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One of the best decisions I made in the past decade was to join our local Toastmasters club. Still, while I find the training and support extremely helpful, I often wrestle with clasping my hands in nervousness. That got me thinking about hands.

I've noticed that recently mine are starting to show the signs of wear and tear. They're still functional, though, providing me with the ability to use a keyboard and earn a living as a writer.

Over the years they have changed diapers, paddled behinds (remember when such motherly behaviour wouldn't have been viewed as child abuse?), guided bicycles as they propelled my beloved sons to new levels of achievement and wiped both fevered brows and dirty bottoms.

My hands regularly caress the keyboard of my piano, the same instrument that for decades knew the touch of my mother's hands. It's there that I express the deepest feelings of my heart.

My hands have traced patterns and sewed clothing for the family. They've constructed sturdy shopping bags – decades before they became the "in" thing. Over the years I've used my hands to mend or darn socks, sweaters, blue jeans and delicate linens. They've planted gardens, pulled weeds, harvested produce and preserved a few thousand jars of food.

Too often I take my hands for granted yet through them I've displayed my creativity, communicated my anger, demonstrated my perseverance and expressed the longing of my heart to worship. They've been instruments of blessing to others but I've also known the comforting touch of a friend in my pain and the strength of a helping hand in my times of need.

"May the favour of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us...." (Psalm 90:17 NIV-UK)

God, make our hands instruments of Your love to a hurting world.