Words of Preparation
Job contrasts those who “bring their god in their hand” (12:6) and God, who has all life in His hand (12:10). Carrying your god in your hand might be convenient in that you could shape your god into whatever you might want. But a god you carry in your hand would have to be very, very, small!

Such a god could never carry you in his hand. But there is a God who can! Our Triune God created us with His hands, redeemed us with His hands stretched out on a cross, and He holds us in His hands as His people! His hands give value to every life!

Prelude

Opening Hymn “Breathe My Name”
(Tune: Hymn to Joy)

God the Father, You have known me from creation of the earth,
Searched me, Lord, completely knowing of the moment of my birth,
Fashion’d me within my mother, with Your hands You knitted me,
Breathed into my life Your breath a living soul I came to be.

Dearest Jesus, You have known me on the cross of Calvary,
Searched my soul completely saving, breath’d your last in place of me,
Through the water and the Spirit washed away my life of sin,
Crucified together with You, Lord in me You breathe again.

Holy Spirit, You have known me all my days before they came,
Nowhere can I flee Your presence in the womb You knew my name,
By your power, through Your working, You have breathed my name again
That through faith it shall be written in the book of life, in heav’n.

Invocation
Pastor: In the name of God the Father,
People: Who created life with His hands.
Pastor: In the name of God the Son,
People: Who redeemed life with His hands.
Pastor: In the name of God the Holy Spirit,
People: Who holds life in His hands.
Pastor: In the name of our Triune God,
People: The Lord of Life! Amen.

Lord’s Prayer

Benediction
Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you in His hands. The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.
People: Amen!

Closing Hymn “Lord of Life”
(Tune: Hyfrydol e.g “Lord of Glory You Have Bought Us”)

Lord of life, Whose hand has made us, Formed us each with tender care.
You had crowned man 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!

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.

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.

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.

Postlude

2 Text: Public domain

For Life! Pro-Life Songs for Classrooms, Choirs & Congregations, a collection of 18 pro-life songs, is a special order item and a project of LFL of Michigan, and is available for a donation of any size. To order, and to find out more, please call (586) 949-9261 or e-mail lflmi@comcast.net.
Life is a Gift of God So Jesus did partake,
And took upon our human form His heirs He did us make!
When we were being knit He knew who we would be
And mark’d us as His very own His Death has set us free!

Proclamation of God’s Word of Life

Offering

Prayers
Pastor: Heavenly Father, we come to You because we are the work of Your hands and You have asked us to make our requests known to You. Therefore, we confidently say,

People: Lord, hear our prayer.
Pastor: Thank You for shaping and forming us and giving us life.
People: Thank You for Your creating hands.
Pastor: Thank You for loving us in our sinful condition and sending Jesus to be our Savior and giving us new life.
People: Thank You for Your redeeming hands.
Pastor: Thank You for calling us in Christ to be Your children and assuring us of Your presence.

People: Thank You for holding us in Your hands.
Pastor: Father, remind us constantly through Your Word that whether we weep or rejoice, succeed or fail, experience good or evil, we belong to You.

People: You hold us in Your hands.
Pastor: As we recall our baptisms and receive Your body and blood, renew our faith and assure us of Your faithfulness, Your goodness, and Your forgiveness.

People: You hold us in Your hands.
Pastor: Secure in Your hands, use us as Your hands. Use us to share Your love with those not yet born, with those facing difficult situations, with those facing death, and with those who have made mistakes.

People: Use us as Your hands.
Pastor: Secure in Your hands, spur our love into action that we might joyfully defend the work of Your hands, provide for those in need, uplift the sorrowing, and demonstrate the acceptance and hope that forgiveness brings.

People: Use us as Your hands.
Pastor: Secure in Your hands, use us as instruments to renew in Your Church the value of life as the work of Your hands, and then use the influence of Your people to bring an end to those things that attack Your gift of life in our society.

People: Hold us in Your hands and use us as Your hands.
Pastor: (Special petitions may be added here.) Into Your hands, we commend all for whom we pray.

Confession and Absolution
Pastor: God tells us to “lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely” (Hebrews 12: 1). Sin can weigh so heavily upon us and cling so closely that it seems impossible to lay it aside. Sin can make us feel so faithless. But we depend upon God’s faithfulness, not ours! He is faithful and just and promises that when we confess our sins, He will cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). Let us then confess our sins to Him.

People: Father, we confess our sinful nature clings closely to us. It produces sins of thought, word, and deed. We even seek to justify our sinful behavior by “shaping” You into the kind of God we think You should be. But it doesn’t work. Things we have done, things we have failed to do, secret things no one knows—these weigh down upon us. The work of our hands can never free us from this burden. But You can! We commend ourselves to Your merciful hands.

Pastor: God has had mercy upon us! Jesus, “for the joy that was set before him endured the cross” (Hebrews 12:2). The hands of God that created you stretched out in love upon the cross to pay the price for all your sins. Therefore, be assured that God’s hand of mercy is upon you, and it is my joy, in the stead and by the command of the risen Jesus, to forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen!

Entrance Psalm (From Psalm 139)
Pastor: Where shall I go from your Spirit?
People: Or where shall I flee from your presence?
Pastor: If I ascend to heaven, you are there!
People: If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!
Pastor: If I take the wings of the morning
People: and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Pastor: Even there your hand shall lead me,
People: And your right hand shall hold me.
Pastor: If I say, “Surely the darkness shall cover me,
People: And the light about me be night,”
Pastor: Even the darkness is not dark to you;
People: The night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you.
Pastor: For you formed my inward parts;
People: You knitted me together in my mother’s womb.
Pastor: I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
People: Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.
All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.
**Hymn of Praise** “The Lord, My God, Be Praised”
*(Tune: Nun Danket Alle Gott e.g. Now Thank We All Our God)*

The Lord, my God, be praised, My light, my life from heaven;
My maker, who to me Has soul and body given;
My Father, who will shield And keep me day by day
And make each moment yield New blessings on my way.

The Lord, my God, be praised. My trust, my life from heaven,
The Father's own dear Son, Whose life for me was given,
Who for my sin atoned With His most precious blood
And gives to me by faith The highest heav'n-ly good.

The Lord, my God, be praised, My hope, my life from heaven,
The Spirit, whom the Son In love to me has given.
His grace revives my heart And gives my spirit pow'r.
Help, comfort, and support In sorrow's gloomy hour.

**Epistle Reading** Hebrews 12:1-3
Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfector of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

**Gospel Reading** John 10:22-30
At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”

**Creed**

**Hymn of the Day** “Life is a Gift From God”
*(Tune: Diademata e.g. “Crown Him with Many Crowns”)*

Life is a gift from God, Who order'd all my days,
And wrote them in His Book of Life So I could give Him praise
He guards and still preserves That life He gave to me,
And loves me with a Father's love and will eternally!

Life is a Holy Gift Which God alone can give.
He sets before us death and life; Choose life that you might live!
For God has sent His Son Who could have come a king,
But chose a mother's womb instead Eternal Life to bring.