

## FOR THE SAKE OF OLD TIMES

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dCFdKpKLGxs>

<https://1504.co/for-the-sake-of-old-times>

(STOP VIDEO at 3:36 min)

As you know, so well 2020 was a mess of a year.

A year that has broken us down, violated us, and exposed how sick we are - not only through a rampant virus - but the sickness that also resides deep in our nation's racist roots.

It has been a year of reckoning.

It has been a scary, hard, and long year.

We know deep in our bones - that it will take many of us years to heal. That the deep trauma so many of you are enduring, is still active.

And it will take us - STILL - years to continue the work to move this nation into greater awareness, justice and liberty **for all**.

And with a year like 2020 as our backdrop - it is easy to see that our human tendency and natural response to such weight - is to "wave goodbye", "say good riddance", and try our best to MOVE ON - to forget this past year.

And I want to honor these instincts in us - to move on - to move forward - to face newness, to mark a new beginning.... With hope...

But I also want to invite us to press into our "Wave goodbye - SEE YA 2020"- tendency through a video we'll watch together.

**This video is called, "For the Sake of Old Times"**

And it was recently created in collaboration with NPR and an Alabama based company called [1504](https://1504.co).

This video - filmed in a church that refused to seat any Black visitors during the city's Civil Rights Movement, features a group of Black community singers in Alabama- singing the familiar "New Year's song - Auld Lang Syne." They have reimagined this traditional Scottish poem - (that is often associated with booze and beads) - and they've slowed it down so we can take in the fullness of the questions that this song poses - which are, "should old acquaintance be forgotten?" "How do we respond to the events, the memories of this past year?" It asks us -- "Do we remember or erase?" "Should 2020 be forgotten?"

As you view this video - let your memories of this past year roll through you... acknowledging - bringing to mind the ones that your heart and body allow - and as best you can - think about ***what sustained you through these moments? What sustained you through 2020?***

## SHOW VIDEO:

I'll give you a moment to gather your breath.

Our memories of 2020 reveal that we are intricately intertwined with one another. That even our very personal memories have roots that stretch and touch greater humanity... People we know well and those we have never met. And the host of these memories will live with us - in our bodies, our hearts, our minds - for a very long time.

They are not resolved aspects of a past gone by... they are unresolved, LIVE parts of us now. We have witnessed chaos, we have embodied compassion, we have shaken with rage and we have lifted our voices for justice ....**we have lived through this year, and this year now lives in us.**

Howard Thurman says,

*"We can use our memory of the past with creative discrimination. We can lift out of the past those things that will give us reinforcement as we face the future, that will give us courage, that will lift the ceiling of our hopes as we look toward tomorrow....."*

*In this way, 'we can let the past become something more than history something that tutors us as we move into the new year. The past is history, but the past is alive, because the past is in us.'" (Thurman, 180,181 - The Mood of Christmas)*

And as we face this new year ahead - it feels worth it to stop and pay attention to what it was that sustained us - and what it is we will bring with us - into 2021. **And our memories inform this.**

So I'd love to have you chat in - what sustained you in 2020?

And what of that, will you bring with you in 2021?

### Prayer :

#### **Oh Sustainer of our soul....**

*Could you fill our cups this morning - with what we need most from you to face this new year.*

*Whether that's courage, or kindness, or rest - or laughter..*

*Fill us up, GOD - and **preserve that memory. The memory of you.***

*What it feels like to encounter the goodness and presence of you, God.*

*Could you preserve in us - the awareness and heart to "love our neighbors" well.*

*Could you preserve in us - our vision, your vision to continue this journey of life - with all it's mess and beauty - and create beloved community - Amen.*

*And now - over to Cate Nelson for this morning's good words....*

**IMAGE REFLECTION:***Waiting/Awaiting**1/3/21*

*In just a moment you'll see an image that we'll use for reflection of your own story and the story we just heard.*

This is the Holy Spirit.

The holy presence of the Divine.

*The one who bends and dips and searches and seeks to be close to you.*

She is your guide.

She speaks to you.

She sees you.

*She awaits your hand.*

*This year also awaits your hand.*

Your hand in action.

Your hand in courage.

Your hand in creativity.

Your hand in love.

Your hand in prayer.

This year waits for you.

Could you stretch your hands out to the Spirit of God now.

Close your eyes if you'd like.

Just hold them there for a moment.

Don't worry about naming what you hope for - or what you want to bring with you in 2021...or what you want to change or resolve...

That will all have its place and time... but for now...

JUST let the Spirit of God TOUCH YOU.

Let the hand of God touch yours. *(Take your hand and pull you close)*

**And could we pray a prayer as we enter into 2021 :**

*Spirit of God we give thanks for you.*

*That you continue to reach out to us... always. Always. always.*

*We give thanks to you - for all that has been - and for all that is to come.*

**AMEN**

*And now, could you join me in singing one last time this season, "Joy to the World"....*

