

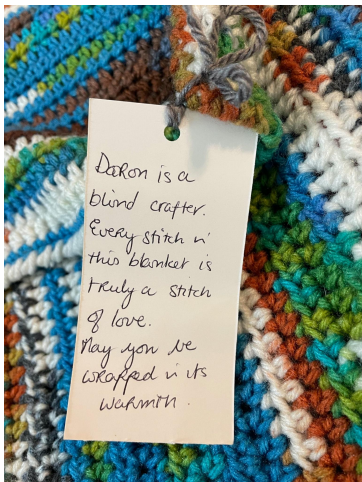
You are so generous!

We were in need and you responded!

Some of the blankets are created by people working to heal their own trauma, others by first time crafters, others by those who have been knitting for years. We gifted blankets to over 400 patients at Christmas. During the rest of the year, when a patient is nearing the end of life, or going through a particularly difficult trauma, we give a prayer-filled blanket. You can imagine how powerful it is to be remembered in a prayer for healing by someone you have never even met.



Two weeks ago, I visited a *literal* answer to prayer. In January, a motorcycle accident tore this patient's body apart. The doctors kept telling his beloved that he might not live. But she kept vigil 24 hours a day at his bedside. As the ventilator breathed for him; she and I prayed, his eyes would flicker and little by little, he lived. Two weeks ago, he requested a follow up visit. I walked in to find him animated and talking. The chair at his bedside was empty. I told him that it's my joy to have a conversation with a *living* answer to prayer. He didn't share in my rejoicing.



He took a deep breath and spoke directly, "the accident stripped the skin from my legs, and it stripped away my ability to maintain the lies I used to protect myself". It turns out that as he lay fighting for his life, sedated and mute, the guarded façade he had curated for his girlfriend had crumbled - now his beloved knew every sordid detail about his past life and he had lived to witness her discovery of his lies. His nightmare of being discovered had come true. Our next few conversations revealed his courageous commitment to living the full truth of his life story and to claim himself as worthy of love, regardless of his beloved's reaction. Chaplain, he told me, for a while I lost track of my story, but now, I know who I am

and I am not hiding it anymore. Right before he left the hospital, I gave him a blanket that had been knit by a community member. I showed him how a single strand of yarn created the beautiful pattern, just how God has used his many experiences to create the beautiful pattern of the story of his life. He smiled as he asked me to open the blanket over his bed - connected to his story and committed to living his truth. I felt the prayers in the blanket, I felt God's love fill the room, I could see this patient's healing and hope, and the prayers and support of the Presbyterian community. All of us held in God's healing love and mercy.

Rev. Elizabeth Gibbs Zehnder serves as Presbyterian staff chaplain at LAC+USC Medical Center. Chaplaincy at LAC+USC is a witness to God's love for all people made possible by your support through the Presbyteries of the Pacific, San Gabriel (special thanks to San Marino Community Church and blanket deliverer Jane Brunette), San Fernando and Los Ranchos and the Synod of Southern California. Your prayers and financial donations are always welcome. To find out how you can be involved, please contact Chaplain Elizabeth Gibbs Zehnder at Elizabeth.GibbsZehnder@gmail.com