

Harry Potter and the Flaming Chalice of Transformation

Rev. Kerry Mueller

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Fayetteville

June 15, 2008

Time for all Ages

Pen Pals from Hogwarts

Professor McGonagall and Friends

Good Morning

I am Professor Mueller, a visiting professor from Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

1. How many of you adults have read any of the Harry Potter series, or seen the movies?
2. How about you children?
3. I understand that your minister is going to preach about Harry Potter today. She asked me to come today to tell you Muggles – that’s our word for non-magic people – a little about the Wizarding World, and to give you all a little gift, a spell that can help you deal with fears and anxieties.

Perhaps you have heard that in the wizarding world, mail is brought by owls, who fly through the night and drop your letters off in the morning. Just this morning, my owl brought three messages from Hogwarts students to share with the congregation. Here they are – readers will you read these letters please?

a. Hello, Unitarian Universalist Muggles! My name is Lavinia, and my favorite subject at Hogwarts is The Care and Use of Magical Plants. I also spend a lot of time working at Defense Against the Dark Arts, because the spells we learn there are really useful when you are in a tight spot. When I grow up I hope to be an explorer looking for new magical plants, and will need to be able to defend myself against all sorts of surprises. Will some of you please tell Professor Mueller what your favorite subjects were when you were in school?

b. Hi! My name is Trevor and I want to say hello to all you Unitarian Universalist Muggles! I want to know what is your favorite sport? I really like Quidditch, of course. I’d like to be a Keeper, to keep the Quaffle ball away from our goal. But I’m also interested in your football. How about those Razorbacks?

c. Good morning! I’m Fiona. I’m a third year student at Hogwarts. My parents are Muggles, so I know all about your world. But what an amazing place this is! I’ve got lots

of good friends, but I sometimes miss my old school. And of course we never get to see TV or play on computers here. I learned a really good spell, that I asked Professor Mueller to share with you. Here, of course, it works by magic, but even in the Muggle world I think it would help people when they are afraid. Maybe this could help!

Thank you for reading those messages from my Hogwarts students. Now I'd like to share the Ridikulus spell with you. Think of something you are afraid of. Is it spiders? Are you afraid of speaking in public? Or are you afraid of monsters hiding in the closet? There are three parts to this spell. First, you have imagine the thing you are afraid of, and really picture it right there in front of you. In the wizarding world, we call this the Boggart. Then you think of something very silly or ridiculous. Like imagine your audience dressed in their pajamas or the monster wearing something silly. Finally, you say the spell: "Ridikulus!" and imagine the silly situation. The image of the scary thing being ridiculous causes your fear to evaporate. So let's try it.

Think of that awful monster hiding under the bed. Get a good picture of it, with all its horrible teeth and slimy skin, and big claws. Got it? Now, imagine a pink tutu, with purple nail polish and high heels. Think of a big wad of bubble gum! Now put all these things on the monster, see it all dressed up and looking silly, and it can't even talk much less growl at you. And say the spell: "Ridikulus!" And the monster will just fade away.

I hope that is helpful the next time you are afraid of something. Thank you for your attention. And, readers, thank you so much for your help. Now I will hand back this worship service to Rev. Kerry.

Reading

Headmaster Professor Dumbledore addresses the Hogwarts students after the completion of the international Tri-Wizard Tournament, and the death of Cedric Diggory at Voldemort's hands:

"I say to you all, once again – in the light of Lord Voldemort's return, we are only as strong as we are united, as weak as we are divided. Lord Voldemort's gift for spreading discord and enmity is very great. We can fight it only by showing an equally strong bond of friendship and trust. Differences of habit and language are as nothing at all if our aims are identical and our hearts are open.

It is my belief – and never have I so hoped that I am mistaken – that we are all facing dark and difficult times. Some of you in this Hall have already suffered directly at the hands of Lord Voldemort. Many of your families have been torn asunder. A week ago, a student was taken from our midst.

“Remember Cedric. Remember, if the time should come when you have to make a choice between what is right and what is easy, remember what happened to a boy who was good, and kind, and brave, because he strayed across the path of Lord Voldemort. Remember Cedric Diggory.” (*Goblet*, 723f)

From the final interview between Harry and the shade of Dumbledore, while Harry hovers between life and death. Present also is a whimpering fragment of Lord Voldemort’s soul.

“I think,” said Dumbledore, “that if you choose to return [to life], there is a chance that he [Voldemort] may be finished for good. I cannot promise it. But I know this Harry, that you have less to fear from returning here than he does.”

Harry glanced again at the raw-looking thing that trembled and choked in the shadow beneath the distant chair.

“Do not pity the dead, Harry. Pity the living, and, above all, those who live without love. By returning, you may ensure that fewer souls are maimed, fewer families are torn apart. If that seems to you a worthy goal, then we say good-bye for the present.” (*Hallows*, 722)

Sermon **Harry Potter and the Flaming Chalice of Transformation**

Note: Muggles who have not read the Harry Potter books, this sermon is written in such a way that you should be able to follow it. However, it also contains information about the final outcome of the series. Beware of the Spoiler!

Earlier this spring I had occasion to meet a local author, someone whose work I have admired. As I waited for her to sign the book I had bought, to make conversation, I mentioned that I looked forward to reading it, but first I had to reread all the Harry Potter books. She looked up, with an expression somewhere between stunned surprise and a despairing sneer. “Why would you do that?” she asked. I was slow on the uptake. “I’m writing a sermon,” I answered cheerily. “On Harry Potter? But those books are all filled with magic and witchcraft. Why would you be interested in *that*?” I was stunned. Small “s” stunned. I didn’t want to get into the depths of a fundamentalism-tinged discussion about the real meaning of magic. My objective now was to retreat into polite chit chat and get away as quickly and easily as possible. I abandoned all thought of real conversation. It was a book signing after all. So I said

the first thing that popped into my head: “Oh, that’s just decoration. Those books have a lot in them that is valuable for us.” She shrugged, and I went and took my seat.

Now what did I mean by “That’s just decoration.” I think there’s truth to it. The charm of the Harry Potter books is the opportunity to live for a while in a world very different from our own – on the surface. The coziness of enclosed world of an English boarding school, the wonder of a magical technology, the novelty of mythical creatures come to life. These things are all very well thought out, wonderfully and intricately constructed, enchanting, so to speak, but they are just a sort of slipcover on one of the most basic of human stories, the religious journey. This is the journey that Unitarian Minister Forest Church has long called our human response to the dual reality of being alive and knowing that we must die. (Church discusses this again most poignantly in the latest *UU World*, in a sermon about his own terminal diagnosis, *UU World*, Summer 2008, p. 18). From Gilgamesh to Harry Potter to Forest Church himself, with billions of stops in between for men and women of valor, for literary characters, for ordinary people of every sort, for people who have lived in oppression and died in anguish, humanity has struggled with this question: If I love life and know I must die, how shall I live? And that is the question at the heart of the Harry Potter books, and of the lives of every person who has the capacity and the circumstances to engage in the religious quest.

In reading these books we live with Harry as he struggles to understand and become who he is meant to be, to understand his world, and to transform both himself and his world. Our first glimpse of Harry is not very promising. It’s his eleventh birthday. He’s a skinny, lonely kid, an orphan with a scar on his forehead, living a very constricted life with Muggles – non-magical people – a dreadful aunt and uncle and a bullying cousin who resent Harry’s presence as much as the promise they made a decade ago to take care of him, after Harry’s parents were killed by the powerful “Dark Lord,” Voldemort. The Dursleys see Harry not as their darling orphaned nephew, but as the evidence of Aunt Petunia’s sister Lily’s unfortunate marriage to James Potter, “one of *that lot*,” a member of the wizarding world. (Lily was Muggle born, but a natural witch, who had gone to Hogwarts.) Grudgingly, they give Harry houseroom. But he doesn’t get enough to eat, he sleeps in the cupboard under the stairs, he never gets a kind word or a birthday cake or anything resembling love.

How then, is Harry to undertake the religious journey, deprived as he is of the very foundation of spiritual maturity, a sense of love and trust? The great wizard Albus Dumbledore knew that Harry was the target of the evil Dark Lord, and that he would be magically protected as long as he has a home with his relatives, and so he had sent the infant Harry to live at 4 Privet Drive with the Dursleys. (*Goblet*, 637) But it was barely a home. We can only assume that Harry had somehow imbibed enough love and trust in that first critical year that a decade with his aunt and uncle was not enough to impair his basic humanity. Dumbledore addresses the Dursleys in the next to last book: (*Half-Blood*, p. 55) “You did not do as I asked. You have never treated Harry as a son. He

has known nothing but neglect and often cruelty at your hands. The best that can be said is that he has at least escaped the appalling damage you have inflicted upon the unfortunate boy sitting between you.” That is their stupid and bullying son, Harry’s cousin Dudley.

Despite neglect, when Harry enters the wizarding world as an eleven year old, he is able to put friendship, trust, and love at the center of his quest to grow up. Perhaps also he knows in his blood and bones the extraordinary loving sacrifice his parents have made for him. That love will protect him magically from external threats throughout his growing up, so we must believe that it protects the health and integrity of his very soul.

But after his first year of life, with his parents dead, Harry no longer enjoys the normal source of trust, a reliable and loving caregiver. He longs for his parents, as who wouldn’t in that pinched household on Privet Drive. All he knows is the lie he has been told, that they were killed in an automobile accident, but surely they loved him more than his aunt and uncle do. Since this is Father’s Day, let us begin with Harry’s father. As we see Harry grow up, author J. K. Rowling presents him with a series of father figures.

First comes Hagrid, huge and rough, with a heart as big as his body, who transports the infant Harry from the ruins of his parents’ house to Privet Drive, (*Stone*, Chapter 1) and who later for him when he is ready for Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. (*Stone*, Chapter 3) Hagrid, being hardly more than an overgrown child himself, falls short of ideal fatherhood, but he offers Harry protection, a caring heart, and a door that opens into Harry’s birth world, a world that he had never even known exists.

More father figures are in that world. Albus Dumbledore, the headmaster of Hogwarts, tall and old, who seems to know all there is to know, the greatest wizard who ever lived, who is austere and remote most of the time – though he does have a twinkle in his eye from time to time. (*Series*, *passim*). Dumbledore doles out information and assistance to Harry, preparing him for his life’s work. He helps Harry to understand the biggest issues in his world, and nudges Harry towards the spiritual maturity he will need, but he does not connect all the dots. While he seems remarkably tolerant of Harry’s propensity for sometimes dangerous rule breaking, and shares the occasional explanatory conversation, Dumbledore is not a constant fatherly presence and does not allow Harry to become dependent on him.

And then there is Sirius Black, who first appears as a madman, an escapee from Azkaban prison, but who turns out to be Harry’s benevolent godfather – Harry and his friends learn of his innocence, and, with Dumbledore’s assistance, help him escape. (*Azkaban*, *passim*) He becomes a friend and advisor to Harry, and invites Harry to come live with him. Harry’s heart lifts at the idea of a home more congenial than Privet Drive, but events overtake this plan, and Harry has to learn to do without this beloved godfather.

Rowling shows us directly how much Harry feels the loss of his parents. In the *Mirror of Erised* a person sees the reflection of their deepest desire. Harry sees his parents. (*Stone*, 208ff) During a fateful magical duel with the Dark Lord, Harry's wand brings forth simulacra of Voldemort's murder victims – including his parents, who cheer him on and give him comfort and advice. (*Goblet*, 665ff) And at the very end of the last book, when he is facing death at Voldemort's hands, Harry uses the so called Resurrection Stone for what is probably its only proper use: He evokes the shades of his parents and dead allies and friends, who accompany him to the edge of death, giving him the comfort and courage to go on. (*Hallows*, 698ff, 720) Earlier, Harry loses his temper and speaks unkindly, to his former teacher, friend and ally, Remus Lupin. What had Lupin done to deserve this in Harry's view? He had left his newborn son to come and help Harry and his friends. "My father died trying to protect my mother and me, and you reckon he'd tell you to abandon your kid to go on an adventure with me? . . . Parents shouldn't leave their kids unless – unless they've got to." (*Hallows* 214f)

All of these father figures, including James Potter, Harry's actual dad, have flaws and limitations. As part of growing up, Harry needs to come to grips with these flaws and limitations. Initially, of course, he idealizes his father. His patronus (*there's a father word*) – a patronus is a magically evoked protective apparition – turns out to be a stag, like his father's. (*Azkaban*, 411) When a stag patronus rescues him and Sirius from an attack by soul killing dementors, Harry is comforted to believe it is James' patronus, somehow come to life when he is in danger. (*Azkaban*, 407) Only later does he realize that it is his own patronus, created by his own efforts. (*Azkaban*, 412) Learning from the preserved memory of the hated Professor Snape (*Phoenix*, Chapter 28) that James was arrogant and sometimes cruel as a student, Harry has to take in this new image of a flawed father, and find a new way to relate to James. He realizes that his godfather Sirius was unkind and dismissive in relating to his house elf. (*Hallows*, p. 198) In the final book, even Dumbledore comes under scrutiny. Harry receives widely differing accounts of Dumbledore's young years from sources far apart as gossip columnist Rita Skeeter, old friend Elphias Doge, and Dumbledore's younger brother Aberforth. (*Hallows*, Chapters 18, 2, 28) He begins to doubt his old mentor, and has to work his own way through the questions facing him. At times he is angry with Dumbledore, and feels he has been betrayed by him. (*Hallows*, 503, 692) Should Harry blindly follow Dumbledore's plans? Should he abandon them and follow a new lead? Little by little he takes ownership of his own vision of what he ought to do, still following Dumbledore, but from a new perspective. Harry becomes a whole person in his own right in part by seeing all his fathers whole and life size, with all their failings and frailties, and still he loves them, and still he trusts them, and still he embraces the values he has learned from them. But now he lives those values from deep within himself.

Harry is not the only part-Muggle orphan in wizarding history to find himself at Hogwarts. Fifty years earlier, young Tom Riddle had a similar experience. Abandoned by his Muggle father before his birth, left at a Muggle orphanage by a witch mother who

chose death over her own identity, Tom grows up in circumstances as grim as Harry's, isolated, unloved, and ignorant of his heritage. Brought to Hogwarts by Dumbledore at the age of eleven, Tom begins a brilliant career as a wizard. (*Half-Blood* 430) But despite the many parallels in their lives, faced with the question we all must answer – knowing I will die, how shall I live? – Harry and Tom take very different paths. Tom continues to isolate himself, concentrating on his “greatness.” He constructs an intimidating persona for himself, and becomes the powerful and ruthless Lord Voldemort, the Dark Lord. (*Half-Blood*, 277)

Voldemort sees a world of death. He exists in such fear of his own death that he will do anything to avoid it. The deaths of others are as nothing to him, he cares only for his advantage. His focus on death prevents him from ever fully living. He begins a career of murder and conquest, killing among others Harry's parents. The curse he aims at the infant Harry, however rebounds on himself. Voldemort is diminished, loses his powers, feels terrible pain, nearly dies, seems to disappear. (*Stone*, 12, *Hallows*, 342) We see the narrowness of his life metaphorically when this event leaves him with no body of his own, (*Goblet*, 652) possessing a series of animals and people as he scurries about trying to find a means of coming back and conquering death. (*Goblet*, 653) He commits the crime of drinking unicorn blood to assure a continued existence of a sort, a cursed life. (*Stone*, 258) His followers are called Death Eaters – because they are deluded that he will help them to avoid death but really because they will be consumed by death themselves if they fail him in any way. (*Goblet*, 647) Secretly, even from his devoted servants, the Dark Lord attempts to create back-up selves to protect himself, infusing magical objects with pieces of his soul. These Horcruxes are made at the cost of other lives, and incur the perilous instability of his own soul. (*Half-Blood*, Chapter 23) Ultimately, none of it works. Harry and his friends are able to track down all the Horcruxes, and they are destroyed. Meanwhile, Voldemort, even as he regains a body, makes the remains of his deepest self smaller and smaller, accepting a bitter and constrained half-life. He has no friends, only servants and enemies. (*Goblet*, 647; *Half-Blood* 277) He loves no one, not even himself. He clings only to his specialness. The young Tom, even at school, rejecting anything ordinary, anything shared, had rejected his father's name, (*Half-Blood*, 277) and in his self proclaimed persona of Lord Voldemort, expresses his true obsession: Vol-de-mort is the will to death.

Harry has a much more complicated and ultimately healthy attitude towards death. He is exposed all too young to the grimmer realities of life and death. As an infant he has seen his mother die, and he somehow survived Voldemort's killing curse. He is called “The Boy Who Lived.” By the age of fourteen he has seen his friend Cedric Diggory die, after which he can see the otherwise invisible thestrals, flying horse-like creatures. (*Phoenix*, 199) Near the end of the first book (*Stone*, p. 297) Dumbledore, speaking of his friend Nicholas Flamel's willingness to allow the destruction of the Sorcerer's Stone, sustainer of his own immortality, says to Harry: “To the well organized mind, death is but the next great adventure.” When Dumbledore dies before Harry's eyes, (*Half-Blood*, 595) Harry is bereft of friend, mentor, and guide. Yet he

accepts the finality of this death more readily than this reader. / kept hoping Dumbledore would return. But when Ron and Hermione are wishing they had Dumbledore to guide them, Harry replies: "Dumbledore's dead. . . I saw it happen, I saw the body. He's definitely gone." (*Hallows*, 390) And in the final conversation with the shade of Dumbledore, the headmaster reminds Harry that his acceptance of human limits is a sign and source of his power over the Dark Lord. "He was more afraid than you were that night, Harry. You had accepted, even embraced, the possibility of death, something Lord Voldemort has never been able to do. Your courage won, your wand overpowered his." (*Hallows*, 711) And later he adds: "You are the true master of death, because the true master does not run away from Death. He accepts that he must die and understands that there are far, far worse things in the living world than dying." (*Hallows*, 720)

Harry has been equipped for the journey of transformation. Over the years of his youth, he transforms himself from a lonely kid to a courageous fighter and leader. By the end of the series he has transformed his world, ridding it of the looming presence of Lord Voldemort's evil and oppressive schemes. We have seen that he had mentors and guides, friends and allies to help him, though ultimately he had to figure things out for himself and take up the cloak of his own authority. We have seen that he had a healthy understanding of life and death.

But the most important element in Harry's successful transformation of himself and his world is love. This love takes many forms

- ★ Harry's loyalty to his friends – unlike Voldemort, Harry is not a loner, he accepts help and advice from his friends. He trusts others. Harry shares the task, and the glory. In the end each of the seven Horcruxes is destroyed by a different person. (*Wikipedia*, Horcrux chart) Harry gives up the idea that he must take all the burden upon himself, and accepts Hermione's advice before the battle of Hogwarts, when she says, "You don't have to do everything alone, Harry. [*Hallows*, 583]"
- ★ Hermione shows an anti-racist commitment to the inherent worth and dignity of all human and non-human beings, especially house elves, who are enslaved. (*Goblet*, 224; *Chamber* 177) Harry and his friend Ron are initially more inclined to just accept things the way they are in the wizarding world, but Harry acts from a personal relationship with elf Dobby to free him. (*Chamber*, 338) Years later, Hermione is vindicated. Dobby saves their lives – and loses his own – rescuing them from the Death Eaters basement prison at Malfoy Manor. (*Hallows*, Chapter 23) When Ron finally speaks up in concern for elves, Hermione finally expresses her love for him. (*Hallows* 625) And Harry takes up the full mantle of his inherent authority after acknowledging his debt and burying Dobby with his own hands. (*Hallows*, 478ff, 482)
- ★ Another example is Hagrid's love of all creatures, even the most bizarre, (*Azkaban*, 115 and series *passim*) and his own part-Giant origins. (*Goblet*, 427f) Rowling does not spell out the racist element in Muggle and Wizarding societies, but she presents a wide variety of beings, and shows us that acting in an anti-racist manner is essential to a healthy society.
- ★ The familial love and loyalty of many wizarding families strengthens the wizarding society. Author Rowling does not discuss sexism in the books but shows girls as well as boys as quidditch players, brilliant magicians, and heads of the school. Similarly, she does not *show* us any out gay characters, but has since told us that Dumbledore is gay. (*Time Magazine*, September 5, 2007, p. 72) And when Harry shows mercy to his enemy Draco and his reassures Draco's mother Narcissa, in motherly gratitude she risks her life to help Harry by lying to her lord, Voldemort. (*Hallows*, 726) Love across all sorts of lines is assumed for Harry and his allies, and is an essential element in their ultimate victory.
- ★ And at the heart of this journey, is the sacrificial love of Harry's parents, and Harry himself, and many of the other characters.

Sacrificial, there's a word to make Unitarian Universalists uneasy. It reeks of bloody altars and oppressive irrational thinking. But if you look closely at the word, it means exactly what it needs to mean for this journey of transformation: to "sacri-fice" is to *make holy*. Harry's mother Lily stands between Voldemort and the infant Harry, receiving the curse meant for him. (*Hallows* 342ff) Her sacrificial love makes a

protective shield over Harry. (*Stone*, 299; *Goblet*, 652) Eventually, Voldemort takes this shield into himself by means of Harry's blood, making an additional link between himself and Harry. (*Goblet*, 642; *Hallows*, 710)

Their early circumstances are parallel, their wands are twins, (*Stone* 85, *Hallows*, 495f), Harry himself contains a fragment of Voldemort, implanted at the killing of his mother (*Hallows*, 686). Dumbledore recognizes this when he hears Harry's report of their duel in the graveyard (*Goblet*, 696) and we see a gleam of something like triumph in Dumbledore's eyes. These links set up the conditions for Harry's final act of self sacrificial love. (*Hallows*, 709)

Near the end of the series, during a lull in the great Battle of Hogwarts, Harry acts alone for the good of the whole world. He walks unarmed into Voldemort's presence, ready to receive Voldemort's killing curse. His last thought is of his love for Ginny. (*Hallows*, 704) The curse comes, but it doesn't kill him. Instead, Harry's sacrificial love casts a shield over the defenders of Hogwarts, his friends and allies in the battle against the Death Eaters. (*Hallows*, 738) The fragment of Voldemort in him is destroyed, and the link with Voldemort is finally severed. Harry's soul is his own, and completely whole. (*Hallows*, 708) Harry has completed the transformation of himself. He knows himself, he knows his world. He knows how to face death and how to live. We see a sweet and touching evidence of his understanding and forgiveness years later in the next to last page of the last book (*Hallows*, 758), when he bends down and speaks to his son heading off to Hogwarts, "Albus Severus," he says, "you were named for two headmasters of Hogwarts. One of them was a Slytherin and he was probably the bravest man I ever knew."

When Harry has made himself whole, it is a short path to healing the world. He returns from his interlude between life and death, his sojourn in Kings Cross Station with the shade of Dumbledore, and takes up the final battle with Voldemort. Harry disarms the Dark Lord as *he* tries one last time to kill Harry. With all the Horcruxes gone, the curse rebounds on the last living fragment of Voldemort, no longer tied to Harry, and Voldemort is no more. Harry and his friends have created a happier world for Lupin's baby Teddy – Harry's godson – and the whole wizarding and Muggle worlds.

So was I right to say to the author that the magic and witchcraft are nothing but decoration? In these books, magic is a technology, enchanting for the reader, convenient for the author, fascinating to decipher. Transfiguration is an amusing trifle, changing a teapot into a hedgehog, but transformation is something we can all undertake. The deepest magic is in the characters themselves. Shortly before the great Battle of Hogwarts, Harry's wand is damaged beyond repair. Harry is distraught and depressed by this loss. ". . . [T]his journey had already given him scars to his chest and forearm to join those on his hand and forehead, but never, until this moment, had he felt himself to be fatally weakened, vulnerable and naked, as though the best part of his magical power had been torn from him. (*Hallows* 350) But of course, his magic does not lie in his wand, even his lovely holly wand with phoenix feather; it lies in himself. When Dumbledore told Harry that his *courage* had won, he is exactly right. Courage

comes from “cors” meaning heart. It is both love and loyalty that enable Harry to face Voldemort with the same courage and sacrificial love that Lily had embodied in saving Harry those sixteen years before. (*Chamber*, 316) And that love, even Voldemort called ancient magic. (*Goblet*, 653)

That is the magic available to us all, the magic of transformation on the religious journey. It would have been available to Voldemort as well, had he been able to understand, but then he would not have been Voldemort, only plain Tom Riddle. Dumbledore tells Harry: “That which Voldemort does not value, he takes no trouble to comprehend. Of house-elves and children’s tales, of love, loyalty and innocence, Voldemort knows and understands nothing. *Nothing*. That they all have a power beyond his own, a power beyond the reach of any magic, is a truth he has never grasped. (*Hallows*,709f)

All of this is as true here in the Muggle world as it is in the Wizarding world. Forest Church declares that “the most eloquent answer to death’s “no”is love’s “yes.” (*UU World*, Summer 2008, p. 20)We are all on a journey. We all have within ourselves the possibilities of transforming ourselves and our world. Last week J. K. Rowling said so herself. She was speaking at Harvard graduation.

"We do not need magic to transform the world. We carry all the power we need inside ourselves already. We have power to imagine better."

(JK Rowling at Harvard Graduation 08,from NPR story June 6, 2008)

So may it be, amen, shalom, and blessed be.

