

**Knitting Ministry**  
**of St. John's United Church, Halifax, NS**

**PRAYER SHAWL PATTERN**

Knitting prayer shawls is a wonderful way to both create something of beauty and comfort for someone who is suffering at the same time as you pray for them and for yourself.

**Method:**

Each time you pick up the needles to knit, first take some time to read the following selection from Psalm 139 in which God is described as a “knitter” of humans. Then say a prayer in whatever manner is comfortable for you for the future wearer of the shawl. Since you don't know who that will be you can just offer up prayers for well-being, comfort and health for the future wearer etc...Please offer up prayers for the Pastoral Care Team who will be delivering the shawls and finally, offer prayers to God for yourself and your concerns. Be sure to include prayers of thanksgiving in all of these.

You will need: 500 g./18 oz. of bulky wool on size 7 mm. (UK 2) needles. (You may prefer to use even larger needles, up to 10 mm. (UK 000/US 15).  
 Finished dimensions should be approximately 22 inches wide by 60 inches long.

Cast on 63 stitches or some multiple of 3 – the 3 stitches represent the Trinity – God, Jesus and Holy Spirit.

Row 1(Right Side): \*Knit 3, purl 3. Repeat across row.

Row 2 (Wrong Side): Knit the purl and purl the knit stitches as the stitches face you.

Row 2	—	—	—	□	□	□	—	—	—	□	□	□	Row 1
	— 6-st Pattern repeat —						Beginning Panel						

- = k on right side, p on wrong side
- = p on right side, k on wrong side

**To read the chart:**

Read **Row 1 from right to left**. It is the **Right Side** row.  
 Read **Row 2 from left to right**. It is the **Wrong Side** row.

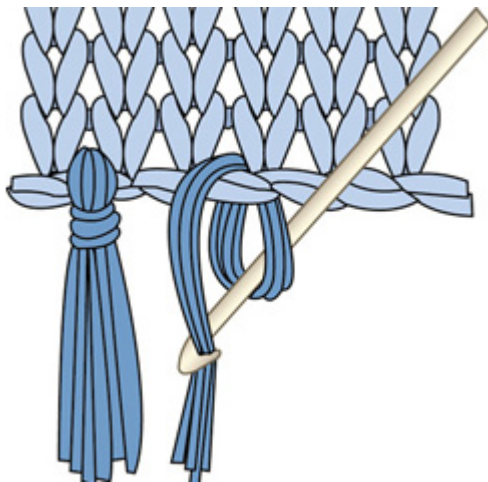
Since this pattern is completely reversible, there is no “Right” or “Wrong” Side row. It applies only while you are knitting the shawl.

Continue to work in this pattern until you come to about third of a ball (or so) of yarn left. You will need this extra yarn to form the fringes on both ends of the shawl. The fringes will not only decorate your shawl, but will add length.

This is the pattern for the entire shawl, after some time you will notice a pattern of rows and ridges. It is only observable after you have done quite a bit of knitting. Is this not like life? Sometimes it is only in the living of many individual days and groups of days that we discern a pattern of the great “Knitter.”

Add fringes to the ends of the shawl when finished. (About 4 inches). The fringes put a beautiful finishing touch on the garment. Indeed, the fringes make the shawl. So it is for our own lives and deaths – a life well lived in service and love is evident in how some choose to die. A faith-filled death forms the fringes on the shawls of our lives.

#### To make the fringe:



Take your remaining yarn and cut lengths of yarns, 8 inches each. Take 3 strands at a time and, using a crochet hook, attach them along each end (as shown in the diagram). Space them evenly along the edge.

#### Psalm 139: 13-18

For it was you who formed my inward parts;  
 You knit me together in my mother's womb.  
 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
 Wonderful are your works;  
 That I know very well.  
 My frame was not hidden from you,  
 When I was being made in secret,  
 Intricately woven in the depths of the earth.  
 Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.  
 In your book were written all the days that  
 Were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed  
 How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!  
 How vast is the sum of them!  
 I try to count them—they are  
 More to me than the sand;  
 I come to the end—I am still with you. (NRSV)

September 2006