

Today's Devotional is provided by Rev. Dr. Robin Hawley Gorsline

Change Never Ends

So here's the deal.....I cherish Cathy Batson's interpretative dancing. She blows me away every time.

She took me to a whole new level on February 15 at MCCDC's Black History Celebration, when she and Eric Cherry danced to one of my all-time favorite songs, "A Change Gonna Come," by an artist I have long treasured, the incomparable, the legendary artist of soul, Sam Cooke.



This song, written and sung by Cooke (he wrote all his hit songs over his all-too brief career) instantly became, as it remains today, an anthem for the movement for civil rights for Black Americans. It is in the sacred company of my favorite hymn, "Lift Every Voice and Sing," as well as "We Shall Overcome."

If you don't know the song and/or did not see Cathy and Eric's interpretation I encourage you to stop reading this now and watch the video, available at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=my84wLEzmXw&feature=youtu.be>

The message of the song remains as true and relevant today as it was when the song was released in 1965—serial shootings of Black men, mass incarceration of so many not shot, voter suppression, hunger and poverty rates so much higher in communities of color, and on and on. One commentator speculated recently that if Cooke were to write a sequel today it would be "The More Things Change."

I know their performance did not occur during Lent, but I thought of Lent as I watched and cried in response. I thought about how, as shown by Cathy and Eric, change is so often made possible by human encounters and connections. God works through us to create change—change in ourselves and change in our world.

Jesus was called to the wilderness as preparation for his mission, but it began when John the Baptizer lowered him in the river, one servant of God blessing another servant of God. And that's what I saw Cathy and Eric showing us that evening, two servants of God blessing each other. And of course all of us gathered together.

The song is a message of the hard reality of living while Black—"it's been too hard living" and "He winds up knockin' me back down on my knees"—and the powerful counter-reality of hope and love and connection that also is a reality of living while Black in this nation, this world—"I know a change gonna come"

Cathy and Eric manifested those truths in their actions, their joining together, their arm-in-arm alliance, showing each other, and us, the truths .

So, while Lent is certainly about quiet time (meditation, prayer) with God, Lent also is centered in human-divine connection, our own one-on-one with God as well as our learnings and blessings from each other, from our worship together, our meals at church and with family and friends, our Metro rides with strangers (and friends)—everywhere we go God is there, God is here on this page, in your heart and mine, no exceptions, not ever any exceptions.

I don't know about you, but I know, I was reminded by Cathy, Eric, and Sam, that there is no end to life, that God is always about change, there is, as I never tire of saying, " always more with God."

Thank you, Cathy and Eric, and Sam, and God for showing me hope and love yet again.

You can also find the lyrics to the song at <https://genius.com/Sam-cooke-a-change-is-gonna-come-lyrics>