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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A picture containing text, indoor  Description automatically generated | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Happy New Year!**  I wonder how you might sum up 2020?!  A few weeks ago, I found myself having a chat over a socially distanced coffee with a friend, musing over 2020 and basically writing it off as a year we would all rather forget. Later that evening, I began to reflect on our conversation a bit more deeply. How could I write off a year in which I received the gift of a new grandchild? How come I failed to think of that, and many other blessings?   It’s easy to overlook the good stuff -  amazing colleagues, the laughter of children, the birth of a baby, or even just a great cup of coffee! Yes, our hearts have ached for all the deprivations, suffering and uncertainty this year has brought forth. And yet, when we stop and think about it, even in the time it takes us to have the first coffee of the day, there are wonders and blessings which spring to mind, having the power to lift our hearts in thanksgiving to God and shifting our mindset.   As 2021 opens up and we continue to face uncertainty, let’s hold on to the quietly grounding truth of Christmas – God is with us. The birth of a baby.   * Why not think about keeping a representation of the nativity on your desk or at your kitchen sink, throughout the year? * Maybe when you have your first cup of coffee of the day, just pause for a couple of minutes and have a conversation with God which begins with thanksgiving?  Who knows where that conversation may take you…? | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | *The Angel of the Lord said to the shepherds “ Do not be afraid. I bring good news of great joy, that will be for all the people.”*  **Luke 2:10**   *Don’t fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God’s wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It’s wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the centre of your life.* **Philippians 4: 6,7** (The Message)  *"Resolve to keep happy, and your joy and you shall form an invincible host against difficulties."***Helen Keller**  *"With the new day comes new strength and new thoughts."***Eleanor Roosevelt** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=emb_title&v=ZY-yBWwZ8sk) of **‘Hands’** – a poem written for Christmas 2020 by Catherine Stevenson and performed by Alistair Stevenson.  From Engage Worship [website](https://engageworship.org/) | | |