

# March

## Quilted Together in Prayer

{ a Women's Ministries Program }



March is a blustery kind of month for northerners. Snow is still around but tantalizing signs of spring tempt and remind that winter won't last forever!

Like the ending winter, as protective walls are torn down, as women dare to reveal the scars, and battles, and trials, things seem to look less lovely. But. Abba has a plan for beauty, life, renewal. No matter how deep the injury. No matter how fierce the battle. No matter how difficult the trial. God re-creating each of His precious daughters into His image. He is making every single beautiful in its time!

Bible Verse	Decorations	Theme Song
<p>Ecclesiastes 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet[a] no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.</p>	<p>Use quilts for tablecloths or use different fabric pieces as table toppers over white tablecloths. For centerpieces: collect a variety of sewing baskets and fill with cloth, various sewing items, and a plant or vase of flowers.</p>	<p>In His Time or Whisper a Prayer</p>
<b>Food</b>		
<p><b>Quick and Easy:</b> Tea &amp; warm beverages; Assorted rolls, cheeses, and fruits <b>Potluck:</b> have women bring their favorite soup and cracker</p>		
<b>Activities</b>		
<p><b>S.I.P. Sisters In Prayer</b></p> <p>Have a basket of quilt squares (glue cloth or colored paper on square card stock) and pens available. Have each lady select a square and write a prayer concern on the back then place in a basket. At the end of the meeting, each lady should select a square, take it home, and incorporate it into their personal prayer time.</p>	<p><b>Ice Breaker</b> <b>Quilt Crazy</b></p> <p>1.) Hand out a piece of paper and pen to each lady. Give them one minute to list as many things as they can that belong in a sewing basket. The women with the most items win.</p> <p>2.) Give each lady an envelope with bits of colored paper in it, a square piece of cardstock, and a glue stick. Challenge participants to create a paper quilt square in 5 minutes. Place all the squares together to create a 'quilt'</p>	<p><b>Ministry</b> <b>Encouragement Quilts</b></p> <p>You will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plain notecards</li> <li>• Paper shape patterns (see below)</li> <li>• Assorted scrapbooking paper</li> <li>• Glue</li> <li>• Pens/markers</li> </ul> <p>Create a quilt effect on notecards by gluing on a variety of colors and shapes of papers. Next, select a pattern or create your own – and write a favorite Bible verse or uplifting phrase on it. Glue to center of 'quilt'.</p> <p>Mail card to someone who needs a reminder that God is making all things beautiful!</p>

## Devotional Thought

### God Makes All Things Beautiful In HIS Time

Many things appear ugly and useless to us. In fact, often we discard the ugly and consider it a bonus to finally have it gone. One too many pumpkins (or tomatoes, or cucumbers) from the garden, trash, old furniture, over-ripe fruit. All can be considered useless and without beauty. And yet, those same items can be used to create objects of beauty and desire - a pie, a handy item, a refurbished piece of furniture, or a loaf of bread. One needs only to see the potential.

How often we also apply this same thinking to people! Perhaps there is someone in church that doesn't talk or look 'normal'. A neighbor that irritates beyond belief. A family member so unlovable you wonder how they can live with themselves. Whether we like to admit it or not, we are all guilty of 'judging the book by its cover'! It is so easy for us to reject the potential in others.

As I contemplated these thoughts I was reminded of quilting.

Quilting is such an enjoyable craft. Selecting a quilt style, hunting for patterns and colors of cloth that will look just right, snipping and sewing. Creating a thing of beauty and usefulness which reflects the creator's love and care.

Often, quilts tell stories. The blue denim squares were from Aunt Sally's favorite skirt. That yellow check was Grandmother's best tablecloth. And that delicate flowery square was the dress I wore when... Scraps of cloth no longer useful as dresses or tablecloths – every piece bringing a different quality to the completed work. Some are shiny and beautiful, others are richly textured, and some are homey and worn. All come together to create a thing of beauty and usefulness.

I like to imagine that God is quilting us together with his Love. Romans 8:28 – And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Each life is full of scraps - the experiences we have had, successes, failures, disappointments, loss, love, happiness, and dreams. For some people – the darker fabric seems overwhelming – too many disappointments, failed relationships, lost dreams. Things that make them bitter or difficult to love. For others, the sunny fabric of contentment and happiness show through. Highly polished professionals and simple, worn-at-the-edge stay-at-home moms. Brand new babies and aging parents. All are viewed as a thing of beauty and usefulness by God.

On a personal level- God wants to gather together all of our 'scraps' and create a thing of beauty. We can't do it on our own. We have to rely on the Master to accomplish this work in us, keeping an eye out for the beauty that He will create with our varied experiences.

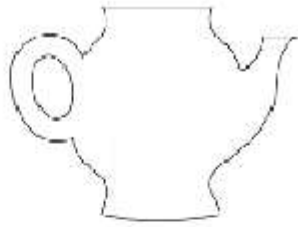
On a larger scale-God brings people together for a purpose. He knows the sunny, happy person can bring cheer to the downcast. The young vibrant youth can shoulder the burden of wiser, older persons. And all together – like a quilt – people come together and become a colorful living masterpiece of God's patience, kindness, and love.

Let's spend time now in prayer - asking the Lord to reveal to us what He wants us to become, and to accept His definition of beauty as it plays out in our lives.

*A Ministry for Every Woman*



## Pattern Ideas for Paper Quilts



Print and enlarge to desired size.  
Scrapbook paper in light colors and patterns make pretty backdrops for ladies to write encouraging words on.

Patterns shown for:

**Tea Thyme Quilt** - tea cups, tea pots. To make it daintier-cut small paper doilies and glue under teapots

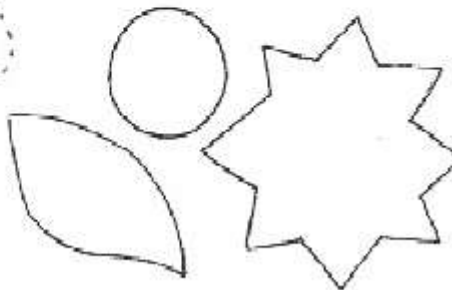


**Birds and Houses Quilt** -use a tiny piece of yellow paper for the birds beak, draw an eye with a black thin-tipped marker, and use contrasting colors for the birds wing and birdhouse roof



**Flowers and Butterflies Quilt** - use contrasting light colored centers for the flowers. A black permanent thin-tipped marker works great for drawing in the features of the butterfly.

**If you are creating quilts to give away, consider adding something special such as:**



Tea Thyme: include a packet of tea, a honey stick, and a chocolate bon-bon in a tea cup tied with a ribbon

Birds and Houses: include a bag of birdseed and birdwatching guide

Flowers and Butterflies: include flower seed packets, potting soil, and plant poke tucked into a pot; or a bouquet of flowers; or a six-pack of flowers to be planted outdoors.

### Other Ministry Ideas

Make a prayer quilt. An excellent resource is the book *Fabric of Faith: A guide to the prayer quilt ministry* by Kimberly Winston