-time job again in the future.

Within a month we had the woman moved into an accessible one bedroom apartment. Her home was cleaned out and sold to the neighbor. She agreed to sell at a reasonable price that allowed a quick sale. She did not make any money on the sale of the home but she did get the financial relief of no longer struggling to make the payments and keep up with the high utility bills. The woman could now easily get to therapy and doctors appointments without the help needed to maneuver the steps. She was more social and again able to attend church. The friend now picked her up and dropped her off each Sunday. They also shared a Sunday meal but now and were able to take turns cooking as the woman was again able to cook and could afford food once more. The volunteers were no longer needed but they said they had formed a friendship and stopped by just for a visit from time to time.

With The Time Is Now to Help and several good friends on her side she could once more participate in life and even enjoy it. When I paid my last visit she shared with me a letter from her daughter. In it her daughter expressed her concerns after hearing about the serious surgery her mother had endured. She also expressed her gratitude for all The Time Is Now to Help had done to provide assistance to her mother. I read the following words out loud, "I don't know how you would have gotten through all these things you told me in your last letter without the good people at The Time Is Now to Help. How I wish they had someone like that here in India. Knowing they are there doing all the right things and sharing God's love with you makes me so relieved. I can just imagine how it makes you feel. I love you so much Mom and do not want to lose you. Please tell The Time Is Now to Help how thankful I am and God Bless them!" We both had tears in our eyes when I finished reading her moving letter.

Please donate to our Barnabas \$50,000 Matching Grant. Your funds are desperately needed to provide the poverty stricken senior citizens, the handicapped, working poor families, children and veterans in our communities with shelter assistance, utility assistance, transportation assistance, food, toiletries and the many other daily necessities. Every dollar of your donation will be matched by the Barnabas \$50,000 Matching Grant doubling your donation and the poverty relief you provide. Thank you, thank you for your support in helping our fellow Americans in desperate need. God Bless "You" for your compassion and Caring and Sharing for God's creations.

Health & Happiness, God Bless Everyone, W.C./Sal

Please Help: There are many coming to us in desperation. Our good fellow creations need our compassion. Together we make a big difference. Make checks payable to: The Time Is Now to Help, P.O. Box 1, Lake Geneva, WI 53147. The Time Is Now to Help is a federally recognized 501(c)3 charitable organization licensed in the states of Wisconsin and Illinois. You will receive a tax deductible, itemized thank you receipt showing how your donation provided assistance for the poverty stricken.

A Very Special Thank You: Barnabas Matching Grant, Fox Charities, Kunes Country Auto Group, Gregg Kunes, Bess Spiva Timmons Foundation, The Harold & Bernice DeWeerd Family Foundation, Martin Business, The Dan & Donna Casey Family Charitable Fund, James & Lynne Newman Foundation, Lake Geneva Area Realty, Thomas Getzen, Donald & Emily Henderson, John & Marian McClellan, David & Shirley Heigl, Rita's Wells Street Salon, Shari & James Loback, Beth & Jody Rendall, William Lano, Joseph & Beth Pizzo, William Kowalke, William Antti, Michael & Sally Anne Chier, Mary Cairo, Judy Dishneau, Church of Jesus Christ LDS, Frank & Deborah Guido, Walter & Florence Strumpf, Michael & Barbara Lakin, Elaine Voss, Ernest & Dorothy Winters, Russo Drywall, Jeanne Allen, Lloyd Cornue, The Sowers House, Estate Art & Collectibles, Jeremiah Straube, Patricia Jankowski, Terry & Debra Pritchett, Paul Weinstock, our anonymous donors and ALL of you who support The Time Is Now to Help donation boxes, and the businesses that allow our donation boxes. Anyone who would like a Time Is Now donation box in your business, please call (262) 249-7000.

Memorials: John & Susan Holmes in memory of Nancy Lyon.

Prayer Chain: Please pray for healing for the following people: Mike, Caroline,

Susan, Jennifer, Clarence, Ryan, Jayden, Santana, Alex, Lily, Kaitlyn, Kynesha, Brandi's Grandma, Marilyn, Sal, Corinne.

Inspiration Ministries Resale Shop: Please donate your gently used household items and furniture to the Inspiration Ministries Resale Shop. For local pick up of major items or collection appointments please call (262) 275-2264. Inspiration Ministries Resale Shop is located at N2270 State Rd. 67, Walworth, WI 53184. New hours: Monday – Saturday 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Closed Sundays. Please visit often knowing your support will provide life changing assistance for the fellow creations in their care. Inspiration Ministries is home for up to 80 residents that live with multiple physical and mental challenges. I thank all of you for helping. For more information visit www.inspirationministries.org.

Please visit: www.timeisnowtohelp.org