

New Hope Church of God

# Women of the Kingdom Newsletter



CHAPTER 1  
 beginning God created  
 and the earth,  
 was without form

## Broken Pieces *Short Story by Linda Sothern*

The Toymaker's shop was the busiest and brightest spot in town. It was constantly filled with dazzling sounds and colors and eager children pattering around. The best part of the shop was that each toy and trinket was handmade by the Toymaker. He spent hours making objects of delight that were either treasured by his patrons or easily forgotten and dismissed. The casual dismissal of his work also brought an amount of sadness to the Toymaker but it did not deter the joy it gave him from creation. Every toy that lightened up the face of a child or caused an adult to remember life before the trials that comes with age aided the

Toymaker in his creative pursuits.

Everything in the Toymaker's shop was aware of the privilege of belonging to him. The workbench and hammer pounded together their admiration for the Toymaker. The scissors sang as they sliced. The Toymaker was adept at all types of creation. He excelled in working with wood, metal, clay, plastic and glass. His inventions were all different shapes, sizes, textures and colors. There were paperweights, figurines, music boxes, and Christmas ornaments all on display on one shelf in the shop. One ornament often watched the patrons' reactions as they passed the shelf where she

was displayed. She saw them marvel at the Toymaker's skill in constructing the paperweights. They were strong, sturdy and practical. Everyone who came by had a use for them and they were a precious commodity.

Although the Toymaker's shop was an ideal place to be, each creation had their own ideas about how life should be. One day, a ballerina figurine ran away. She hopped in the pocket of a customer as he was leaving the store without so much as a by your leave. Next, one of the music boxes decided to seek his fortune in another part of the store. As he was winding down playing his song a lady walked by and picked him up and walked to the cash register and purchased him.

Even with all the shifting around her, the ornament was observant. She noted the types of clients the Toymaker seemed to attract and the buying habits of the regulars. Occasionally people would enter the shop not with the purpose to purchase or even browse but to snicker and poke fun at the Toymaker's world. The ornament wondered about these people the most. They were so different than what she was used to seeing but she did not figure them out.

While the ornament was being reflective, two little music boxes on her shelf began playing their own songs. They had lots

## Women of the Kingdom Spotlight

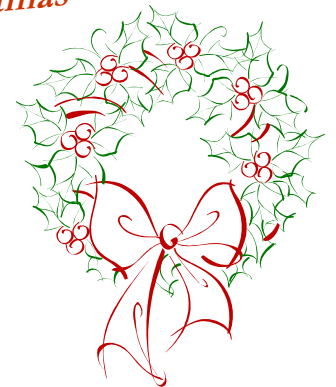
### *A Word About Christmas*

**Name:** Azalea Albritton

**Birthday:** December 24

**Favorite Color:** Orange

**Describe Christmas in one word:** Christ.



**Name:** Kendra Dee Anding

**Birthday:** March 17

**Favorite color:** Green

**Describe Christmas in one word:** Triumphant!!!



of interested buyers but kept hiding when it was time to be bought. As they matured into their musical beings their price tags kept increasing with the demand they drew. One day out of curiosity the ornament looked to see her own price. She had not really thought about it because being purchased was a part of life. The Toymaker created you, set the price and someone would come to the shop and buy you. When she looked down, to her dismay there was no price tag. No tag. No sticker. No general price listing on the wall with her name. Nothing...AT ALL!

Being logical, the ornament took this to mean she was worthless. No one would want her therefore she didn't cost anything. Then she began to think the Toymaker couldn't give her away. She reflected of all the times customers passed her shelf. They never gave her a second glance. Her shelf mates got picked up, turned over, played with and purchased. She was never touched, picked up or played with. After wallowing in her pity party, the ornament became angry. She was angry with the Toymaker, angry that he made her as she was. Something was obviously wrong with her because no one wanted her. If the Toymaker received joy from his creations and the joy they brought his customers why would he make something no one else wanted or even seemed to like?

Every time the Toymaker passed the shelf and smiled at the ornament she no longer felt special. In fact, she began to resent what she felt was the Toymaker's patronizing affection. If she was so great, how come no one else noticed? Unfortunately she did not see, she did not understand. The reason she did not have a price tag is because it was not her season. The Toymaker knew his clientele. They would not be apt to buy a Christmas ornament during the spring or long hot days of summer. He had made this ornament special and had great plans for her when the time was right but she did not understand the plan. What she thought of as cruel and unkind was really the Toymaker's deep affection for his creation.

After awhile the ornament began to wonder what it would be like to be bought or just to leave the shop. Although she thought about it a lot, she was not going to leave, just stew in her resentment against everything with a price tag. One day as she was studying the people in the shop, she saw a boy milling around. He did not look like the normal customer of the Toymaker, yet he was not like the outsiders either. While she was watching him, he walked over to her shelf and looked at her; really looked at her like no one else had before. He picked her up and flipped her around looking for a price tag, she assumed, after he set her down he left the shop.

The boy came back to the shop every once and awhile and each time he looked at the ornament she felt special. Even though the boy bought other things from the shop and his visits were infrequent the ornament hoped to see him everyday. After a long time between visits the boy came back. The ornament decided she was not going to wait around in the shop forever. Today was the day she was going home with the boy. She rolled to the front of the shelf and waited for him to come to the shelf. This day he did not even look up at the ornament as he was too busy purchasing a figurine from the other side of the shop.

Not to be deterred, the ornament rolled off the shelf in hopes of landing in the boy's pocket. She missed and hit the floor hard. After the initial shock of pain, the ornament looked around and saw the boy leaving the store. She tried to roll after him but realized she was cracked due to the fall and was not rolling straight. After orienting herself, the ornament made it out the door as another patron came in. She looked left and right and could not tell which way the boy had gone. She thought she saw his jacket and rolled and rolled and rolled and rolled after him. When she was close enough to see him she realized it was not the boy after all just someone with the same coat.

The ornament sighed with dismay and turned around to go back to the shop but realized she did not know where she was or how to get home. She rolled around aimlessly for days in hopes of seeing something or someone familiar. Sometimes as she wandered someone would pick her up and she would think they were going to take her home with them but they saw she was cracked and inevitably tossed her back onto the street. Each time the crack got a little bigger, more jagged and painful. Occasionally, she saw people who frequented the shop and hoped to be taken home but they also threw her back out because they did not recognize the Toymaker's logo that had been covered up with so much dirt and grime since she left. It got to the point that she avoided all people as not to get injured anymore. Even when she saw some of the Toymaker's most loyal employees she hid as not to garner anymore pain. She just wanted to go home, have the Toymaker repair her

## **Broken Pieces, *cont.***

and sit on her shelf in solitude.

One day as the ornament was rolling along; she saw the most beautiful sight in the world. The Toymaker's shop. She rolled as fast as she could down the sidewalk toward the store. As she neared the door she could feel the emanating warmth of the only place she knew as home. As she waited for a customer to either arrive or depart so she could enter, the unthinkable happened. One of the many people walking the sidewalk stepped on the ornament. She was broken into many pieces and was beyond repair. She could not move or do anything but lay there shattered and weep.

The door opened and a patron of the Toymaker's shop looked down and saw the pieces of glass strewn on the pavement and informed the cashier. The cashier came to the door with a whisk broom and dustpan to clean up the mess. The ornament or what was left of her thought the dustbin was a

fitting end for her life. When the cashier knelt to sweep up the mess he paused to study the pieces in the dustpan as he thought he saw the Toymaker's logo. He carefully brushed off the layers of dirt and grime and did see the trademark.

The cashier returned inside and went straight to the workshop where the Toymaker and his son were busy at their craft. After a brief explanation of the dustpan contents the Toymaker took the pan and looked for himself.

"I know this design and these colors. This was the ornament that I had made for a special Christmas display but seemed to have misplaced" he said.

The Toymaker was heartbroken and grieved at the state of his creation. Then the ornament began to understand the deep love the Toymaker did have for her after all. However, it was seemingly too late. In her current

## Broken Pieces, *cont.*

state she was good for nothing. As the Toymaker turned away to resume his work his son spoke up.

"Father, may I have her?"

At his father's quizzical look the Toymaker's son quickly spoke up.

"What you created was beautiful and perfect but the harshness of the outside world has corrupted the ornament. But there is still life in the pieces and I would like to use them to make something new".

Whether it was the fervor of his speech or the genuine love of his creations, the Toymaker allowed his son to take the pieces of the ornament to see what he would create.

The son went back to his work bench and began the long and arduous task of meticulously cleaning each piece of glass. Sometimes the rugged edges of the glass sliced the Toymaker's son hands, however he continued to work

as he bled. Though the son tried to be gentle in his task, the complete cleaning process was not pleasant. The ornament rather enjoyed being washed with soap and water and dried with a clean cloth after her excursion into the outside world but the treatments of harsh chemicals to remove the set in stains as well as having her jagged edges sanded down to a smooth surface were often down right painful. After all of the remaining pieces were clean, the son selected the best and discarded some pieces that were not structurally sound and added a few new pieces to her.

Then the son put all of the clean pieces new and old aside and began working on something else. The ornament was dumbfounded as to why the son would take so much time and care to clean her if that was all. In many clean colored pieces she still was not worth much. While the ornament pondered this thought, she saw the Toymaker's son grab a piece of silver and began to fashion what looked like a shiny pipe and then he inserted triangle shaped mirrors into the sides of the tube.

He added an eyehole at one end and the other held clear glass and a little compartment. The Toymaker's son put all of the pieces of the ornament into the chamber and sealed it up and proudly walked over to his father.

The Toymaker was intrigued by his son's ingenuity. From the shards of broken and dirty glass he had created a kaleidoscope.

"Isn't she nice, Father?" the son enthusiastically asked.

The Toymaker nodded his approval as his son continued.

"The best part is when you hold her up to the light she makes the most beautiful pictures, even with her broken pieces and the closer she is to the light the more brilliant the pieces appear."

Though she remembered her old life as an ornament, the kaleidoscope had to remember she was a new creation and had a new name when the

Toymaker put his logo on her. It was good to be home. The Toymaker allowed his son to pick the kaleidoscope's purchase price and new location in the shop.

Satisfied with his work, the Toymaker's son placed the kaleidoscope in the front display window and attached her price tag. When the kaleidoscope glanced to see what she was worth she was puzzled to see a symbol. She reasoned that things had changed since she left and the customers would understand. As the days went by and patrons would come to the shop to browse they too seemed puzzled by the kaleidoscope's price tag. One day a man came into the store, the kaleidoscope recognized him as a regular customer. He went over and picked her up and looked at the price tag and furrowed his brow but instead of setting her back down he carried her over to the cash register and asked the cashier what the symbol meant. The cash register told him the Toymaker's son set the price and he could explain it better than she.

The man went back and knocked on the workshop and asked to see the Toymaker's son. When he appeared and saw what item the man had, he grinned from ear to ear. Before the man could ask the Toymaker's son said:

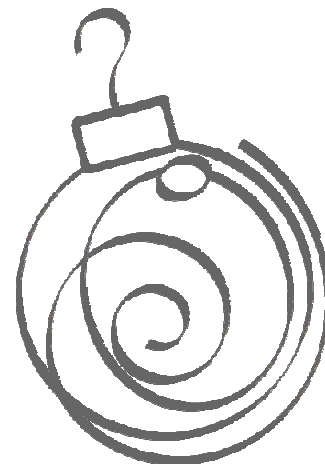
"You want to know how much the kaleidoscope is worth."

The man nodded his assent. The reason for the confusion is that instead of putting a number on the kaleidoscope's price tag the son had placed an image of a heart. His heart. There was no monetary value for the kaleidoscope, as he invested his time, efforts, energy and even his blood into his work. The Toymaker's son felt such an intense love for his creation that he could not sell her for a price as she had become part of him. He realized that he could not keep her to himself but did not want to let just anyone possess her.

"Only someone who is willing to love her as I have deserves to have her and could purchase her through their love."

## Pumpkin Spice cake

<p>Ingredients</p> <p>2 cups Eagle Mills® All-Purpose Unbleached Flour with Ultragrain®</p> <p>1 tablespoon baking powder</p> <p>1/2 teaspoon salt</p> <p>1/4 teaspoon baking soda</p> <p>1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon</p> <p>1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg</p> <p>1/2 cup Blue Bonnet®-stick, softened (1/2 cup = 1 stick)</p> <p>1 cup firmly packed brown sugar</p> <p>1/2 cup granulated sugar</p>	<p>3/4 cup canned solid-pack pumpkin</p> <p>1 egg</p> <p>1/2 cup lowfat buttermilk</p> <p>1 container (16 oz each) vanilla buttercream frosting</p> <p>Directions</p> <p>Preheat oven 350°F. Spray 9x5-inch loaf pan with baking spray. Sift together flour, baking powder, salt, baking soda, cinnamon, and nutmeg into medium bowl; set aside. Beat Blue Bonnet and sugars in large bowl with electric mixer on low speed until light</p>	<p>and fluffy. Add pumpkin and egg; beat until well blended. Alternately add flour mixture and buttermilk, beating until well blended after each addition. Pour into prepared pan. Bake 1 hour or until wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Remove cake from pan to wire rack. Cool completely. Spread with frosting. Sprinkle with walnuts, if desired. Cut into 12 slices to serve.</p> <p>~Submitted by Angela Woods</p>
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## First Lady's Corner-Best Gift Ever

*"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."* James 1:17

Would you say every gift someone has given you was good and perfect? Do you sometimes feel like you give better gifts than you receive?

These are some thoughts we have during the Christmas season. We look forward to the family time, food, and gift-giving; but we hate to see the responses of those who do not appreciate the gift we gave or vice versa. Why is that?

James 1:17 shows us that the best gift giver is our Heavenly Father. It says every gift He gives is good and perfect. The Father's gifts are without flaws and imperfections because they come from heaven above. Another reason His gifts are good and perfect is because He has no hidden agendas (no variableness, no shadow of turning). Our Heavenly Father gives because He loves and He is love. The Father's good and perfect gift to us is His Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16). The Bible tells us Jesus Christ was without sin

(2 Cor 5:21). We know sin is what causes flaws and imperfections, but that isn't the case with our PERFECT GIFT, Jesus Christ.

This Christmas spend less time focusing on the material gifts and more time on the spiritual gift, a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. I assure you, you will not be disappointed nor would you want to exchange it for something else.

Merry Christmas,  
First Lady

## Upcoming Events

### December

Sunday, December 25 - Christmas Day Service with Communion  
10:50am

Saturday, December 31 - Watch Night & Baptism Service 10:00pm

### January

Sunday, January 1- New Year's Service  
10:50am

Monday, Jan 2 - Sunday, Jan 29  
New Hope's Corporate Fast

Saturday, January 14 - Teen Girls' Fellowship 10:00am

Saturday, January 28 - WOK Bible Study 10:30am

### WOK Newsletter Needs You

Has God gifted you to write? Do you have a favorite family recipe you would like to share? Women of the Kingdom Newsletter is looking for writers to contribute articles, poems and recipes. Please contact Linda Sothern, [lindasothern@yahoo.com](mailto:lindasothern@yahoo.com) for more information.