

For the formative years of my life, I donned velvet and organza dresses, white socks with lace at the ankle, and shiny Mary Janes. My entire childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood were soundtracked with hymns, hollers, and holiness. The Black Church is a religion all its own. We see parodies of Black Church services in sitcoms and movies. The real thing accosts us in the wee hours of the morning when we leave the tv on. It's impossible to drive for very long in The South and not see Black Church buildings sprinkled about the landscape. Colloquialisms and vernaculars have surmounted those walls and cascaded into virtual every nook and cranny of the world outside:

"Can I get an amen?" "Preach!" "Turn to your neighbor and say 'NEIGHBOR!'"

There are thousands upon thousands of Black Church members on rollbooks all over the diaspora. However, there are thousands upon thousands more who have never experienced The Black Church for themselves.

The more things change, the more afraid I am that those thousands upon thousands never will. Can I even experience it still?

As roses fade with the swelter of the summer, pulpits and pews wane in vibrance and visitation as nether flames grow to rend asunder.

Generations are void of the village that kept me accountable and alive.

Can we Revive? Or is it the Season to Contrive?