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## Wholehearted Prayer Square

by Will Gillespie

*Heartfelt thanks to waldonia (Ravelry name) for inspiring this interfaith variation of a prayer square.*

*This prayer square uses double knitting to create a fully reversible heart design. Its texture invites you to hold it and trace its surface as you spend moments in reflection. Small enough to slip into a pocket, the square is useful to take with you through life as a tactile aid for prayer or meditation.*

### Needles, Notions, and Notes

- US 7 or 8 (4.5 or 5 mm) needles (straight or circular is fine) or your preferred needle size to work garter stitch. Gauge in garter stitch-based pattern = 4 sts per inch; blocked square is 3.75" x 3.75"
- 6 to 10g (12 to 20yds) of solid color, worsted weight yarn; select a yarn that wears well and feels good under your fingers to invite handling. Samples shown: Berroco Vintage (color 5120 Gingham); Harrisville Designs Highland (light pink: Color 34 Aster; dark pink: Color 35 Chianti)
- optional locking stitch marker (to indicate RS); or, note location of tail for RS / WS reference

Can be worked on different sized needles and yarn; simply use needles that would typically pair with the weight yarn you have chosen to yield a pleasing fabric. For instance, using sport weight yarn and US 5 or 6 needles would yield a smaller square. Yardage may vary.

*The cast on edge may tend to be smaller than the rest of fabric, especially if piece remains unblocked. Two strategies to address this in the knitting are to use needles for the cast on that are 1 or 2 sizes larger than the main needle size used, or to try a cast on with more body than the long-tail method, such as the knitted or cabled cast-on or a German twisted cast-on.*

### Glossary

**k** - Knit.

**kfb** - Knit into the front of the stitch, leaving the stitch on the needle, and then knit into the back of the same stitch. Increases 1 stitch

**k1-sl1wyif** - Knit one stitch, slip next stitch purlwise with yarn in front. Return yarn to back of work.

**RS** - right side / side of work on which all shaping takes place

**ssk** - Slip 2 stitches knitwise, then knit slipped stitches together. Decreases 1 stitch

**st(s)** - stitch(es)

**WS** - wrong side / side of work on which no stitches are added or removed

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May you be strengthened on your journey in courage, humility, and compassion.

## Wholehearted Prayer Square Directions

Underlined sections indicate the double-knit heart.

*Repeated rows are followed by a little mini-tracker to help with counting rows.*

Cast on 15 stitches using preferred method (see note about cast on edge). Turn work, note location of tail to mark RS row; or, place locking stitch marker in first stitch before working Row 1.

**Rows 1-2:** K15.

**Row 3 (RS):** K7, kfb, k7. (16 sts)

**Rows 4-6:** K7, k1-sl1wyif, k7. (16 sts)

**WS, / RS, WS**

**Row 7 (RS):** K6, kfb, k1-sl1wyif, kfb, k6. (18 sts)

**Row 8 (WS):** K6, k1-sl1wyif 3 times, k6. (18 sts)

**Row 9 (RS):** K5, kfb, k1-sl1wyif 3 times, kfb, k5. (20 sts)

**Rows 10-12:** K5, k1-sl1wyif 5 times, k5. (20 sts)

**WS, / RS, WS**

**Row 13 (RS):** K4, kfb, k1-sl1wyif 5 times, kfb, k4. (22 sts)

**Row 14 (WS):** K4, k1-sl1wyif 7 times, k4. (22 sts)

**Row 15 (RS):** K3, kfb, k1-sl1wyif 7 times, kfb, k3. (24 sts)

**Rows 16-22:** K3, k1-sl1wyif 9 times, k3. (24 sts)

**WS, / RS, WS, / RS, WS, / RS, WS**

**Row 23 (RS):** K3, k1-sl1wyif 4 times, ssk, k1-sl1wyif 4 times, k3.  
(23 sts)

**Row 24 (WS):** K3, k1-sl1wyif 4 times, k1, k1-sl1wyif 4 times, k3.  
(23 sts)

**Row 25 (RS):** K3, ssk, k1-sl1wyif twice, ssk, k1, ssk,  
k1-sl1wyif twice, ssk, k3. (19 sts)

**Row 26 (WS):** K4, k1-sl1wyif twice, k3, k1-sl1wyif twice, k4.  
(19 sts)

**Row 27 (RS):** K4, ssk twice, k3, ssk twice, k4. (15 sts)

**Rows 28-29:** K15.

**WS, / RS**

**Row 30 (WS):** Bind off 15 sts: k1; \*k1, pass previous st over st just worked, repeat from \* to end, being careful to keep tension loose enough for piece to lie flat. Proceed to finishing.

## Finishing

After finishing bind off row, break yarn, weave in tails, and add tassel at cast on edge centered below the bottom of the heart. Wet or steam block finished piece, pinning into shape, for a clean-looking finish. If using a yarn with animal fiber such as wool, wet block (soak, squeeze out excess, pat to shape, dry). If using an acrylic or similar fiber, steam block (pin to shape, steam with steam setting on an iron, hand pat as needed).

Feel free to embellish with crochet or embroidery to personalize the design! If desired, you could *lightly* stuff the heart (with short bits of yarn, wool fluff, lavender, etc.) after row 21 by slipping the slipped stitches to a separate cable needle during half of the underlined section. On row 22, work each separated k1-sl1wyif as follows: k1 from cable needle, slip next stitch on left needle purlwise to right needle. *Overstuffing the heart may make it more difficult to tuck into a pocket.*

## Easy tassel method

Fold a 4-foot length of yarn into four lengths of about 12" long. Fold this bundle in half for tassel. Insert crochet hook through center of cast on row, catch fold in tassel strands, and pull through enough to make a loop; now use crochet hook to catch up all tassel strands and pull them through the loop. If your cast on tail is long enough, you can weave to the center and thread it into the tassel. Tighten and adjust as needed, and trim ends to desired length.

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