Celebrating Life as the Handiwork of God  
By Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

“I’m in pretty good shape for the shape I’m in!” That’s a positive view of life! Even more positive — “I’m in pretty good shape because God shaped me!” Knowing that the value of human life comes from God’s handiwork and does not depend upon our capabilities or condition enables us to value our lives and the lives of others. We celebrate and share the message that human life is created, redeemed, and held by God’s hands.

Read Psalm 8. Display an old handcrafted quilt or other item that’s a bit worn. Discuss how the value comes not from its looks but because it is someone’s handiwork.

Prayer
Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless our study of Your Word and guide our understanding of the truth that You give value to each human life. In Your Name. Amen.

Created by God’s Hands
The First Human Lives
Genesis 1:26–27 What did God do that gave value to the first human beings? ____________

Genesis 2:7, 22 What picture does God give in the verbs formed and made (literally, built)? ____________

Genesis 9:6 Discuss how this original high position gives human life value even after the fall into sin.

Subsequent Human Lives
Genesis 1:28; 2:24 How will God continue His procreative work? ____________

Job 10:8; Psalm 139:13–14; 119:73 What picture does this give about His involvement? ____________

If human beings came with tags like clothing, they would read, “Handmade by God!” Discuss the implications for the following:
• Human life in the womb
• Grandma in the care center
• The frozen embryo in the fertility clinic.

If the handmade item displayed were tattered or torn, would that decrease its value? How does this apply to human life? See Isaiah 45:9–11. ____________

Celebrate the value God’s creating hands give to life and sing!
Lord of Life* [Sung to “Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us”]
Lord of life, whose hand has made us, formed us each with tender care. You had crowned men with Your image, not intending such despair. Yet through sin the glory faded, death and doom came in its place. But in spite of our condition, we’ve been rescued by Your grace!

Redeemed by God’s Hand
Ever lose something? Is there sometimes a price to get it back (e.g., replacing a driver’s license)? ____________

Redeem means to buy back with a price. What is the price for lost sinners (Romans 6:23a; Revelation 21:8)? ____________

You were bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:20 ESV). You know the price. Fill in the blanks: “[N]ot with ___________________ or ___________________ but with His holy, precious _______________ and innocent ___________________ and ___________________.

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Were God's hands involved in this price? (John 19:18; 20:20)
For whom did Jesus pay this price? Lutherans? Christians?
____________________________________ (John 3:16; Hebrews 7:27)
Every life is a life for whom Jesus died and rose again! The
unborn child is not a mistake or unwanted but someone
“bought with a price.” Immobile grandpa is not a burden or
unproductive but someone “bought with a price.”
Being redeemed by the loving hands of God is a particularly
powerful message for those who have made wrong choices
about life. For example, women who have had an abortion
— many of whom are Christian — often feel crushed by guilt
and shame.
Read the following passages out loud. Silently pause after
each. Allow God’s Spirit to speak to all and especially to any
burdened with the “secret” sin of abortion (1 John 1:8–9;
Romans 8:1; Isaiah 1:18).

**Stand and recite together:**
Fellow sisters in Christ who have sinned against life, we
stand together beneath the cross as sinners in thought,
word, and deed. But in Christ, God forgives all sin. We value
each other and everyone as individuals who have been
“bought with a price.” We pledge to each other our love and
acceptance and prayers.

**Celebrate the value God's redeeming hands give to life and sing!**
God so loved the world, He gave us
Jesus Christ to bear our sin.
On the cross His life He offered,
that we might be His again.
And the Holy Spirit calls us
by the Gospel's joyful ring.
Making us His own dear children
us, eternal life to bring.

**Held by God's Hand**
After a fall on an icy walk, Katie said to her dad, “Maybe I
should hold your hand.” The feeble grip on a couple of Dad's
fingers was not enough. The ice won again. This time Dad
spoke, “Maybe I should hold your hand.” Katie's little hand was
surrounded! Oh, she still slipped, but she never fell.
Read Isaiah 42:6a. Describing His relationship to His Servant
Messiah, God also gives a picture of His relationship to us.
When are we “called in righteousness”? (Romans 6:3–4)

What comfort do we receive from the fact that God holds our
hand and not the other way around? (John 10:27-30)

Discuss how this comfort might apply to a family in your
congregation dealing with a crisis pregnancy, infertility, a
frightening diagnosis, placing a parent in a care center, the
suicide of a loved one.

**Hope in God's Hands**
Just days before he took his own life, a young man said to a
friend, “It's like a train coming at me, and I can't do anything
to get out of the way.” Suicide is a desperate act of hopelessness
often caused by clinical depression. While clinical depression
requires professional treatment, God offers a message of
hope that can move people to seek such treatment and
sustain them during treatment.

Answer the following questions and discuss how these
passages remind us that Christian hope is more than a feeling
or wishful thinking.
1 Peter 1:3 Why can we be certain that our hope is “living”
and never diminishes? ________________________________

Romans 15:13 Hope does not come from hopeful feelings or
hopeful circumstances. What is its source? ________________

1 Timothy 1:1 What is the connection between “God our
Savior” and “Christ Jesus our hope”? _____________________

**Celebrate the comfort and hope God's holding hand gives to life, and sing!**
Lord of Life, Who rose in triumph,
conq'ring death and giving hope,
You have called us and equipped us,
in a sinful world to cope;
Teaching us to love each other,
to befriend and help in strife;
To forgive and seek to comfort,
and preserve the gift of life.

**Being God's Hands**
Read 1 John 4:11. Rather than seeing the life issues
as controversial issues to be avoided, we see them as
opportunities to be God's hands of love and carry out the
mission of the LWML!

God has given us the greatest, most positive and powerful
For Life message in the universe! Human life has value and is
worth celebrating because it is the handiwork of God!

**In celebration of life as His handiwork,**
join hands and sing as a closing prayer:
help us, Lord to see as you do
life is precious in each stage.
From the unborn to the feeble,
life is precious in each age.
Help us, Lord to be your witness
and to show the world we care.
So that people may not perish,
but instead your life may share.

Congregations available from Lutherans For Life.