

A Prayer For Us

Presented by Pastor Scott Walters on 06/02/19

At Crossroads United Methodist Church

Waunakee, WI

“Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone”

+A fascinating mirror

+ Harry sees himself and his deceased parents

+Prof. Dumbledore explains: “It shows us nothing more or less than the deepest, most desperate desire of our hearts. However, this mirror will give us neither knowledge nor truth. Men have wasted away before it, entranced by what they have seen, or been driven mad not knowing if what it shows is real or even possible. It does not do to dwell on dreams and forget to live; remember that.”

What is your deepest desire? To be loved? To belong?

Whose faces do you see in the mirror? Who is missing?

+I see parents; grandparents; parishioners; friends; heroes of mine.

What are you desperate for?

Usually, we settle for “lesser gods”

+Wealth, popularity, power, sex

But, these are lesser gods.

St. Augustine: “O Lord, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in You.”

I would like to suggest that today’s gospel from John is like that mysterious mirror at Hogwarts.

A mysterious meal in an otherwise darkened room, perhaps lit by lamps or candles.

+Jesus’ last supper with disciples; unusual Passover; not celebrative; more serious; words spoke with a heavy heart. We know why.

Then Jesus offers a prayer – a different prayer.

No “Lord help me!” or “Thank you for my blessings.”

Rather, we overhear a deep, intimate prayer about his hour having finally arrived and about being one.

But the prayer isn’t for himself but for them (including us).

And Jesus prays for those who must believe through the witness of the church.

Most of our prayers a first-person prayers.

Jesus prays collectively for all of us.

Pastor’s School in Appleton – Dr. James Sanders

How do we misread or misinterpret the scriptures today?

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“We read of scriptures individually, but scripture was read communally, collectively.”

To be a Christian is not to cultivate your own solitary spiritual garden.
Our love for one another; for the community, for unity, that the gifts God has given to me might be used for others.
According to Jesus, no solitary Christians or spiritual “Lone Rangers.”

The prayer of for unity: “that all may believe”
+Do we have to get along all the time? Do we have to agree all the time?

CRUCIAL: We need to think of our faith less as a checklist and more as who we are.

William Sloane Coffin: The job of creating each person in God’s image has already been done for us; all we need to do is to recognize and live out that reality.”

Jesus goes ultimate on us: Jesus prays for his followers for the ultimate purpose “so that the world may believe.”

Our mission is to show others to the Mirror, and to invite them, as Dumbledore did with Harry Potter, to look deeply into their hearts, so that they might know about a Savior who cares for them, by the way we care for them