



*Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting You are God.*

*Psalm 90:2*

*If you're like me, it has probably dawned on you that the new year is no longer new. January has given way to February and our best resolutions have likely given way to "things as usual". Maybe you felt a bit of hope as the new year arrived, that somehow this year things would be better. Certainly there are some things that are better. The latest report on the coronavirus infections is that they are down by about 40%, and for that I think we can all be grateful. Still, as we move into the Year of our Lord 2021, it seems that we are still plagued with the challenges we faced as the last year, 2020, came to a close. Clearly all those problems persist.*

*Someone recently asked me what hope I was holding on to as we begin this new year, and just yesterday I had a moment show itself to me so that I can answer that question. As I was leaving our neighborhood yesterday, I stopped and saw that on the bank of our small lake there were six or eight snow geese. They are a rare sighting, so I was awed by their presence and beauty. Later in the day as I left the neighborhood for lunch, they were gliding in concert across the water with their black heads held high. They were breathtaking.*

*However, as I returned from lunch I realized they were gone. Still, each time I pass the lake I keep looking to see if they have returned. I'm sure they have moved on to points further north, yet I have the memory of the gift of their presence that they gave to me.*

*I wonder if that is how we need to think about the challenges that we still face in this new year. Instead of letting them bring us to despair, perhaps we can think about the beautiful moments we have experienced as the old year passed away and the new year has shown itself. Perhaps we can keep looking for the good things that bring us joy and hope, the moments in which we stand in awe and can give thanks to God for all that was, is and shall be.*

*As we seek to hold on to hope in this new year, I suggest we take the "long view." That is to say, I truly do believe that "from everlasting to everlasting God is God." When I make that my mantra I have deep and abiding hope, the same kind of hope I have that I will, in the fullness of time, someday see those snow geese again.*

*Holy One, help me to hold on to the truth of your everlasting presence in my life and in our world. Amen.*

