

## Quilters

by [Willie James Jennings](#) in the [March 2023](#) issue

They sat in the ancient place  
of the broken and bombed,  
the torn and taken, the loss and lost  
remembering  
the shattering  
pockets and bags filled  
with remnants captured  
by keen sight  
able to touch what be not  
as though it were  
possible to make.

These multi-shaded women knew  
their anointing,  
the power to join

broken glass, torn hearts, pebbles large and small, bloodstained brick, pieces of  
those aprons that smelled like fresh bread, flashes of sadness caught in song, the  
extra fabric from the wedding dress, little napkins, quick melancholies,  
bunches of laughter, shreds from curtains from soul windows.

Then with eyes aligned,  
stepping out onto nothingness,  
handling things that could  
slice flesh, and pierce skin  
they placed pieces side by side  
unprecedented, but now  
colors and shapes dancing  
intricate new steps making  
visible pulsating joy  
never before imagined.

Then they decided in majestic wisdom to create soft shelter  
against the cold, against threat, against forgetting caress,  
and as the final threads joined, they saw what God wanted  
to call good, but could not create.