

White's Chapel United Methodist Church

Prayer Shawl Ministry



“Praises be to God...who comforts us in our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God”.
2 Corinthians 1:3-4

What is “Prayer Shawl Ministry?”

Simply put, a Prayer Shawl is a soft, warm shawl, knitted or crocheted, which is given to persons who are ill, have suffered a loss or are in the midst of a crisis.

Before the shawl is delivered it is prayed over by a minister. The shawl is then taken to the person prayed for with this note:

“This Prayer Shawl was made especially for you with love and prayer. It is a gift from your friends at White's Chapel United Methodist Church. The Prayer Shawl Ministry Team gathered in a circle and asked God to bless this shawl. It is our prayer that you receive comfort and solace as you wear it and that it will encircle you in God's love and peace, now and always.”

Are all the Shawls the Same?

There is no right or wrong way to create these gifts of love. They do not have to look alike nor be the same color. The patterns are simple and each shawl is one of a kind.

Shawls may be made with one of two thoughts in mind:

- As a gift for someone in need that will be given at the right future time.
- As a special shawl for a particular person you know who needs this blessing for their life.

Once finished, the shawls may be left at the church office. A label is attached that says “From the Knitting Needles of White's Chapel UMC.” Each completed shawl will be blessed and given to someone for whom it will become a meaningful blessing of love.

How are the Shawls Made?

Shawls are either knitted or crocheted and the instructions are simple. Each shawl takes three skeins of Lion Brand Homespun Yarn. You can purchase the yarn at Walmart, Hobby Lobby, Michaels or at any other fabric or craft store.

Here are the Instructions:

Knitted Prayer Shawls

Use size 13 needles.

These needles provide a loose weave and make the project go fast. The shawl should be approximately 56" long before fringe.

Begin by casting on 63 stitches.

Pattern:

Knit 3, purl 3, to the end of row.

Turn and repeat the pattern

Each row will begin with "Knit 3."

Before you begin your third skein, set aside the yarn you will need for making the fringe for both ends of the shawl. Then, knit until you finish the yarn. Attach fringe.

The fringe is made by cutting lengths of yarn about 8 inches long. Hold two together and fold in half. This creates four ends. Pull through and knot.

Crocheted Prayer Shawls

Use a 10 mm hook.

For fringe, cut at least 108 pieces of yarn 8 inches long; before beginning to crochet.

Ch 53. Turn. SC for 3 rows. Turn. In the second sc from hook. *do 3 dc sk1 st; sc in next st, sk1 stitch; in next stitch. Rep from*

For width of shawl. Ch 2. Turn. (You should have 13 dc shells across.) Note that the 3 dc shells are done in the center of the dc group in the row below.

Repeat this row until shawl is the desired length. End with 3 rows of sc.

Attach fringe to shawl.

History of the Prayer Shawl Ministry

The ministry was begun at West Des Moines United Methodist Church by a church Member, Mary Terp, after she learned of the power of the prayer shawl from a former member, Rich Luze, who is now part of Manchester United Methodist Church in St. Louis, Missouri.

Rich was seriously struggling with cancer and the church gave him a prayer shawl. He shared with Mary how powerful it was in his healing.

Mary thought it was a ministry their church should have. So she brought it back to West Des Moines from the Manchester church, which had gotten the idea from a church in Connecticut. And that circle of love continues to expand.

You can be part of the Prayer Shawl Ministry

The ministry team knits or crochets at their own leisure at home or as they travel. If you don't know how to do either, it's a simple pattern and easily taught.

There are several ways to be involved in this ministry:

- You can knit or crochet a shawl.
- You can share the name of a friend or loved one who is in need of God's blessings.
- You can support the ministry financially.

Blessings for Creating a Shawl

- Loving God, as I create this shawl, may it be woven with love and compassion for _____ in her/his time of need. May it be a sign of hope and caring from our family of faith. Amen.
- Loving God, as I work to create this shawl, may it become a sign of your love and concern as _____ faces treatment in the days ahead. Amen.
- As I create this shawl, may you guide my hands and my thoughts. I pray for _____ in her/his time of need, trusting that this gift will be a reminder to her/him of your love and concern which surrounds us all our days. Amen.

Blessings for a Completed Shawl

- God of grace and God of glory, you alone know what _____ and his/her family need at this time. Surround them with your loving peace that they might find solace and comfort in You. Amen.
- God of love, surround _____ with your tender mercy in this time of struggle and sorrow. May this shawl be a source of comfort and the warmth of your love in the days ahead. Amen.
- God, we know that you are with us in the midst of the toils and struggles of our lives. May this shawl be a sign of that presence and a source of tender hope and peace for _____ in this time of need. Amen.
- Loving God, may the rhythm of the rows and stitches all tied together be a sign to _____ of the tie that binds us all together—that of your love and mercy.