

RESPONDING TO THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE

LIFE GROUP GUIDE

“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:2

What follows is a compiled list of ways that various Life Groups can offer support to members who have experienced the death of a loved one. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. As you care for those that are grieving, you should discern how you might best care for them.

1. Be present with those who are mourning. Often referred to as the “ministry of presence,” be a comforting presence in their hours of greatest need.
2. Be quick to listen and slow to speak. You certainly don’t need to have all of the right things to say. Start by listening and be okay with silence.
3. Pray often, both with the person grieving and also, privately during those times of silence.
4. Be sure to communicate well with your Life Group, so that they are informed of all details related to your group’s care of the person and the arrangements that have been made.
5. While visiting their home, offer to take on any task that might be overwhelming at that moment, like answering the phone, meeting people at the door, and accepting food.
6. Ask if any practical help can be offered around their home, such as cleaning up around the house, doing yard work, and so on.
7. Offer to shop for personal or household items that may be needed in the home, such as groceries, household goods, and so on.
8. Help by offering to take them to appointments, picking up children at school, picking up family members at the airport, caring for pets, and so on.
9. Talk to them about plans for serving a meal to the family after the service. In doing so, offer to organize a meal for them. It may be helpful to use an online sign-up so that others can assist with the meal.
10. Provide snacks, water, coffee, tea, personal packages of tissue, and Tylenol or Ibuprofen in family areas. Consider making the room as pleasant as possible.
11. Offer to meet the florist or funeral home when they bring the flowers to the church and offer to help set up
12. Ensure that they have ordered a guest book, and if not, offer to pick one up for them.
13. Offer to coordinate for greeters, ushers, parking help, someone to hand out bulletins, several to help set up and serve food after the service, and help to clean up afterward. Again, consider using an online sign-up system to make sure every area is covered. Have the volunteers arrive thirty minutes early to ensure they understand their responsibilities.
14. Communicate effectively with the pastors and family about the appropriate details of the funeral. Be sure the pastors are aware of the family’s arrival time and the various people who will be serving the family on the day of the funeral.
15. Ask the family if they would like to display pictures during the service. If so, offer to pick them up prior to service, placing them throughout the worship center according to the family’s preference. Also, plan to collect the pictures after the service and return them to the family at an appropriate time.

Additional Resources:

- [Yes, You Should Say Something: Overcoming Awkwardness With Grieving People](#)
- [Loving Those Who Grieve](#)