

The Prayer Shawl Ministry of Christ Church was established on August 12, 2004, under the direction of The Rev. Gena Adams Riley. Rev. Gena and Susan Vaillant had discovered the book "Knitting into the Mystery" earlier that year and were inspired to organize our Christ Church Prayer Shawl Ministry. Fourteen knitters gathered on this first occasion of whom three are still with us. In 2004, fifty shawls and blankets were given away. Twenty-two women participated that year. Since then, over 100 women have contributed their time, skill, and money to the ministry. About fifteen hundred (1500) shawls, blankets, lap robes, hats and scarves have been given away to Christ Church parishioners, family members, friends, and strangers. The number continues to grow. The monetary contributions by the individual knitters and crocheters is monumental. Yarn was purchased by the ministry for a Joseph's Coat* shawl once, but the money for it had been donated by a grateful recipient. With a few exceptions of donated yarn, the knitters and crocheters have purchased the yarn themselves.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry is not really about the knitting and crocheting or the time or money spent to make the hand-crafted items. It is about prayer, sharing God's presence in our lives, and caring for one another and others. This is a meaningful, prayerful, quiet and heartfelt ministry. It is the hope of our knitters and crocheters that the items prayerfully made and given will offer comfort and a sense of well-being to the recipients and they will feel God's love and peace.

We welcome new crocheters and knitters. All skill levels are invited. We have supplies of needles and some yarn to get beginners started on a project. Hands-on instruction is available by our members. Your participation in this ministry is not dependent on your ability to attend our gatherings. Most of our knitting and crocheting is done at home. Simple patterns and suggested sizes are available.

A few prayer shawls have been placed on a stand just inside the front doors of the church that may be used during services. If you are a bit chilly or just want something to hold, pick up a prayer shawl to use. It is the hope of the Prayer Shawl Ministry that these items prayerfully made will offer comfort and a sense of well-being to the borrowers and they will feel God's love and peace. If it would be meaningful to you to have the prayer shawl that you borrow, you are welcome to it. Please write your name on the blue card that is attached to the shawl, detach it and turn in the card to the office or place it in the offering plate. If you know of a need in the parish, please, contact Rev. Katie.

Our Prayer Shawl Ministry meets on the third Thursday of each month at 9:30 AM. in the parlor or the old library. The meeting consists of prayer, ten minutes of silence, blessing of the new items and a time of sharing with one another. You are welcome to join us any time.

The following passage concludes the notes written by Susan Vaillant from the first gathering.

"We give thanks to the Lord for preparing the way for us to come together, to knit for those in need of His comfort, love, hope, joy and His peace, and knit us together in His love."

"But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love." Ephesians 4:15-16

*A Joseph's Coat shawl is one made of many colors of yarn and passed around our circle so that everyone may add a few stitches and be a part of its making and the prayers.