

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Prayer shawls are given at times of difficulty or in times of celebration.

Two women from Connecticut, looking for an effective way to offer spiritual support to others, were the first to develop the practice of the Prayer Shawl Ministry. Since that time, the ministry has spread across North America.

Shawls large enough to wrap around one's shoulders are usually knit or crocheted, with the makers often prayerfully remembering the spiritual needs of another as they work toward the completion of the project. Often the promise is made, also, that the prayer will continue after the shawl has been given.

A 90 year old lady from another congregation phoned me one day when I was having my chemo to ask if she could come to visit and bring the shawl she had made for me. I was moved to tears by her thoughtfulness and support.

Sometimes the shawls are given to those celebrating a special occasion, but mostly they are meant to bring solace and comfort. Sometimes these are given from individual to individual, but in many congregations they are brought before the congregation for a sharing of the blessing.

A special note may accompany the giving. One such note read

*May this gift made for you with love be a mantle and sign of
God's sustaining presence.
May it refresh your weariness; surround you with comfort in
your suffering.
May it encircle you with healing from your pain; be a consolation
for your loneliness.*

How simple. How sincere. How blessed are those who are the recipients of this ministry.

(Notes by Joyce Sasse)