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## Prayer

By Izzy Harbin

Indeed, God,  
your kingdom is at hand.  
Give us the strength  
and the courage  
necessary to live lives of  
justice, peace and mercy  
reflective of your  
faithfulness to us.  
Show us daily  
how to be kingdom builders;  
to see you as the  
incarnational Christ  
who lives and reigns  
in us.  
Amen.

## A Conference E-Pistle

Brought to you by Our Church's Wider Mission

Reflections From  
The Indiana-Kentucky Conference



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Lately, I have been asking myself, "What exactly is the gospel message?" As I write this, I can imagine some folks being shocked by the question... the implication that a minister does not know the gospel message is like a mechanic not knowing anything about repairing cars. Still, I ask.

In Brian McLaren's book, "A New Kind of Christianity," he is asked by a friend to rethink his understanding of the gospel message. His friend challenges him to not see the gospel through the eyes of Paul reflecting on the life of Jesus; but rather, return to the life of Jesus as our blueprint. According to Jesus, the gospel message is clearly "The Kingdom of God is at hand."

This revelation was true for first century Christians as much as it is still true for 21<sup>st</sup> century Christians. God's kingdom is always at hand.

We are afforded every opportunity to be in relationship with others, to be the literal hands and feet of Christ, but to do so, we must open ourselves to the incarnational work of God in us. God is constantly creating newness in our lives, restoring us to right relationship with one another and with our creator. Regardless of our willful behavior, we are consistently brought back into covenant with God. God's faithfulness to us, in turn, inspires us to a life of discipleship. This connection compels us to be creators of God's kingdom of justice, peace, and mercy right now!

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Sincerely,

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The Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the United Church of Christ was selected as a Constant Contact All Star in 2011, 2012 & 2013



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