



About Shawls...

**Shawls have been made for centuries;
They are universal and embracing;
They comfort and enfold; wrap and warm;
Mother and hug; shelter and beautify.**

Those who knit or crochet and receive shawls are loved and blessed.

Shawl Knitting| Crocheting: A Ministry of Love & Connection

A group of women who participated in the first Women's Leadership Institute at Hartford Seminary, Hartford, CT, began this shawl knitting/crocheting ministry in 1998. Vicky Galo started knitting shawls for women who were undergoing treatment for breast cancer and other illnesses; Janet Bristow started knitting shawls for new mothers. Other members of the Institute began knitting shawls for their friends, family members, and people who just needed a shawl.

People knit or crochet shawls for many different reasons. Shawls celebrate birthdays and anniversaries, friendship and love, and professional and personal achievements. If one could wear the heartfelt sentiments you often find in a greeting card, it would be as a shawl. Shawls console those who are grieving, comfort those who are ill, bring hope to those who are in despair. Parents knit shawls for their children; children knit shawls for aging parents. The reasons to knit a shawl are as numerous as the people who knit and receive them.

Cathy Murtha, a Daughter of Wisdom and Director of The Spiritual Life Center in Bloomfield, CT, introduced this ministry to many people at the Spiritual Life Center. Cathy creates Wisdom Mantles for making significant passages in women's lives when they claim their unique gift of Wisdom.

Susan Izard, a UCC minister at First Church in West Hartford, CT, wrote an article about this shawl knitting ministry for *Presence: The Journal of Spiritual Directors International* in September of 2000. As a result, people all over the world are knitting, crocheting and receiving these wonderful gifts of love.

This ministry continues to grow. When you wear your shawl, you are connected with many people throughout the world. May you knit or crochet the shawl you give away with love, may you be blessed by the shawls that you knit/crochet and receive, and may you extend that blessing to those you love.

This text adapted by Susan S. Jorgensen from the original by Victoria A. Cole-Galo and Janet Bristow, 2002. All rights reserved.