

## Pattern of the Month: December 2023

# Kite > Hexagon

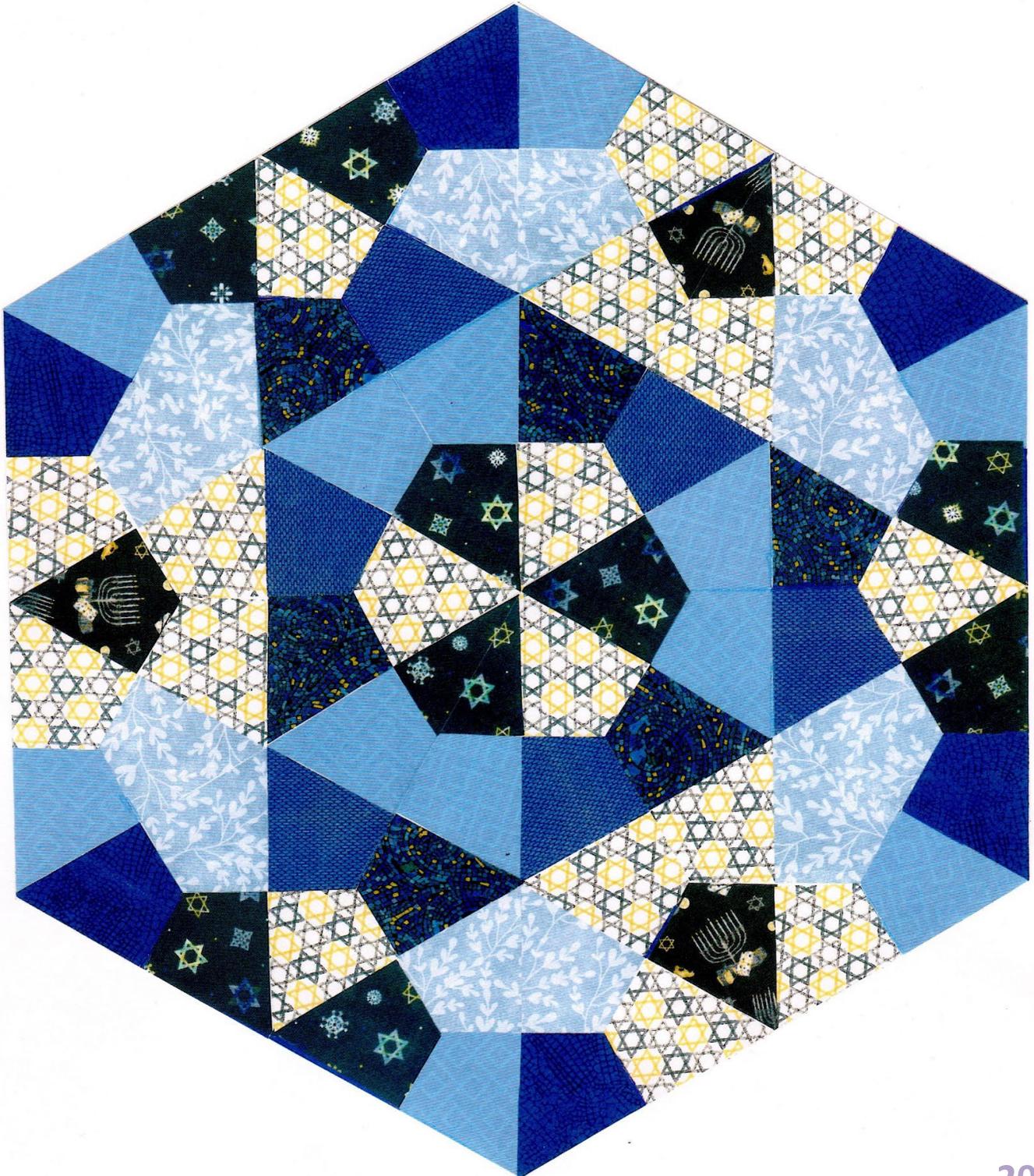
Karen G. Fisher

This is a very old traditional pattern that I found from the American Quilter's Society and made it several years ago. The AQS site noted the following history:

“The Kite block was featured in the early 1930s by Old Chelsea Station Needlecraft Service in a *Laura Wheeler* newspaper column, one of which was called *Rose Star One Patch*. In those days, according to Barbara Brackman's *Women of Design: Quilts in the Newspaper: The Needlecraft Service's New York addresses, which varied over the years, were in the neighborhood served by the Old Chelsea Station post office. Before postal zones and zip codes, the words “Old Chelsea Station, New York City” were enough to direct the pattern request to the correct address.”* The name Needlecraft Service was changed to Reader Mail in 1944. Needlecraft's patterns appeared in dozens of newspapers in a column with the fictional names *Laura Wheeler* or *Alice Brooks.*”



Christmas fabrics and colors are available year-round. Hanukkah fabrics were hard to find this year, but are available seasonally, and the colors of gold, white, and blues are always readily available. I've included two pattern sizes with center lines to help fussy cut fabrics. If you make your templates out of template fabric, you can see the lines to center your fabric imagery.



Kwanzaa is a secular holiday celebrated since 1966 during the last week of December, to celebrate African American culture. Kwanzaa colors are Red, Black and Green. Yet one of its most used symbols, corn, is completely New World, and is used to celebrate children. I have included reproduction Kente cloth, which includes lots of yellow, like corn, and contemporary fabric of women's heads that are either wrapped in cloth, or with full, soft black hair. The Kente cloth, the "hand" fabric, and the women's heads are from a fabric line from Joann Fabrics.



I have included variations in Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa fabrics, as well as a basic layout for the whole block. The whole big hexagon has four “rounds” of fabric, which I’ve labeled A, B, C, and D, but each round may be made of more than one fabric. It can also be made scrappy.

For the rounds, there are more and more “kites” as you go out: 6 “A” fabric, 12 “B” fabric, 24 “C” fabric, 30 “D” fabric. I’ve also included a basic layout where you can color and play with arrangements. Each round of the design can be divided by 3 and 6, and larger numbers as you go out.

Because of the small identical pieces, this is a design readily suited to both hand piecing, and English paper Piecing, which would still work just fine.

I made my larger Christmas version completely by machine, starting from the center and working my way out, round by round. I’ve done this before, and usually stop and backstitch a quarter of an inch short of the end, so that there’s flexibility to join the seams in whatever configuration works best. There are LOTS of different angles where pieces come together, and I discovered that I could build sections of several pieces to attach to other multiple-piece sections.

For example, if you complete rounds A and B, you can build the outer sections of C and D, then attach them to the inner A, B hexagon.

Completed block sizes are large, so you won’t need very many blocks to quickly make a large quilt top. The larger template makes a hexagon that is 28” point to point, and 24” side to side. to bring it out to a rectangle, cut two pieces of background fabric 7 ½” x 13”. Cut the two rectangles, as shown in the patterns section, and attach them to four of the six sides.

For the smaller hexagon, cut two rectangles 5” x 8”, cut as illustrated, and attach to four sides of the hexagon.

In either size, these “corners” can make interesting shapes between the bigger hexagons depending on how you connect them. One possible arrangement will give you big diamonds. Another will make “bowtie” shapes.

You can also join the hexagons to each other, just as you would with small individual hexagons in a “Grandmother’s Flower Garden” layout.

Have fun!

