



Hand Holders

Begin by singing or reading “Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me” *LSB* 722

Opening Prayer: Heavenly Father, let us always be aware that Your hand is outstretched to us. It is up to us to reach out and hold Your hand as we daily go about our tasks. With You by our side we are assured of Your peace, Your forgiveness, Your unconditional love. We ask Your blessing on our devotion to open our hearts to the Holy Spirit. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: “Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words.” So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. And the vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do.

Then the word of the Lord came to me: “O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter has done? declares the Lord. Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel (Jeremiah 18:1-6).

Hands are such an important part of our bodies. What a wonderful creation God has wrought when He made us and created us with hands. Take a few moments and look at your hands. Think about the many things our hands do in a day ... in a lifetime.

My godmother was very special to me. She had no children and as she grew old there was no one to care for her, and I gladly accepted this task. When I took her to church, she would hold my hand, and I would look down on the wrinkled, leathered skin which had seen so many decades of extremely hard work. The fingers were bent from crippling arthritis that had planted seeds, picked corn, and milked cows in bitter cold Nebraska weather. The fingers had sewn a memorable sky blue dress with smocking and dainty embroidered flowers for me when I was barely three years old. Those hands had canned thousands of quarts of food and picked hundreds of bouquets of beautiful flowers from her carefully tended garden. Hands folded in prayer as she taught me to pray and hands which finally lay still in the peace of death when God called her home.

God tells us in Jeremiah how He formed us like a potter forms his clay, and how even though we are marred with the guilt and burden of our sins, Jesus was able, through His suffering and death, to form us into something precious and perfect in His sight.

Focus on your hands. Think of the many times you have held the hand of someone: the curled fingers of your first-born child; the chubby hand of your grandchild; the weathered

and gnarled hand of a parent or elder loved one; the strong, powerful hand of your beloved husband. The holding of these hands is an extension of our Lord holding onto your hand throughout your lifetime ... in every situation, from the moment of your conception until your entrance into His heavenly kingdom. We are being safely led by our Savior. As we fold our hands in prayer, soothe a fevered brow, comfort the sorrowing friend, our hands are indeed an important part of our ministry of Christ. In Luke 23:46b even He said, *“Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!”* as He died for our sins on the cross of Calvary. As we say to the child as we approach a possibly dangerous situation, “Hold onto my hand.” Jesus tells us to hold onto His hand, and He will see us safely through this world into His heavenly kingdom.

Our contributions to God’s kingdom are very important. While we work, take care of the children, serve church and school committees, and do the mundane chores of this world, we must never forget, God formed us with His hands. He gave our hands to be used for His service.

... fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand (Isaiah 41:10).

Prayer: Lord, never let me fear what you have chosen as my life’s work. Allow me to always revere Your unending love in the forgiveness of sins. Keep me in Your Word and grace. Show me the way to be an example for Your love, and when I feel weary or distraught, let me remember that you will raise me up on eagles’ wings. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Sing or read “On Eagles’ Wings” *LSB* 727.

All Scripture references are from the ESV.

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