Linking of Hands

Please remain in a circle and join hands.

L: Become aware of the hands that you are holding; feel their warmth, texture and weight.

As an infant, these same hands reached out for the nourishment of another’s touch. As a child, these hands shakily wrote a name on paper for the first time.

These hands have wiped away tears, been clenched in anger, waved hello and good-bye countless times and embraced loved ones. These hands are the tangible link that connects us to one another.

These hands have worked, and are working, and will continue to work to make this world a better place.

I invite you to look around and see those who have experienced so much that is life. (Pause)

May the circle be open but not broken.

All: Community of hope, children of God, daughters and sons of God: we go in peace and offer our hands to honor and serve God who lives within each of us; to serve God in Christ who leads us in using our hands and hearts to serve and bless the world. Amen.

L: Go in peace.
Go in love.
Work for justice.
Go forth and bless the world.

All: Thanks be to God.

(Closing music)
Gathering

L: There are many names for God. Regardless of the tradition, God is God. We come to this service of blessing and invite God to be with us. God of Health and God of Healing, be with us in this time of blessing.

All: Amen

P1: This is Holy ground.
All: We are standing on Holy ground.

P2: For God is present.
All: And where God is, is Holy.

P3: These are Holy hands.
All: God has given us Holy hands.

P4: God works through these hands.
All: And so these hands are Holy.

Blessing of the Oil

P5: Holy God, as oil was used in ancient times, we ask You to bless our use of this oil today.

P6: May its fragrance by a symbolic offering of what is pleasing to You.

P7: May its texture remind us that the soothing work of our hands is also pleasing to You.

P8: May the hands this oil blesses be instruments of Your healing and of Your peace.

All: Amen.

Blessing of the Hands

L: May the work of our hands bring healing to all the people we touch. May the God who formed these hands guide them to bring the healing touch of life. Holy God, bless these hands to be instruments of healing.

Beginning with the Leader, each person will bless the hands of all those gathered.

Dipping a finger in the oil and making a sign of the cross on the clasped hands of the person in front of them, the person doing the anointing will say:

A: Dear God, bless _________’s hands.
All: Amen

The person doing the anointing will continue around the circle; anointing each person’s hands before giving the oil to the first person they anointed. That person will repeat the blessing around the circle. Continue until every person has the opportunity to be the anointer.

Scattering

P9: God blesses our hands for service.
All: We receive the strength offered by our Creator.

P10: Let us also receive the vision to see with the eyes and hear with the ears of our hearts.
All: And the courage to persevere in difficult times.

P11: May all those we touch come to know God’s love.
All: May the same love be a consolation to us.

P12: Let us move forward in our study and preparation with blessed hands that are attentive, healing, meticulous, reliable and hard-working.
All: We go, renewed and refreshed, ready to imagine peace in new ways.