
BLESSING OF THE PRAYER SHAWLS

OPENING PRAYER

God of love and comfort, we gather together to celebrate one of the ministries of Divine Street United Methodist Church. We give thanks for the opportunity - out of love and out of concern for our Christian brothers and sisters - to share a tangible gift to those in need: the gift of the prayer shawl. While we know that you are always present in our lives and that your love transcends all tragedy, illness and pain, we also know that sometimes a physical reminder can bring hope, healing and peace to someone who is crying out. We pray that these prayer shawls bring comfort to those who will receive them.

Oh God, open our eyes so that we might see, open our ears so that we might hear, and open our minds so that we might know who is in need of your healing power and presence. Open our hearts so that we might reach out to them. Amen.

AFFIRMATION OF OUR PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Without even knowing who would receive it, each shawl was made specifically for the person who will receive it. **May each recipient see the intricate love and care given to this shawl, mirroring the intricate love and care that God bestows upon all people.**

Each shawl was made to bring warmth to someone who feels a chill.

May each person feel the warm breath of the Holy Spirit as they wrap themselves with it.

Each shawl was made to bring comfort to someone who feels alone

May each one feel comfort in knowing that someone prayed for them as they pieced it together.

Each shawl was made to bring peace to someone in need of prayer.

May every one feel the power of our prayers as they feel the yarn winding through their fingers.

Each shawl was made to remind the recipient that they are part of this community.

May they all feel touched by our love, moved by our guidance, and held up by our support.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

God of creation, redemption and sustaining grace, we praise you for the opportunity to take part in this ministry so that we might see a world beyond ours. We thank you for putting those in need on our hearts and in our minds so that we might fully live out your call to love and serve. We ask that you bless these shawls and those who will receive them. May the power of the Holy Spirit live and breathe within each one of us through these shawls and through the lives that they will touch. May they feel the love, comfort and peace of your presence.

May your light shine in them and be a beacon of the hope that is promised to all of us. Amen.

BLESSING OF OUR COMMITMENTS

OPENING PRAYER

Oh Lord, giver of life and source of our freedom, we are reminded that yours is “the earth in its fullness; the world and those who dwell in it.” We know that it is from your hand that we have received all we have and are and will be. Gracious and loving God, we understand that you call us to be the stewards of your abundance, the caretakers of all you have entrusted to us. Help us always to use your gifts wisely and teach us to share them generously. **May our faithful stewardship bear witness to the love of Christ in our lives. We pray this with grateful hearts in Jesus’ name. Amen.**

AFFIRMATION OF OUR GIFTS

Children of God, we give thanks for the ways that we have been blessed by God. We seek to invite, welcome, receive, and care for those who are strangers. We want to offer radical hospitality! **We are blessed! We receive God’s love and offer it to others.**

People of faith, we give thanks for the ways that we have been blessed by our faith. We ask God to shape our hearts and minds through prayer, personal devotion, and passionate community worship. **We are blessed! Our faith showers us with blessings, and we respond in the way we love God!**

Body of Christ, we give thanks for the ways that we have been blessed by the people around us. We want to grow in grace and mature in Christ through intentional faith development. **We are blessed! Our community surrounds its people with prayers, with love and with care as we learn in community!**

Members and friends of Divine Street United Methodist Church, we give thanks for the ways that we have been blessed by our church. Through risk taking mission and ministry, we offer ourselves, our gifts, our abilities and passions, to God. May God use us to transform the world. **We are blessed! Our church is such a blessing to so many people as we serve!**

Beautiful People of God, we give thanks for the ways that we have been blessed through the sharing of gifts. We long to be extravagantly generous because of extraordinary sharing, willing sacrifice, and joyous giving out of love for God and neighbor. **We are blessed! God uses our giving to reconfigure our interior lives and form us anew. Our faithful response to God is in our giving back.**

PRAYER OF BLESSING

God of creation, redemption and sustaining grace, we praise you for the opportunity to take part in the ministries of this your church so that we might see a world beyond ours. We thank you for putting those in need on our hearts and in our minds so that we might fully live out your call to love and serve. We ask that you bless these gifts and those who will benefit from them. **May we all feel the love, comfort and peace of your presence, and may your light shine in us and be a beacon of the hope that is promised to all of us. Amen.**