



Rev. Izzy Harbin,
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Prayer

By Izzy Harbin

God, as we
pay attention
to the stories
of our lives,
give us courage
to look around
and listen to
what they are
telling us.
Show us
how our experiences
can benefit others.
Empty us.
Redeem us.
Strip away our selfish
and self-centered natures.
Cause us to be reborn
in you daily.
In Christ alone
we pray,
Amen.

A Conference E-Pistle

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"Stories move in circles. They don't go in straight lines. So it helps if you listen in circles. There are stories inside stories and stories between stories, and finding your way through them is as easy and as hard as finding your way home. And part of the finding is the getting lost. And when you're lost, you start to look around and to listen" (Deena Metzger's: "Writing for Your Life;" quotes members of A Traveling Jewish Theater).

I have only been physically lost once in my life, but emotionally I have been lost more times than I can count. It is a feeling that I recognize easily. The story I like to tell myself is that I am never lost, that I know exactly who I am, where I am, and where I am going. This, of course, is the lie I tell myself.

The more I learn about who I am, the more I realize just how little I know about the internal workings of my own life... and this is not a bad thing. What I have discovered over the last 30 years is that the more lost I become, the more I rely on God. I used to think that God wanted me to have it all figured out. Knowing was how I proved to be acceptable to God. Now God is more present in those places where I am utterly lost. It is the only time I care enough to look around and listen.

The notion that we are to be still and somehow **know** God has often felt like a bad practical joke. And yet, when we are still... when we look and listen to the circular stories of our lives, we are redeemed. We, like Christ, become willing to sacrifice our selfish and self-centered natures for God-centered natures, and recognize that in doing so it will cost us everything. By emptying ourselves, we create space for others and for our creator. We are reborn again and again.

Izzy Harbin

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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