

## **Prayer Shawl**

by [Suzanne Underwood Rhodes](#) in the [January 2023](#) issue

The work of a prayer shawl  
is to love the weight it holds,  
the blue yarns heavy with the ache  
of shoulders, of cold like winter rain,  
the gray yarns grave as tears. A voice struggles  
to rise from the wool, but the cry fails and falls  
and the hurt breast is unconsolated.

But the Galilee ladies who gather on Sundays  
to knit their prayers into a woman's fear  
and hug her prayers into theirs, know  
that in the diamond honeycomb stitch,  
or the hurdle and purl ridge stitches,  
hope turns and casts on the heart's fibers  
and the ladies believe, needles flashing.