



January 2022

Dear Friends,

At the beginning of each year I tend to think it's illogical to regard a single date as a new start, but we do, most of us, think of New Year in that way. What will 2022 bring? Some of us may think we know and may already have booked things like holidays. But in fact, of course, we don't know if we shall be doing any of the things we imagine we will. Life is uncertain.

I think that it's safe to say that this last year was more than eventful and for many not what we expected. For some it was disheartening and even tragic. Many people are hurting or fearful because of their experiences over the past year. For them it's been a difficult year including family bereavements, challenging personal circumstances, financial issues, difficult relationships and illnesses not to mention the dreaded Covid-19. And yet, when we look back over this past year, amidst all of the anxieties and difficulties, there were always some '*signs of hope*' which could be discerned, giving strength to persevere and carry on. Some of these signs of hope were people around us or things that people did for us.

As 2022 begins I'd like to share a poem - some may know it.

I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:

'Give me a light that I might tread safely into the unknown!'

And he replied: 'Go out into the darkness

And put your hand into the hand of God!

This shall be to you better than light

And safer than a known way'.

So I went forth, and finding the hand of God

Trod gladly into the night.

As you walk into the unknown of this year, you may be excited or maybe you're scared of the darkness that you feel or see ahead. As day follows night, light always follows darkness and signs of hope like chinks of light will be there. You may just need help to see it. May you find someone to hold your hand and be your light through good times and hard, be it God, your partner, family or friends.

*Rev'd Nicki*