

Healing Prayer Shawls

by Katie Cunningham

Healing prayer Shawls (see article on page 19, Summer 05 *Leader*) can be knitted or crocheted in various colors and sizes. The Mennonite Women at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church started with a pattern developed by the Women's Leadership Institute at Hartford Seminary.

Three skeins of Lion Brand Homespun acrylic yarn are recommended, but other kinds are also appropriate. Using size 13 needles, cast on 68 stitches and knit 3 purl 3. The knitting goes fast and gives a soft loose weave. Smaller needles or crochet hooks make a denser shawl. The men seem to prefer a denser weave and with shorter fringe than the women and a few shawls have been made with only two skeins. I have encouraged women to adapt the pattern to fit their skill level so we have had a variety of beautiful designs.

We deliver the prayer shawls in an attractive gift bag with tissue paper. This is the printed prayer which is used before knitting:

“O Lord, Bless this yarn and these needles. May this shawl be a sign of your healing presence: may it warm those who are weary, surround those who suffer and encircle those who are in pain. May your gentle touch reach out to heal in the light of Christ. Amen.”

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