

21<sup>st</sup> February 2022

## Knitted

**“Using 5mm needles, cast on 70 [78:86:98:106] sts and work in 2x2 rib for 6cm, ending with a rs row. Next Row: K6 [6:6:6:4], K2tog, (K5 [6:7:5:6], K2tog) 8 [8:8:12:12] times, K6 [6:6:6:4], 61 [69:77:85:93] sts. Change to 6mm needles and work in st-st until Front measures 30cm, ending with a ws row.”**

*King Cole Co, Knitting Pattern 4852*

My wife and sister are inveterate knitters – from stuffed dolls to pram-covers, sweaters to baby clothes, blankets to hats. Our church “Crafters Group” produces a wonderful array of knitted items. I am in awe of knitters.

When I was a boy, a neighbour knitted “Fair Isle” sweaters from Shetland, famous for their intricate, colourful designs. With an array of different coloured skeins of wool around her, a leather waist-belt anchoring one of her knitting needles for stability, and the other pin moving *so* quickly you could see the pattern growing in front of your eyes ... it was amazing!

I don’t understand knitting patterns (like the one above), written in a Bletchley-proof unbreakable code. But clever people know what a pattern tells them. *Really* clever people know the pattern off-by-heart, like my neighbour, who’d learned it from her mother. She did complicated knitting *and* chatted or watched TV at the same time. Did I say I’m in awe of knitters?

But I wonder if there’s such a thing as “free-style” knitting. You know the basics. You’ve mastered the techniques. So you can wing-it, make it up as you go along, see what emerges from your skill and creative mind. I hope so. Patterns are fine. But there should be a place for creativity too.

St Paul told Church in Colossi he hoped the people of Laodicea “may be encouraged as they are knit together in love” (Colossians 2:2 RSV). Some translations use the word “united”. But I like the “knitting” reference. *Together*, Paul is saying. Knitted together! Different strands and colours, so that a well-constructed garment can emerge. A pattern? The same as everyone else? Perhaps, or maybe different from other places, or even completely new. But if the basics were understood, and the knitters were skilled, who knows what kind of togetherness might result?

Let’s hear it from the knitters of this world! Let’s give thanks for patterns to follow *and* for creativity that might emerge. Let’s rejoice when we find ourselves “knit together in love”.

### **A prayer for today**

*Knit us together in love, Creator God, that our pattern might be to your liking. Amen*