

Dear W.C.,

I am currently living in a friend of a friend's basement with my two children, something I never imagined could happen to us. Last winter, my husband began experiencing unusual symptoms, but he ignored them while trying to work and support our family. Eventually, he became so ill that he was hospitalized, where we learned he had a rare form of cancer. After a very short and devastating battle, he passed away over the summer.

Because we had been struggling financially, my husband had not renewed his life insurance policy the previous year. After his passing, I was left with overwhelming medical bills and unpaid expenses that I could never pay. During the final two months of his life, I took significant time off work to care for him, which led to me losing my job. Without income, I fell behind on rent and lost our home. Soon after, I lost our newer car when I could no longer keep up with the payments.

After moving into a motel room for two days, all I could afford, an old friend let us move into their basement. The living conditions are not ideal, but at least we are not on the street. While I am grateful for their help, I am uncomfortable with their alcohol use and smoking, especially around my children. I desperately need to get us out of here but do not know how I can come up with the needed security deposit and first month's rent. I have recently found employment, but my car is unreliable and urgently needs repairs.

After learning about The Time is Now to Help, I felt compelled to reach out for assistance. I truly believe this may be my only chance to break free from this cycle and provide stability and safety for my children again.

Thank you for taking the time to read my story and for any consideration you may give.

Dear Readers,

This letter troubled me until I was able to contact the woman. I kept thinking about this widowed mother and two children, living in these conditions, not because of addiction, recklessness, or poor choices, but because life unraveled faster than anyone could have prepared her for. What struck me most was not just the depth of her hardship, but the quiet strength in her words and her determination to get them out of this situation.

Stories like hers are far closer to home than many realize. There are many families who were once working, paying rent, and doing "everything right." Yet one illness, one job loss, or one unexpected crisis was all it took to push them over the edge. When there is no safety net left, homelessness can happen quickly.

This mother has already found a job. She is doing the hard work of starting over. What she lacks is reliable transportation, and safe affordable housing. The things we together can provide, new tires, a car repair, a security deposit and first month's rent, were all provided as soon as possible. We provided peace and stability during a time of mourning and great stress.

There is a difference between compassion and action. We like to think our assistance contains both. When we come together, lives are transformed. Your generosity made the difference between a family remaining trapped in a bad situation or taking their next step toward independence. Please remember that behind every statistic is a name, a child, and a story like this one.

Together, we will continue to share the joy of Christmas and carry that spirit into the New Year, thanks to the Christmas Helping Hand Up \$50,000 Matching Grant and your generous matching donations. With every donation being doubled, we can multiply the poverty relief provided, restoring hope and easing suffering to those most in need.

Health & Happiness, Love & God Bless Everyone, 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. You will receive a tax deductible, itemized thank you receipt showing how 100% of your donation was used for providing poverty relief.

Please visit our website to read more of our past and current columns and/or to make a donation: www.timeisnowtohelp.org Please go to the home page, follow the yellow highlighted link that says WC Letters to see current and past columns.

A Very Special Thank You: Family Legacy Donors, Family Foundation, Wayne and Beverly Hilbelink, Kunes Family Foundation, Ziegler Charitable Foundation, Paul Ziegler, Jeff Martin, Bob and Nancy Webster, Mr. and Mrs. Phil Hagenah, Jim and Lynette Heimann, Dr. Mark and Cynthia Brower, Steven and Deidred Trumble, Doris Kushch, Mark and Sandra Schmitt, Lynda Adas, Colleen Heffernan, Thomas Morrissy, Sharon Jardas, Dan and Donna Casey Family Charitable Fund, Vanguard Charitable Endowment Program, Edward Hechmann, Lake Geneva Area Realty, Mr. and Mrs. Peter F. Vanderveld, American Endowment Foundation, HomeTown Auto Exchange, Kathleen and Brian Hurdis Charitable Fund, James and Cathy Beierle, Steve and Mary O'Connor, Gerald and Donna Gerndt, Rogers Klenske, Dick and Trae Torhorst, Maureen Gleason, Gregory Swanson, Sue Flynn, Kelly Tomaske, Ed McKeown, Estelle Reeder, Diane Emerson, Tracy Cromey, Karin Slayton, Richard Green, William Davit, John and Sally Dicmas, all of our anonymous donors and ALL of you who support The Time Is Now to Help. Anyone who would like a Time Is Now donation box in your business, please call (262) 249-7000.

Honoraries: Steve and Helen Buchanan in honor of their siblings and their brothers and sisters-in-laws.

Memorials: Dolores "Lor" Piotrowski in memory of beloved parents Gene and Lottie Piotrowski and best friend Martha "Dee" Valentine. Kent and Martha Johnson in memory of Ken Pagel.

Prayer Chain: The power of prayer and positive thoughts comes from the true healer, our Lord answering our prayers. Please pray for healing for the following people: Trae, Bill, Brian, Mike, Sylvia, Megan, Kayla, Maria C., Judy, Scott, Annie, Marilyn, Brandon, Helen, Dennis, Mary, Joseph, Jordan, Jean, Tom L., Dr. Peter, Matthew, Pam E., Jenene B., John S., Patricia H., Wendy, Eric, Anthony, Mary, Charlie, Tom P., Christina, Billy, Mike, Cheryl, Bryan E., Betty, Ellie, Concetta, Cheryl, Kirubel M., Wanda L., Joan, Bruce, and Andy.

Please visit: www.timeisnowtohelp.org