



Ray Of Hope

Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ

"My House shall be a house of prayer for All People."

(Isaiah 56:7)

Founded: 10/31/1983. Now in our Fortieth year of Ministry.

MISSION: Love God, Love your neighbor,
and make disciples of every person

everywhere. (Matthew 22:37-39; Matthew 28:19)

"It is time to put our faith into action."

"Faith without works is dead." (James 2:14-26)

Veronica Floyd, Moderator

Rev. Br. Shawn F. Benedict, O.S.B, Appointed Pastor

We extend a very special welcome to our visitors.

You are as welcome here as Jesus Christ Himself.

Scripture exhorts us: "Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God" Romans 15:7 (NABRE – 2011)

Guests are invited to participate in all parts of the worship service as they feel comfortable. We are building a wonderful Christ-centered Community here, and we invite you to share in our joy! After the Worship Service, please join us for refreshments and sharing.

Today is January 1, 2023, Holy Name, Year A

The grace, the goodness, the loving-kindness of our God has appeared, bringing salvation to everyone. (Titus 2:11, 3:4)

Ray Of Hope Church teaches the same Christian faith of ancient ecumenical consensus.

St. Vincent of Lerins, a fifth-century monk and theologian, described it as

"what has been believed always, everywhere, and by all."

Scripture Readings for this worship event:

First Reading: Isaiah 9:6-7 NRSV 1st Test. Pg. 638

Psalm 96 verses 1-3 and 11-13 with Responsorial.

Second Reading: Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7 NRSV 2nd Test. Pg. 215

Third Reading: Gospel: Luke 2:1-20 NRSV 2ND Testament page 58

*We use the term 1st for the "Old" Testament and 2nd for the "New" Testament. The NRSV Bible 1st Testament numbers are found in the front portion of the Bible and the 2nd Testament numbers are found in the later portion. If this confuses you just ask someone around you to assist you. Thank you.



CALL TO WORSHIP

Visit and greet one another for a social time before the Bell is rung.

Bell's 1st ring. As the bell rings, please find your seat and spend the next few minutes in silent prayer. Please refrain from conversations as these disturb those trying to pray.

The St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi bell at Ray Of Hope Church, 380 W. 1st St. in Elmira, NY, was a gift from Michael Quinnell of Syracuse, NY, in September 2005. The bell rings out 39 joyful rings, in contrast to tolling the bell in single rings. The 39 joyful rings honor the 39 lashes Jesus endured that we now celebrate in victory and gratitude for our salvation. "The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes, we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5) The bell is rung before worship and Bible Enrichment sessions. Listen carefully and see if you can hear all 39 rings.



WE GATHER TO PRAISE THE LORD AND GIVE THANKS

+ Pastoral Welcome

Leader – 1: Hello. My name is _____, and I am in the City of ___ in the State of __. Since this is the second week of Christmas, I will start by saying: Merry and Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year to everyone.

ALL: Merry Christmas. Happy New Year. Alleluia

Leader – 1: You have chosen the most excellent way to start 2023 by giving God thanks and praise. We welcome you to Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the faith community founded in Central New York and now all across the world through the Internet, where everyone is welcome. We extend a special welcome to our visitors and guests here in the Chapel and online through Skype and Facebook. To be added to our email list, email rayofhopechurch@aol.com and write "email list" in the Subject. Visitors in the Chapel can fill out the email information form at the hospitality table and place it in the offerings/donations box on the wall.

You are invited to participate in some or all the parts of this worship event as you feel comfortable. At Ray Of Hope Church, we assist people at various stages of visual impairment by announcing all instructions, page and song numbers, and by using a psalm response verse.

Leader-2: Hello. My name is _____, and I am in the City of _____ in the State of _____. A very blessed New Year to everyone, AMEN! Today, those participating through the Internet may receive Holy Communion with us during this worship event. You do not need to be a Member of this church or any church to receive Holy Communion at Ray Of Hope Church. We celebrate the Lord's open table, where everyone is welcome. Those celebrating at home, please prepare the following items at this time and bring them to your table; 1) a cup with some wine or grape juice, 2) a small piece of bread, cracker, or matzo on a plate, 3) a second cup with some water, and 4) a side napkin. We will use these items for Holy Communion during the second half of the worship service.

Leader-1: The bulletin with the worship order is available in multiple ways. On Facebook Live, click on the "Featured Link" in the window. The bulletin will appear in a second window. Simply flip or slide between the Order of Worship bulletin and the webcast. On Skype the "Order of Worship" is posted in the Chat window. Right-click on the link, choose to open it in a new window or new tab. Finally, the Order of Worship bulletin and the Skype link are posted in the large gold box labeled SUNDAY WORSHIP INFORMATION at www.rayofhopechurch.com. Take a moment now and gather these items. We will start shortly. This morning, Ed Askins is going to play a piano prelude for our service. We ask everyone to listen attentively to enjoy this prayer time and not visit during the music. Thank you.

Music Prelude.



Bell's 2nd ring to announce the start of the worship event.

Leader – 2: We are glad you have chosen to spend this time with us this New Year's morning and on this Eighth Day of Christmas. You are as welcome here as Christ Jesus himself. In Romans Chapter 15:7, the Scriptures instruct us to:

ALL: "Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God." (NABRE)

Leader -1: God is glorified when we welcome one another and introduce ourselves to those around us. You are truly welcome here. **During COVID, we may wave across the room and into the camera for the Internet.

Pastor: Since today is about the Holy Name, we must know in whose Name we are meeting. We begin in the name of God our Creator, Christ Jesus Our Lord and Saviour, and the name of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen


Pastor: Peace be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

Pastor: Merry Christmas again! I emphasize "again" because this is the second of three weeks of Christmas in the Church. Today is the 8th Day of Christmas. Everyone will be receiving eight maids a-milking... OH NO, wrong song. However, really and truly, it was on the 8th day that Jesus was presented in the Temple and given his name by his parents, Joseph and Mary. We will discuss the power of receiving new names later in the worship event.

Today is January 1, 2023, Holy Name, Year A
The grace, the goodness, the loving-kindness of our God has appeared, bringing salvation to everyone. (Titus 2:11, 3:4)

Ray Of Hope Church began on 10/31/1983.

Today we are celebrating the ninth Sunday in our 40th year of ministry. Welcome to the  Church of Elmira, NY, and the world.

Romans 13:11 "Now is the time to WAKE from your SLEEP."

We are proud to be known as the "WOKE" Church of Elmira and Central NY. Popularized by African-American young men, the definition of "woke" is: having or being marked by an active awareness of systemic injustices and prejudices, a liberal progressive orthodoxy, especially promoting inclusive policies or ideologies that welcome and embrace ethnic, racial, and sexual minorities. Awake and aware.

Source: Dictionary.com:

<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/woke>

In Theological terms: Awakened by the Holy Spirit, alive in Christ, actively supporting persons of all Religions and faiths and those with no faith or religion.

See the Ray Of Hope Church Statement of Purpose for more information on these ideas. Right Click Here:

<http://www.rayofhopechurch.com/purpose.htm>

The tree and decorations reflect the multiple colors and aspects of God's love for us and God's presence with us.

However, speaking of love and peace, we stop and pray for all the people in the war still raging in Ukraine. We pray to end these hostilities that started approximately 311 (*corrected*) days ago. Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022. The Winter conditions are very harsh when the power system is not functioning. It is frigid in Ukraine these days.

(Add your silent prayers for the people in this war.)

Pastor: We begin to worship God in the beauty of holiness, spirit, and truth. (Psalm 96:9; John 4:23-24)

ALL: Together, we give God thanks and praise.

FIRST SONG:

+ The Candle Of Hope

Leader -1: Please be seated. The Advent Wreath is wholly transformed into the Christmas Wreath with gold and all the colors. We did not include the Candle of Hope in the middle of the Advent wreath until last Sunday, December 25, the start of this Christmas Season. And so, now, we light our Resurrection Candle Of Hope in honor of the "Blessed Hope," the return of Christ who will transform the living faithful and raise all to new life.

Jesus said: (John 5:25 and Titus 2:13)

ALL: "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." (John 11:25, 26)

Leader -2: While lighting the Candle Of Hope, it is our custom to read panel entries from the Names Project Aids Memorial Quilt to remember those who died of AIDS. Unfortunately, some churches continue to reject sick, lonely, and dying people with HIV/AIDS who need spiritual guidance.

Leader -3: Hello. My name is _____, and I am in the City of _____ in the State of _____. Today we are reading the names on Block # 57

- Western Star Dancers San Francisco (1)
 - Richard Clayberg (2)
 - Dan Druid (3)
 - Steve Perry (4)
- Western Star Dancers, San Francisco (5)
 - Henry Shernoff (6)
 - Ron Cohen (7)
 - Kurt Stutzman (8)

We remember them here and pray for their families.

Leader -2: At this time, we also remember in our hearts the names of our family and friends who have died from COVID-related illness and other causes of death. We pray for their family members as they remember their loved ones during this time of year. May the candle's flame remind everyone of the joy and happiness known in life, the comfort offered by the Holy Spirit in our loss, and the "Blessed Hope" we have in the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

ALL: Amen

(NAMES Project website where you can visit over 48,000 panels and over 100,000 names on the Quilt virtually:

<https://www.aidsmemorial.org/interactive-aids-quilt>)

SECOND SONG:



WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS

+ Confession and Forgiveness of our sins.

Leader -2: Please be seated. (wait) After gathering, greeting one another, and praising God in song, we now prepare our hearts to accept renewal when we listen to the Word, the Holy Scriptures. In preparation, we silently confess our sins to Christ and receive the forgiveness He promises to give us.

(silent prayer)

Leader -2: We pray together:

ALL: I confess to Almighty God, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned through my own fault in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do. I declare in the midst of this assembly of believers that I am truly sorry for having offended anyone, and God, in any way. **Therefore**, I ask you,

my brothers and sisters, all the angels and the saints, to forgive me and pray for me to the Lord our God.

L-4: Hello. My name is _____, and I am in the City of _____ in the State of _____. Loving God, you have allowed us to start a new year. Sometimes we do not appreciate the honor of living to see each new day. Lord, have mercy.

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

L-4: Christ Jesus, you have given us a new birth and made us sisters and brothers in you. As we start a new year, we realize we can do more to focus on the unity of all people. Christ, have mercy.

ALL: Christ, have mercy.

L-4: Holy Spirit, you give us wisdom and understanding. Please help us understand the Scriptures and to apply them as living words. Lord, have mercy.

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

L-4: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

ALL: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

Pastor: We pray that all of God's people may one day be united in God's Kingdom without the loss of anyone. Therefore, we ask Almighty God to have mercy on all of us, forgive all our sins, and keep us in everlasting life.

ALL: Amen.

Pastor: Please rise as you are able to give God thanks and praise for the forgiveness of our sins by praying the Gloria. Try to imagine the shepherds in the fields who suddenly heard millions of angels and spirits in the heavens praying the first part of this prayer. The Church has prayed this prayer since the earliest records of worship services.

Spoken:

Glory to God in the highest,

and peace to God's people on earth.

You are the One God, Sovereign of the Universe,

**Only Holy God, we worship you,
we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of God:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord of all,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,**

**with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of the
Holy Unity of God. Amen.**

+ Opening Prayer

Leader 5: O Loving, Eternal, and Holy God, our hearts and minds are open to hearing these very familiar Scripture readings. We ask that your Word cause action and change in our lives. We pray that your Word will transform and equip us for many more years of ministry. We pray through Christ, our Lord;

ALL: AMEN.

Leader 5: Please be seated now as we listen attentively to the Scriptures.

ALL: We read the Word to recall, reflect on, and rejoice in the action of God in life.



THE SERVICE OF THE WORD OF GOD

+ First Reading

Reader: **** If an introduction is needed:**** Hello. My name is _____, and I am in the City of _____ in the State of _____.

The first reading on this Second Sunday of Christmas day is Isaiah, Chapter 9, verses 6 and 7. The reading is on page 638 in the first testament, in the front of the NRSV Bible. Here begins the reading:

Here begins the reading:

6 For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **7** His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord!

ALL: Thanks be to God!

+ Psalm: Special Music: Oh, Holy Night! Text: John S. Dwight, Music: Adolphe Adam. Soloist: Christina McLaughlin Violin: Lisa B. Frost

+ Second Reading

Reader: **** If an introduction is needed:**** Hello. My name is _____, and I am in the City of _____ in the State of _____.

The second reading is in the Book of Colossians, Chapter 3, verses 12-17 on page 201 in the second testament, in the back of the NRSV Bible. Here begins the reading:

12 As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. **13** Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. **14** Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. **15** And let the peace of Christ

rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. 17 And ***whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through Christ.***

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord!

ALL: Thanks be to God!

+ The Holy Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

Reader: We sing an acclamation before and one after the reading of the Gospel. Please rise as you are able for the Gospel Acclamation.

Gospel Acclamation

We Love Your Word!

To my friends in Christ
at Ray Of Hope Church

"Music for Worship"

Music by: Gaude! Liturgical Arts
October 31, 1993
Revised 8/2013

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of four staves of music with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: "We love Your Word, O Lord for it set us free. We know the truth, O Lord; We are Yours e - ter - nal - ly. So we stand to hear Your Word. We praise You for Your Word. Al-le - lu - a! for Your Word. It heals our hearts, souls and minds. For Your Word, Al - le - lu - ia! Thank You Je - sus!"

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Reader: The Gospel reading is Luke, chapter 2, verses twenty-one through forty on page 58 in the second testament of the NRSV Bible. This is a continuation of the Christmas Day Gospel reading.

Reader: Truly present among us, the Lord is with you.

ALL: And also with you.

Reader: A reading of the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

ALL: Glory to you, O Lord. May the Word of God be in our (+) minds that we will understand it, on our (+) lips that we will speak it, and in our (+) hearts that we will love it.

Jesus Is Named

²¹ After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and they named him Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Jesus Is Presented in the Temple

²² When the time came for their purification according to the law of

Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord²³ (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"),²⁴ and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him.²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.²⁷ Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law,²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹ "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;

³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹ which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles

and for glory to your people Israel."

³³ And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him.³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed³⁵ so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,³⁷ then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day.³⁸ At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

The Return to Nazareth

³⁹ When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.⁴⁰ The child

grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

Reader: This is the Gospel of the Lord!

ALL: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Gospel Acclamation

January 1, Holy Name Year A page: 15
Forever, We Are Yours!

To my friends in Christ
at Ray Of Hope Church
for the 1996 New Year,
The Year of The Holy Spirit!

"Music For Worship"

Music by: Gaude! Liturgical Arts
December 31, 1995

Glo-ry to the One God! Glo-ry to our Sa - vior Je - sus the
Christ! And, to the Ho - ly Spi - rit, for - ev - er You're Our God!
You brought us out of dark - ness, in - to Your mar - ve - lous Light! Your Word is our
joy! For this we give You glo - ry, both now and ev - er more!
For - ev - er we are Yours! For - ev - er we are Yours!

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 **Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc.** 
The LGBTQIA2SS+ Pride Activities, and Social Events Center of Elmira, NY.
The only Church in Central New York founded and fostered by the GLBTQSA2SS+ community for 39 years. October 31, 2022 - 39th Anniversary now in our 40th year in Ministry.

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and God's grace toward me has not been in vain. 1 Cor. 5:10

+ Sermon

Ray Of Hope Church teaches the same Christian faith of ancient ecumenical consensus. St. Vincent of Lerins, a fifth-century monk and theologian, described it as **"what has been believed always, everywhere, and by all."**

<http://www.rayofhopechurch.com/faith.htm>

Luke 2:39 The Return to Nazareth

³⁹ When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

**** Remember this, next Sunday, when we talk about the visit of the Magi to the Holy Family. They will be in Nazareth, not in Bethlehem, in a manger.

Before we get into the Holy Name of Jesus, did anyone notice the second reading Colossians, Chapter 3, verses 12-17 is the same reading we had for the fifth night of Kwanzaa principles five - Nia (NÉE-ah) Purpose and principle six - Kuumba (koo-OOM-bah) Creativity?

Colossians 3:17 And ***whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through Christ.***

When our purpose is to do everything in the name of Jesus, we can expect God will be providing all kinds of creative ideas! After all, we are talking about the Only Begotten Son of the Creator of all things! So, expect creative ideas, plans, thoughts, possibilities, etc.

Do notice our Kinara in front of the Communion Table. We have celebrated all of the principles of Kwanzaa and tonight we will do Imani – Faith this evening at 7:00 p.m.

These are the seven principles of Kwanzaa:

- 1st** Umoja (oo-MO-jah) Unity
- 2nd** Kujichagulia (koo-jee-chah-GOO-lee-ah) Self Determination
- 3rd** Ujima (oo-JEE-mah) Collective Work and Responsibility
- 4th** Ujamaa (oo-jah-Mah-ah) Cooperative Economics
- 5th** Nia (NEE-ah) Purpose
- 6th** Kuumba (koo-OOM-bah) Creativity
- 7th** Imani (ee-MAN-nee) Faith

The prophecy of Isaiah 9:6-7 was well-known by the people of Jesus' day. They were expecting a virgin to birth a divine Son who would be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6).

Two weeks ago, Kaiden and I watched as the synagogue received a new adult member. One outstanding feature was the lady was given a new "Hebrew Name" by which she would be known the rest of her life. Naturally, I was thinking of new names given in the Christian traditions. Some congregations give new names or add names at Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, Ordination, and Religious Life. In these naming events, significant thought is put into the new name. This was the case with Jesus too.

The name Jesus was Yeshua in Hebrew, and in English it would be Joshua.

I found a great sermon on the Name of Jesus by Dean Sam Candler from the Cathedral of St. Philip in Atlanta, Georgia that was posted on 9-10-2017. It is very thought-provoking. Here is the link: <https://www.cathedralatl.org/sermons/what-does-it-mean-to-pray-in-the-name-of-jesus/>

+ **We Invoke the Blessing Of The Holy Spirit**

Leader-1: Jesus **promised:** "..truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by God in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, I am there among them"
(Matthew 18:19-21)

ALL: Further, Jesus also said: "Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these because I am going to God. I will do whatever you ask in my name so that God may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it." (John 14:12-14)



WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

+ **The Prayers of the People**

Leader – 3: Having heard the Word Of God, we bring our prayers to God in Christ through the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit. Today we will offer communal prayers. Our response will be: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader – 3: Oh God, thank you for guiding Ray Of Hope through 2022. We ask for your blessing in this new year of 2023. In thanksgiving, we pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader – 3: We give you thanks and praise for the guidance the church provides us with times and seasons to celebrate and remember the many aspects of your love; we pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader – 4: We continue to pray for the children and people of all ages whose lives have been changed forever by war. We know these terrible times have also caused many people in the attacked regions to doubt you even exist. We ask You, God, to heal and strengthen the people traumatized by destroying their homes, schools, places of worship, and towns. For these intentions, we pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader – 4: We know you are the Prince of Peace. In this age of the Church, we know people have the free will to choose peace. We look forward to the New Heavens and the New Earth, where Peace will be established, and you will reign over it. While we are in this age, we thank you for the possibility of peace, and we pray that world leaders will work toward peace; we pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader – 4: We thank you for our Country, the United States of America. We pray that liberty, opportunity, and freedom increase for everyone; we pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader -2: We ask your blessing on all people suffering from climate change's effects, especially the loss of sources of food, heat, water, and shelter. We pray the leaders of the World respond to this emergency both in short and long-term planning. We pray to the Lord.

Leader -2: Gathered together, we ask your blessing on all religious leaders of every Religion known to humanity. We pray that religious leaders everywhere recognize and act upon their obligation to guide all people to you, Almighty God. We also pray that religious leaders will guide people to work for freedom, equality, and respect for everyone. We ask your blessing, Almighty God upon every community of seekers and those with no faith or formal Religion. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader- 2: We pray for those driven from faith because of the misuse of Religion. We pray for those who have been cast aside, excommunicated, and wrongly not included in the worship community. We hope all people grow to realize that they, too, are God's living light. We eagerly await your promised renewal of all creation when you shall be all in all. We pray to the Lord.

(1 Corinthians 15:28)

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader – 3: We bless you, Almighty God, for all the people who have come through the doors of Ray Of Hope Church. As we continue in the 40th year of ministry, we ask for your grace and guidance to remain faithful to this unique work of the Gospel; we pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader – 4: We invite you to add your petitions in silent prayer.
(silent prayer)

Leader –4: We pray to the Lord for these silent prayers.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader – 3: Lord Jesus, we lift our spoken and unspoken prayers to you. We ask you in intercede for us as our High Priest at the right hand of God.

ALL: Amen



(Visit our moving
prayers page [Right
Click Here.](#))

+ Offertory And Preparation of our at-home Holy Communion Altar/tables.

****** Leader:** At this time, we show our gratitude to God and our dedication to the Church of Jesus Christ, His Body present in the world, by offering our financial gifts and support for this ministry. In the Chapel, use the donation

box next to the door before, during, or after this worship event. In addition, there are donation envelopes available on the hospitality table by the door.

Internet participants may use the [PayPal link](#) in your bulletin or mail a check to Ray Of Hope Church, 380 W. First St. Elmira, NY 14901. Additionally, the electronic links are always available in posted bulletins, on Facebook, and our website. So please give what you can, but never give your last.

We also prepare our Holy Communion Altars and Tables at home and in the Chapel. Folks viewing on the Internet, please turn to page three and follow the instructions under leader two.

We are using the small Communion set at your seat in the Chapel. Shake the kit gently in case the contents have settled. After receiving Communion, someone will collect the cup.

Everyone may help set the Chapel Communion Table, and you may walk to the donation box during this time.

(** Viewers on the Internet, please read the following statement. ** Communion is a gift for the worship community to celebrate together, an action of the local church. However, if this is an extraordinary situation, and you believe the Holy Spirit is calling you to celebrate at a time other than the live webcast, then yield to the direction of the Holy Spirit. Hopefully, you will be able to join us in a live virtual worship event soon. (*This practice policy was changed on

Gaudete Sunday, December 13, 2020.*))

SONG:

Leader -2: (*Pray a prayer over the offering, giving thanks and praise.*) Please rise as you are able to conclude the Service Of The Word Of God with a doxology.

ALL: Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God all creatures here below. Praise God above ye heavenly hosts. Praise God the Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.



WE CELEBRATE THE SACRED MEAL OF CHRIST

Kaiden: Please gently hold the communion kit in your hands for the following two prayers. Those at home with bread, please lift it now.

(*The Pastor may invite someone to say this prayer out loud.*)

Pastor: Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness, we have this bread, which the Earth has given us, and human hands have lovingly made. Now, through the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit, this bread will become for us the Bread From Heaven (Exodus 16:2, Psalm 78:24, John 6:32, 41,50,58), the Bread of the Angels (Psalm 78:25), the Bread of God (John 6:33), the Living Bread (John 6:51), the Bread Of Life (John 6:35, 48, 58), the Bread of the New Covenant (John 6:32, 49, 50,51, 58), the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the very Body Of Christ (John 6:52-56, 1Corinthians 10:16).

ALL: Blessed be God forever.

Kaiden: Please set down your bread. In the Chapel, please continue to hold your communion kit.

Viewers at home pour your wine or grape juice into your cup if you have not already done so. Then add a small amount of water to the cup. With this water, we remember Jesus is human. With this fruit of the vine, we remember He is divine forever.

Pastor: Now, please lift your cup with me as I pray this prayer.
(*The Pastor may invite someone to say this prayer out loud.*)

Pastor: Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness, we have this fruit of the vine, which the Earth has given us and human hands have lovingly made. Now, through the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit, this fruit of the vine will become for us the Cup of Our Salvation (Psalm 116:13), the Cup of Everlasting Life (John 6:54-57), the Cup of the New Covenant (Matthew 26:28, Luke 22:20, 1 Corinthians 11:25), the very Blood Of Christ (John 6:54-56; 1Corinthians 10:16).

ALL: Blessed be God forever.

Pastor: Please set down your cup.

Pastor: Truly present and risen among us; the Lord is with you!

ALL: And also with you!

Pastor: As His Body, we lift up our hearts!

ALL: We lift them up to the Lord!

Pastor: As His Church, we give thanks to the Lord, our God!

ALL: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Pastor: It is truly right and just....

May our voices be one with all the Faithful from every time and place as we sing our song and join in their unending hymns of praise.

Holy, Holy, Lord!

To my friends in Christ
at Ray Of Hope Church

"Music for Worship"

Music by: Gaude! Liturgical Arts
October 31, 1993
Revised 8/2013

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of six staves of music with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: "Ho - ly Ho - ly Ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might. Hea-ven and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho - san - na in the high-est. Ho - san - na in the high-est. Ho - san - na in the high-est. Bless - ed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high-est. Ho - san - na in the high-est. Ho - san - na in the high-est. Ho - san - na in the high-est." The score includes various musical notations such as rests, beams, and a triplet of eighth notes on the fifth staff.

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+ We Invoke the Blessing Of The Holy Spirit

Cheryl: At Ray Of Hope Church, we pray together and ask the Holy Spirit to give us the same gifts that Jesus gave when He instituted Holy Communion for His Church. We invite you to extend your hands forward over the bread and fruit of the vine or extend your arms out with palms turned up in prayer and say the following Invocation of the Holy Spirit with me.

ALL: O God, in the Name of Jesus, we, your faithful people, ask your Only One and Holy Spirit to bless and separate this bread and fruit of the vine for Christ's purpose. Through the powerful

ministry of the Holy Spirit, give to us the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in precisely the exact same manner that He gave them, and commissioned us to do often in His Holy Name. You alone, O Loving, True God, authenticate for us that this is the Messiah, Christ, New Covenant Meal that Jesus instituted for **our physical and spiritual wellbeing. We ask this in the Name of Jesus. Amen**

Cheryl: You may relax your arms and hands.

Pastor: Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. (John 1:29,36) Behold Jesus truly present in the Bread of Life and the Cup of Salvation. Behold Him who said whoever eats of this Bread and drinks of this Cup though they die shall live forever. (John 6:50, 51, 54) Blessed are those who come to His Table. All are welcome.

ALL: Lord, you make me worthy to receive you, and by your Word, I am healed. (This prayer is credited to Fr. James Callan, Spiritus Christi of Rochester, NY.)



The Reception of Holy Communion

+ The Words Of The Institution Of The Holy Eucharist

Veronica: Push down on the tab of your kits. Open the first seal and remove the bread. Please lift the Eucharistic Body Of Christ, the Bread of Salvation, and together we will say our Lord and Saviour's words of institution when he gave us the Blessed Sacrament.

**ALL: Before He was given up to death, a death He freely accepted, He took the bread and gave you thanks. He broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:
Take this, all of you, and eat it: This is my body which will be given up for you. Do this in memory of me.**

Pastor: You may now receive the Bread of Life, the Body of Christ.
The Gift of God for the People of God.

Veronica: We are not going to open the seal on the cup just yet.
Please lift now the cup of salvation, and together we will say:

ALL: When the supper was ended, He took the cup. Again He
gave you thanks and praise, gave the cup to His disciples,
and said:

**Take this, all of you, and drink from it: This is the cup of my
blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will
be shed for you and for all so that sins may be forgiven. Do
this in memory of me.**

(** pause for adoration**) (**you may bow or genuflect if you choose to**)

Pastor: Open your kit and receive the Cup of Salvation, the Blood of
Christ. The Gift of God for the People of God.

Pastor: I assure you, by the promises of Christ, that anyone who
receives this Holy Communion today will indeed receive sanctification
and healing in mind, body, soul, and spirit, be raised by Christ to new
life, and live forever.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

+ A Proclamation Of Our Faith

Leader-2: We proclaim our faith together.

ALL: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.
You are the Savior of the world.

PRIVATE PRAYER FOR A SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.

Pastor: Some people are watching from a location where they do not have actual Holy Communion Bread and Wine with them. We offer the following prayer for them based upon a prayer from the Episcopal National Cathedral Prayer book for a Spiritual reception of Holy Communion. This prayer assures all the benefits and blessings of a physical reception. Together...

Oh, My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things, and I welcome you in my soul. Since I cannot now receive you in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, come spiritually into my heart. Cleanse and strengthen me with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let me never be separated from you. May I live in you, and you in me, in this life and the life to come. Amen.

Spiritual Communion Prayer from the Episcopal National Cathedral Prayer Book.

A spiritual communion is a personal devotional that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive Holy Communion at that moment, but in which circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion.

+ The Lord's Prayer

Leader -4: Having heard the Word of God and remembering the sacrifice of the cross, we invite everyone to pray together the prayer of Jesus.

**ALL: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those**

**who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen**

+ Final Doxology

Pastor: Together we pray:

ALL: It is through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, that all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, forever and ever.

Doxology/Amen!

To my friends in Christ
at Ray Of Hope Church

"Music For Worship"

Music by: Gaude! Liturgical Arts
October 31, 1993

All hon - or and glo - ry be un - to ____ You. Al - migh - ty

5
God ____ world with - out end. ____ A ____ men! Al - le - lu - ia

11
A ____ men! Al - le - lu - ia! All hon - or and glo - ry to you! A - men! ____

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+ Sign Of Peace

Veronica Floyd: The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ is with you.
ALL: And also with you.

Veronica Floyd: Please take a moment to share a sign of Peace with those around you. **During COVID, we wave across the room and into the camera for the Internet.

Veronica Floyd: Now, we clean our tables and altars. Please be sure all of the crumbs are in your cup. Add some water and swirl it around inside the cup. Drink the water. Dry the cup with the side napkin. Clear your worship table and altar.

SONG:

Post-Communion Music: Ed Askins sings the song: "Breathe" by Marie Barnett (made popular by Michael W. Smith)

A silent prayer one might pray during Holy Communion:

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, by the will of God and the work of the Holy Spirit, your death brought life to the world. By your holy body and blood free us from all our sins and from every evil. Keep us faithful to your teaching, and never let us be parted from you. Amen.

A silent prayer one might pray during Holy Communion: Oh my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of Hell, lead all souls to Heaven, especially those who are most in need of thy mercy.

This prayer is known as the Fatima Prayer. It is prayed thousands of times every day by people praying the Rosary. Looking closely, one can see it is a very gracious prayer that prays for the salvation of all people. Read more of my commentary on this prayer: [Click Here](#).

General Offering for the week of December 4 \$468.00 (some people give monthly rather than weekly) Attendance 6

General Offering for the week of December 11 \$388.00 (some people give monthly rather than weekly) Attendance **15 ALLELUIA!**

General Offering for the week of December 18 \$93.00 (some people give monthly rather than weekly) Attendance 9

General Offering for the week of December 25 \$113.00 (some people give monthly rather than weekly) Attendance 12

***** Donations for the end of the year special gifts are now being received.**

****Special Gifts recently given.****

We give God thanks and praise for all these gifts given. We appreciate the special gifts being made at this time.

UPCOMING EVENTS

OUR CALENDAR

January 1 Sunday The Presentation of Jesus, the Holy Name of Jesus **8th** Day of Christmas Kwanzaa **day 7 Imani (Faith)** 7:00 p.m. service online

January 2 Monday **9th** Day of Christmas

January 3 Tuesday Bible Enrichment 6:30 p.m. **10th** Day of Christmas

January 4 Wednesday **11th** Day of Christmas

January 5 Thursday **12th** Day of Christmas The Twelfth Night Epiphany Eve

January 6 Friday actual Epiphany and Orthodox Christmas

January 8 Sunday Epiphany Celebration at Ray Of Hope Church

January 10 Tuesday Bible Enrichment 6:30 p.m.

January 15 Sunday Civil Rights Sunday, The Memorial of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

January 17 Tuesday Bible Enrichment 6:30 p.m

January 22 the 39th Annual Meeting in the 40th year of Ministry, also The Memorial of St. Marianne Cope of Syracuse, NY, "Beloved Mother of Outcasts".

Ash Wednesday February 22, 2023

Holy Week 2023: Palm Sunday April 2 10:30 a.m. Holy Thursday April 6 7:00 p.m. Good Friday April 7 7:00 p.m. Vigil of the Resurrection Saturday April 8 7:45 p.m. No service on Sunday April 9.



We Are Sent Forth To Serve

Pastor: The Lord is with you!

ALL: And also with you!

Pastor: (a prayer is said) In the Name of God, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen

ALL: Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen (Romans 15:13)

Leader-4: We go forth in peace and love to serve all the people, and the Lord ...

ALL: ... on our journey into renewal, fresh beginnings, new possibilities, and a renewed embrace of our potential! Thanks be to God.

SONG:

Visit and follow us on our new TikTok Page: [Right Click Here](#) Here is the link if you need to copy and paste it into your browser:

<https://www.tiktok.com/@rayofhopechurchlgbtqisia? t=8UgoVv5ekqg& r=1> Thank you, Heather and Michael for making this project possible and producing our videos.

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Volunteer opportunities: As discussed at our Priorities Meeting #2 there are some exterior building volunteer opportunities. There are also some first floor interior volunteer opportunities – painting, patching using drywall mud, and a larger project day for removal of carpet and replacement with new carpet. If you have some time to spare and interest in these types of work please let Brother know with advanced notice so the necessary supplies will be ready.

***** Millennial Series by Dr. John F. Walvoord**

<https://walvoord.com/series/328>

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. Isaiah 9:7 This is all God's fault,

God's design, God's doing from start to end.

Br. Benedict at the time of Renewal of Vows, June 20, 2021: "Looking forward, I like to say the first twenty-five years were spent on **stabilization, survival, and sustainability**. The second twenty-five years will be spent on growth to help Ray Of Hope **thrive, train, and transplant** this Congregation to new leadership. The founders and foundresses successfully transferred the leadership to a new generation, us, and now we must do the same. I plan to fade into the Congregation and continue providing support to the new leadership. My goal is to leave the Congregation with new leadership, in good standing, and thriving."



We never held a vote to decide if we would be an **INCLUSIVE** church for you.
We are not an **OPEN AND AFFIRMING** church for you.
We are not a **RECONCILING CHURCH** or
RECONCILING CONGREGATION for you.
We are not an **OPEN MINDED** or **ACCEPTING** or **WELCOMING**
church where you can attend as long as you blend in quietly and discretely.
WE ARE YOU!
THIS is the church where YOU belong.
Ray Of Hope Church is the church by us, for us, and made by You.

The Third Sunday of Pride, 2019

=====**Who can receive the Holy Spirit**=====

Everyone has access to the Holy Spirit, the gift of God to us.
Read this on our website. [Right Click Here](#)



WHO SHOULD RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION, THE EUCHARIST, AT RAY OF HOPE CHURCH?

Everyone is invited to receive Holy Communion, also known as The Eucharist, The Lord's Table, or The Blessed Sacrament at Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc.

It is not required that you be a member of this church or any other church, to receive Holy Communion at / or with Ray Of Hope Church.

This Holy Communion is the Table of Jesus Christ, who is really present among us. Jesus invites you to receive Him in this Eucharistic banquet. If this is your first time receiving The Blessed Sacrament, let us know before you receive or right after, so we might pray a special prayer of thanksgiving with you.

Unfortunately, through the centuries many institutional churches have established rules, teachings, and practices that would exclude people from Holy Communion. There has been an almost endless list of reasons to exclude people from the Blessed Sacrament. Yet, together, during the worship service, we recite the very words of Jesus, the Words of Institution, "This is my body. This is my blood," and we rehear Christ present with us saying: "Take this, all of you and eat; Take this all of you and drink" of this gift.

I have thought about this extensively and have decided to take these words "Take this, all of you.." as a command to the church to give, and bring, the Eucharistic Gift to everyone who will receive. This approach also requires us to teach people about this gift. I have stated in other places, **it is uniquely and deliberately the work of Christ in His Church** to offer the necessary education, guidance, and practices that help people live a life centered and purposed on finding and sharing the Will of God. The Lord's Table is central in that life.

The Eucharist belongs to the Church. The Blessed Sacrament is Christ in us, through us, and with us; made known in the breaking of the Bread of Life and drinking of the Cup of Salvation. We are to take this gift to the whole world.

We begin by inviting those who are on the fringe of Society, those who have been pushed aside, those who are poor, who are not accepted, who are sick, who need God's help in special ways. We welcome and bring the Eucharist to everyone who has been told they cannot receive it by other Denominations. In conclusion, to all persons who have ever been told "no you cannot" go to

Communion in any other church; hear us, "yes you can" at Ray Of Hope. All are welcome. Or as we like to say as one of our mottos, when we quote Fr. Bartholomew J. O'Brien; "You are as welcome here as Christ Himself."

Come to the Table of the Lord. There is a place set for you too. (Excerpted from the Pastoral Report given at the Annual Meeting 34 on January 28, 2018 by Pastor Br. Shawn F. Benedict, updated 3-6-21)

Visit our page on the Sacraments. [Right Click Here](#).

See this in a PDF format from our website and share it with others or download it to your computer / device. [Right Click Here](#).

Ray Of Hope Church Weekly Schedule

Elmira Worship- Sunday 10:30 a.m. – 380 W. First St. Parsonage/Monastery .
Join us live on SKYPE: rayofhope26 is our contact name. Sign on by 10:15 a.m.
Syracuse Worship- looking for a host in Syracuse. For more information
[Click Here](#).

Bible Enrichment- Tuesday 6:30–8 p.m.-380 W. First St. Parsonage
/Monastery. Or Join us live on SKYPE: rayofhope26 is our contact name. Sign
on by 6:15 p.m. [Click Here](#).

**** to call the Pastor: Rev. Shawn Benedict: 607-280-0374***

Policy Concerning Minors at Events

Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ welcomes all youth and children to worship with us and participate in our activities. We endeavor to provide a safe and non-threatening environment for all children. To this end, we have a Policy Concerning Minors at Events, which is available from the Clerk upon request and is on our website;
http://www.rayofhopechurch.com/Minors_At_Events.htm. Please enjoy your visit with us, and we hope you will return.

NOTE: On June 15, 1996, as a part of the Ordination Ceremony and his profession of Benedictine Vows, Rev. Leo W. McDermott, II retired the use of his secular birth name and was given a new name in religion, Brother Shawn Francis Benedict.

The Chapel is not open to the general public at this time as we try to do our part to stop the spread of COVID-19. Call for an appointment if you want some time to come in and pray. All of our regular services will be blended with live participation in the Chapel and live on Skype and Facebook Live. To read the information on how to use Skype to participate with us [Click Here](#).. Visit our Facebook page [Click Here](#). As soon as it reasonably safe and prudent the Chapel will be reopened.

Visitors: Please feel free to fill out the information slip below and place it in the collection plate. Please indicate any special needs you may have. All information will be used for church purposes *only*.

(Optional) Name: _____

(Optional) Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

___ I would like to be included on the church Email list.

___ I would like to schedule an appointment with the Pastor.



Ray Of Hope Church Statement Of Purpose

In the Spirit of God, and in the footsteps of Christ Jesus, we the Faith Community at Ray Of Hope Church commit to:

- **guide** and welcome all people to the Free Gift of Salvation in Christ Jesus, with a God-ordained celebration of all sexual orientations, and gender expressions, with an open ministry to persons affected by or infected with HIV/AIDS, their families and friends,
- **declare** and openly assert the truth that same-sex relationships, founded and fostered in God-centered love, are holy and blessed, and in fact originate by the work of the Holy Spirit; and, that God equally uses blessed same-sex and heterosexual Holy Unions and Marriages to bring God's own love and good news of "Salvation to all who believe" into the world,
- **uphold**, proclaim, and teach the historic Biblical Christian Doctrine, build community through worship and prayer, break the bread, and live the ministry of the Holy Spirit,
- **change** the world around us by living Gospel principles of social justice in everything we do, thereby exposing all forms of prejudice, oppression, racism, homophobia, sexism, and misogyny,
- **proclaim** the ray of hope, which is the soon coming return of Christ Jesus, and the fullness of His Eternal Community where the Will of God will establish liberty, justice, equity, and peace for all God's People and the universe.

Visit us online:

Our website: <http://www.rayofhopechurch.com/> Facebook Page (like and follow) [Click Here.](#)

Our YouTube page: www.youtube.com/rayofhopenyqlbtqs

—————Scripture verses to share with others:—————

Romans 15:13 Now may the God of **hope** fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in **hope** by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Titus 2:11, 3:4 The grace, the goodness, the loving-kindness of our God has appeared, bringing salvation **to everyone**.

John 5:24 Those who hear my word and **believe in God** who sent me, **have** eternal life, will **never** come under judgment and have passed from **death to life** already.

Romans 10:13 "For **whoever** calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." (repeated @ Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21) "everyone, anyone who" asks. "Lord" here refers to God principally as in the book of Joel that is being quoted, so all persons who call on God shall be saved.

"Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?"

(Isaiah 43:19 ESV)

"Behold, I make all things new." (Revelation 21:5)