



**"My House shall be a house of prayer for All People."  
(Isaiah 56:7)**

**Founded: 10/31/1983. Now in our Forty-second year of  
Ministry.**

MISSION: Love God, Love your neighbor, and make disciples  
of every person everywhere. (Matthew 22:37-39; Matthew 28:19)

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

We extend a special welcome to our visitors.  
You are as welcome here as Jesus Christ Himself.  
In Romans 15:7 the Scriptures exhort us to:  
"Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you,  
for the glory of God" (NABRE – 2011)

Participate in some or all parts of this worship event as you are 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 12-29-24 Nativity WK 1, Year C  
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."***  
Scientific Discovery, Academic Knowledge, the Holy Scriptures, and Spirituality are Universal  
and Unified. (Br. Benedict 8-6-23)

**Scripture Readings for this worship event:** -

**First Reading:** Isaiah 9:6-7 NRSV 1<sup>st</sup> Test. Pg. 638

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

**Second Reading:** Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7 NRSV 2<sup>nd</sup> Test. Pg. 215

**Third Reading:** Gospel: Luke 2:1-20 NRSV 2<sup>ND</sup> 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, and the 2nd Testament numbers are found in the later portion. If this confuses you, ask someone around you to assist you. Thank you.**

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## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

**Visit and greet one another until the bell rings.**

**Bell's 1<sup>st</sup> ring.** As our bell rings, please find your seat and pray silently for the next few minutes. Please refrain from conversations as these disturb those trying to pray.

Our St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi bell at Ray Of Hope Church, 380 W. 1<sup>st</sup> St. in Elmira, NY, is a gift from Michael Quinnell of Syracuse, NY, given 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, and we now celebrate victory and gratitude for our Salvation. "The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes, we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5) We ring the bell 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 \_\_\_\_\_. I am in\_(city) \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_(State)\_\_\_\_\_. Good morning. Welcome 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. To facilitate your full participation, please look for today's bulletin, Order of Worship, and Music Supplement available on Facebook Live; right-click the "Featured Links" icon. On Skype, look in the Chat window for two document icons. On our website, look at the large gold box labeled SUNDAY WORSHIP INFORMATION at [www.rayofhopechurch.com](http://www.rayofhopechurch.com). For people watching on the Internet, we recommend you have two Internet devices on. Set one device on Facebook

Live to listen to the Music. Right-click on this link to access our [Facebook page](#). Open the Skype meeting on the second device to interact with us. Right-click on this Skype Link: <https://join.skype.com/qt6Y1PQvj04I>.

You do not need an account on Skype to "enter as a guest" when prompted. We announce all instructions, page, and song numbers and use a psalm response verse to assist people with various stages of visual impairment.

**Leader-2:** Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am in\_(city) \_\_\_\_\_, \_(State)\_\_\_\_\_. Good morning, and welcome. (\*\* Reader, please remember to look at the people and smile.\*\*\*) We invite you to participate in some or all of the parts of this worship event as you feel comfortable.

Today is the First of three Sundays of the Season of the Nativity, Christmas. Christmas is a Season in the Church, not just a single day.

To the people watching on the Internet, in order to fully participate in today's worship please bring a bowl with some water in it and a small piece of bush branch, or if you have none, then anything to sprinkle water with will do. Additionally, you may receive Holy Communion with us during this worship event. To participate in Communion, please also bring to your table 1) a cup with some wine or grape juice, 2) a small piece of bread, cracker, or matzo on a plate, and 3) a second cup with some water and a side napkin. We will use these in the second half of the worship service. Now, gather all these items, and we will start shortly.



**ALL PEOPLE HAVE RECEIVED SALVATION AS A FREE GIFT FROM GOD, ARE ETERNALLY SECURE IN GOD'S LOVE AND ARE BY MODERN TERMS, "SAVED." ALL LGBTQSIA2ss+ persons of every sexual orientation and every gender expression are SAVED and are called to live out the fullness of who they are so that God may be praised. Ray Of Hope Church, Inc. officially took this position on September 18, 2011 and changed the By-laws to secure this position. (www.rayoffhopechurch.com/faith.htm) (www.rayoffhopechurch.com/purpose.htm)**

(The Congregation amended this By-law on September 18, 2011, and used to read: We believe that Salvation is

available to all who call on the Name of Jesus Christ, and are re-born into the Life of Christ.)([Article 10 STATEMENT OF FAITH 10.01 Short Form Statement Lines 1140 – 1143](#))



**Bell's 2<sup>nd</sup> ring will announce the start of the worship event.**

**Leader – 2:** (\*\* Reader, look up at the people and smile.\*\*) Thank you for choosing to spend time with us today. In Romans, Chapter 15, verse 7, the Scriptures instruct us to:

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

**Leader -2:** You are as welcome here as Christ Jesus himself. (\*\* Reader, please remember to look at the people and smile.\*\*) Show the glory of God by introducing yourself and welcoming the **SAINTS** around you. To be extra careful, we observe COVID-19 safety protocols by waving across the room and into the camera for the Internet.

**Pastor:** Good Morning, **SAINTS!** Merry Christmas!

**ALL: Merry Christmas!**

**Pastor:** I ask you, in whose Name are we meeting?

**ALL: We meet in the name of God our Creator, Christ Jesus Our Lord and Saviour, and in the name of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

**Pastor:** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, God's love, and the Holy Spirit's fellowship is with you. (2 Corinthians 13:14)

**ALL: And also with you, praise the Lord.**

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

**June 1, 2024, was the TWENTY-FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF THE ELMIRA CHAPEL.**

**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:** O Come, All Ye Faithful/Adeste Fideles G&P 311 Text: John F. Wade, ca. 1711-1786. English tr. Frederick Oakley, 1802-1880, alt. Music: Adeste Fideles John F. Wade, ca. 1711-1786. Setting by James Chepponis. Setting published in ©2017 by GIA Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Used with Print Permission and Streaming License A-74127. Performed by Rev. Clyde McLennan. As from October, 2015, I, Rev. Clyde McLennan, performer in this collection, have assigned my performer rights in this collection to Hymnary.org. Non-commercial use of these recordings is permitted.

### + The Christmas Wreath Week 1, 2024 – The Candle of Christ.

**Leader -2:** Please be seated. Looking at the Advent Wreath, we see all the candles are now gold. The center candle is new to the wreath and is named "Alleluia, Christ Our Lord Is With Us." The multi-colored lights remind us of the rainbow of color around the throne of God, and the gold candles transform the Advent Wreath into The Christmas Wreath. Notice the Advent Tree is now totally transformed into the Christmas Tree filled with rainbow colors, Christmas cards expressing love, and, look at the new rainbow tree skirt!

**Leader -3:** The colors of Christmas are white for the forgiveness of sin, red for the sacrifice of Christ for our sins, gold for the resurrection of Christ and each person because eternal life is given to all. The evergreen represents the eternal promises of God. Looking up, we see the evergreen garland with different size distances on the arches. The looping arches represent the passing of time, the various lengths of life, the ages of time, and the bright lights represent the souls who have gone before us sealed by the sacrifice of Christ, represented by the red bows, and glorified by eternal life represented by the gold bows. The decorations proclaim the Gospel and the everlasting love of God. Let's give the Chapel Assistants Committee a round of applause for all their work on the

chapel.

**Leader -1:** At this time, we will bless our Christmas Wreath, Christmas Tree, and Manger with Holy Water. Please pick up and hold the container with the water or touch the water and pray silently as I pray out loud.

**(please wait)** Dear God, we dedicate this water to you and ask you to make it Holy, setting it apart as an instrument of your blessings. We ask this in the name of Jesus. **ALL: Amen.**

**Pastor:** Please dip your branch into the Holy Water and sprinkle your Christmas decorations dedicating them to the use of the Holy Spirit to bring us anew into a deeper faith. **(please sprinkle the decorations at this time)**

We pray aloud together now:

**ALL: O Loving and Gracious God, we ask your Holy Spirit to bless these Christmas decorations, bless this holy season of your Nativity, and bless us as we begin anew our Christmas journey with You. We dedicate ourselves and these three weeks of Christmas to You. We praise you, God, for this time of celebration of your wondrous love. We thank you for the birth of your Only Begotten Son, Jesus, our Christ, our Saviour, and our Lord. We ask you to speak to us, guide us, and impassion our hearts with your Divine Love. We ask this in the Name of (\*+\*) God, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**SECOND SONG:** Hark! The Herald Angels Sing. Text: 77 77 D with refrain; Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt. Music: Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847; arr. by William H. Cummings, 1831-19156. Glory & Praise Second Edition #317 Onelicense Song #83988. Used with Print Permission and Streaming License A-74127.



**WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS**

## + Confession and Forgiveness of our sins, our failures.

**Leader 3:** Please be seated. (wait) Now, Ray Of Hope Church provides another service: Christ, being truly present among us and forgiving our sins through the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit. In silent prayer, we consider our relationship with God and others, confess faults, sins, and failures to Christ, who is present in this room and our bodies, and receive His immediate forgiveness.

### **Pastor: Colossians 3:11b - 13 reads:**

There is only Christ, who is all in all. <sup>12</sup> Because you are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. <sup>13</sup>

Bear with one another; forgive whatever grievances you have against one another—forgive in the same way God has forgiven you. <sup>14</sup> Above all else, put on love, which binds the rest together and makes them perfect.

(Priests for Equality. The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation (p. 3115 Kindle Edition). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. The Inclusive Bible. Page 765. Copyright © 2007 by Priests for Equality. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Kindle Edition. To Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc., September 4, 2024. Please accept this correspondence as authorization and permission to use the cited material at no charge. Please do use appropriate citation and referencing protocols. The Rights & Permissions Team, Globe Pequot International Sales, Marketing & Rights, Part of the Globe Pequot Publishing Group Representing the Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, now part of Bloomsbury.)

**Pastor:** The Lord has heard our confession and has granted forgiveness, and so we declare together:

**ALL: The faith community of Ray Of Hope Church openly declares the forgiveness of all your confessed sins in the Name of Jesus Christ. He forgives you, we forgive you, and God rejoices over your restoration in Christ. Amen.**

**Leader - 3:** The Church now provides the service of praising God in thanksgiving together. Please rise as you are able as we sing "The Gloria." Look under your seats for a bell, and ring the bell just on the refrain throughout the song.

## WORDS ONLY HERE. MUSIC SCROLL DOWN

### "The Gloria"

From "Music for Worship"

© Words and Music: Gaude! Liturgical Arts 7/25/19 - 1/21/24 Br. Shawn F. Benedict, O.S.B. Dedication :Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc. 40th Anniversary.

Refrain:

Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to all people on earth.

Glory to God in the highest.

We give you thanks and praise. Alleluia!

We give you thanks and praise.

Verse 1:

You are the One God,  
Sovereign of the Universe,  
Only Holy God, we worship You,  
we give You thanks,  
we praise You for Your great glory!

Refrain:

Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to all people on earth.

Glory to God in the highest.

We give you thanks and praise. Alleluia!

We give you thanks and praise.

Verse 2:

Lord, Jesus Christ;  
The Only Begotten Son of God  
You are 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.



Refrain:

Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to all people on earth.  
Glory to God in the highest.  
We give you thanks and praise. Alleluia!  
We give you thanks and praise.

Verse 3:

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 God.  
In the Holy Spirit, in the Holy unity of God.

Refrain:

Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to all people on earth.  
Glory to God in the highest.  
We give you thanks and praise. Alleluia!  
We give you thanks and praise.

Verse 4:

Amen; We give you thanks and praise.  
Amen; We give you thanks and praise.  
Amen; We give you thanks and praise.  
Amen.

From "Music for Worship" © Words and Music: Gaude! Liturgical Arts 7/25/19 - 1/21/24 Br. Shawn F. Benedict, O.S.B.

Dedication: Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc. 40th Anniversary.

Dedication:  
Ray Of Hope Church  
Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc.  
40th Anniversary

# The Gloria

## "Music for Worship"

Words and Music  
Gaude! Liturgical Arts  
7/25/19-1/21/24  
Br. Shawn F. Benedict, O.S.B.

**Refrain**

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and

4  
peace to all peo - ple on earth — Glo - ry to God in the high - est —

8  
We give you thanks — and praise. Al - le - lu - ia

10  
We give you thanks — and praise.

12 **Verse 1**

You are the One God, Sov - ereign of the Un - i - verse, On - ly

16  
Ho - ly God, — we wor - ship You, — we

18  
give you thanks, we praise You for Your great glo - ry!

21 **Refrain**

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, — and peace to all peo - ple on earth —

25  
Glo - ry to God in the high - est — We give you thanks — and

© Words and Music: 7/25/19-1/21/24, Gaude! Liturgical Arts, Br. Shawn F. Benedict, O.S.B.

2

28  
  
 praise. Al-le-lu\_\_ ia We give you thanks\_ and praise.

31 **Verse 2**  
  
 Lord, Jes - us Christ;\_\_\_\_\_ The On - ly Be - got - ten

34  
  
 Son of God, You are Lord God,

36  
  
 Lamb of God, You take a-way the sin of the world; Have mer - cy on

41  
  
 us; You are sea-ted at the right hand of God; re - ceive our prayer.

46 **Refrain**  
  
 Glo-ry to God in the high-est,\_\_\_ and peace to all peo-ple on\_ earth\_

50  
  
 Glo - ry to God in the high - est\_\_\_ We give you thanks\_ and

53  
  
 praise. Al-le-lu\_\_ ia We give you thanks\_ and praise.

56 **Verse 3**  
  
 For You a-lone are the Ho - ly One You a - lone are the Lord of all,

61  
  
 You a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, With the Ho - ly

66

Spi-rit in the glo - ry of God. In the Ho - ly Spi-rit, in the

71

Ho - ly un - i - ty of God\_\_\_\_\_

75 Refrain

Glo-ry to God in the high-est, - and peace to all peo-ple on\_ earth\_

79

Glo-ry to God in the high-est\_ We give you thanks\_ and praise. Al-le-lu\_ia

83

We give you thanks and praise.

85 Verse 4: Amen

A\_\_\_\_\_ men\_ We

We give You thanks and praise!

Lord we praise You, Lord we bless You, We

4

87

give You thanks and praise!

We give You thanks and praise!

give You thanks, We give You praise We give You thanks and praise

89

A - men

A - men. Al - le - lu - ia.

Lord we praise You, Lord we bless You men. Al - le - lu - ia.

**PASTOR:** Please remain standing for the opening prayer.

**+ Opening Prayer**

**Leader-4:** The Lord is with you, Alleluia!

**ALL: And also with you, Alleluia!**

**Leader-4:** Together, we lift up our hearts.

**ALL: We lift them up to the Lord.**

**Leader-4:** We make this exhortation together:

**ALL: Let us keep the Scriptures in mind and meditate upon them day and night, persevering in prayer, always on the watch. Let us beg the Lord to give us real knowledge of what we read and to show us not only how to understand it but how to put it into practice, so that we may deserve to obtain spiritual grace, enlightened by the law of the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord, whose power and glory will endure throughout the ages. Amen**

**Leader-4:** Saint Origen, who lived from 185 – 254 A.D., wrote this prayer. His prayer is our prayer on this day. Please be seated now and listen with all your heart, soul, and mind as we open the Word of God.



## THE SERVICE OF THE WORD OF GOD

### + First Reading

+ 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 is the Book of Isaiah, Chapter 9, verses 6-7, in the NRSV 2021 updated edition. The 1989 pew Bibles have a similar reading on page 638 in the First Testament.

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> Great will be his authority,<sup>[a]</sup>  
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!

**Footnotes**

a. 9.7 Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain

Read full chapter

(Source: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+9%3A6-7&version=NRSVUE>  
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**+ Psalm:** **Reader:** \*\*\*\* **If an introduction is needed:**\*\*\*\* Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_.

The psalm is 96 verses 1-3 and 11-13. Today's response is "The grace, the goodness, the loving-kindness of our God has appeared, bringing salvation to everyone." (Titus 2:11, 3:4)

**R. The grace, the goodness, the loving-kindness of our God has appeared, bringing salvation to everyone. (Titus 2:11, 3:4)**  
Sing to the LORD a new song;  
sing to the LORD, all you lands.  
Sing to the LORD; bless God's name.

**R. The grace, the goodness, the loving-kindness of our God has appeared, bringing salvation to everyone. (Titus 2:11, 3:4)**  
Announce God's salvation, day after day.

Tell this glory among the nations;  
among all peoples, God's wondrous deeds.

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

Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice;

let the sea and what fills it resound;

let the plains be joyful and all that is in them!

Then shall all the trees of the forest exult.

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

God's people shall exult before the LORD,  
at the appointed time to rule the earth.

He shall rule the world with justice

and the peoples with his constancy.

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

**Praise God, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit,**

**both now and forever. Amen.**

+ 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 the Letter to Titus, chapter 2, verses 11-14 and then chapter 3, verses 4-7 in the NRSV 2021 updated edition. The 1989 pew Bibles have a similar reading on page 215 in the Second Testament. Here begins the reading.

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all,<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup> while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior,<sup>[b]</sup> Jesus



Christ. <sup>14</sup> He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

**Reader:** Continuing our reading, Chapter 3, verses 4-7.

<sup>4</sup> But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup> he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water<sup>[a]</sup> of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. <sup>6</sup> This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

**Reader:** This is the Word of the Lord!

ALL: Thanks be to God!

### [Read full chapter](#)

#### Footnotes

- a. [2.11](#) Or *has appeared to all, bringing salvation*
- b. [2.13](#) Or *of the great God and our Savior*

#### Footnotes

- a. [3.5](#) Gk *washing*

### [Read full chapter](#)

(Source: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Titus+2%3A11-14&version=NRSVUE>  
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Titus+3%3A4-7&version=NRSVUE> Scripture quotations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. See notice above announcements in this bulletin.)

## **+ 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

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 2:1-20, in the NRSV updated edition of 2021. The 1989 pew Bibles have a similar reading on page 58 in the Second Testament.

**Reader:** Truly present among us, the Lord is with you.  
**ALL: And also with you.**

**Reader:** A reading of the Holy Gospel according to Luke.  
**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.**

## The Birth of Jesus

**2** In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup> This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup> Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he

was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup> He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup> And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.<sup>[a]</sup>

## The Shepherds and the Angels

<sup>8</sup> Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup> to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah,<sup>[b]</sup> the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,<sup>[c]</sup> praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" <sup>[d]</sup>

<sup>15</sup> When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup> So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup> When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, <sup>18</sup> and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, <sup>19</sup> and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

Reader: This is the Gospel of the Lord!

**ALL: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!**

**Read full chapter**

**Footnotes**

- a. 2.7 Or their room
- b. 2.11 Or the Christ
- c. 2.13 Gk army
- d. 2.14 Other ancient authorities read *peace, goodwill among people*

(Source: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+2%3A1-20&version=NRSVUE>.  
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**Gospel Acclamation**

**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

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**Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc.**  
 The LGBTQISA2ss+ 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**

**Here is a quick Premillennial understanding of today's readings.**  
 The Book of Hebrews tells us: yes born of a woman, but born to be a sacrifice.

Isaiah 9:6,7

<sup>6</sup> For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders,  
and he is named

For unto us a Child is born,  
Unto us a Son is given;  
And the government will be upon His shoulder. (NKJV)

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup> Great will be his authority,<sup>[d]</sup>  
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.

TODAY'S Second Reading: Titus, chapter 2, verses 11-14 and then chapter 3, verses 4-7 in the NRSV 2021 updated edition. The 1989 pew Bibles have a similar reading on page 215 in the Second Testament. Here begins the reading.

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all,<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup> while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior,<sup>[b]</sup> Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup> He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

**Reader:** Continuing our reading, in Chapter 3, verses 4-7.

<sup>4</sup> But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup> he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his

mercy, through the water<sup>[a]</sup> of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. <sup>6</sup> This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

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\*\*\*\*\*OPEN MICROPHONE \*\*\*\*\*

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**Leader-1:** At this time, we invite anyone who wishes to renew your statement of faith and rededicate your life to Christ to rise as you are able and answer the three sections of the Apostles' Creed. After each question please respond by saying aloud the text that is in bold print. We begin.

Creed #1: The Apostles' Creed

PASTOR BENEDICT: Do you believe in God?

**I believe in the One Eternal, Loving, Life-Giving,  
Forgiving, Good, and Gracious God,  
Creator of heaven and earth.**

PASTOR BENEDICT: What do you understand and testify to concerning Jesus, born in Bethlehem, the Christ of God?

**I believe in Jesus the Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God,  
our Lord and Saviour.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended to the dead.**

**On the third day, God raised Jesus from the dead.**

**He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God.**

**Christ will come again in glory to judge the living and the  
dead.**

PASTOR BENEDICT: Do you proclaim the Holy Spirit as God and the power of God in the Church of Christ?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, Who is equal with God and the Son.**

**I believe in the one, holy, Christian Church, the Body of Jesus Christ that is universal/catholic, and apostolic.**

**I believe in the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting. Amen**

(Revised 10-31-20 Br. Benedict)

Leader - 1: In the Book of Acts, Chapter 2, verses 38 and 39

Peter said to the crowd who heard his sermon on Pentecost Day,

"You must repent and be baptized, each one of you, in the name of Jesus the Messiah, that your sins may be forgiven; then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 It was to you and your children that the promise was made, and to all those still far off whom our God calls."

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**Pastor:** Please dip your branch into the Holy Water and sprinkle yourself, or touch the water and make the sign of the Cross. **(please sprinkle at this time)**

**\*\*\*\*\*HOLY WATER DISPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS\*\*\*\*\* plants, ground, or keep for blessing.\*\*\*\*\***

**Brother: PRAYERS FOR THE PEOPLE:** Baby Karma was Baptized before her passing last Sunday afternoon at 2:31 p.m. Baptism was not necessary. Baptism is necessary in churches that teach St. Augustine's dogma of "original sin" where he taught all humans are born with the sin of Adam and the only way to be free from this "original sin" is through the

Sacrament of Baptism. This opinion has become the dominant view of the vast majority of Denominations and most "non-Denominational churches." There has always been a competing understanding of Scripture that could be called "original innocence." Therefore, we cannot sin until we reach an age of conscious choice. The main theologian who wrestled with this idea is Pelagius, a monk from Britain who was teaching in Rome from about 380 to 410 AD. Augustine was the Bishop of Hippo (North Africa, now Annaba, Algeria) from 396 to 430 AD (source on Augustine: [britcannican.com](http://britcannican.com)). The two views remain supported to this day, though most lay people are unaware of the position of the church they attend or of their pastor. I recommend an article titled: Augustine and the Pelagian Controversy, by Gerald Bray, written in 2020. (<https://tabletalkmagazine.com/article/2020/09/augustine-and-the-pelagian-controversy/>) to read the article.

Hurricanes, floods, war, disease, and healing; who else should we pray for?



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

**Veronica:** Worship is our primary activity as a church. We are grateful for all the people over these last forty-one years of ministry who have given help and assistance so that Ray Of Hope is here in 2024. Thank you to everyone who has contributed with your gifts "seen and unseen," may God bless you.

We are an independent organization founded and funded by anyone who appreciates what we offer. Your support is one way to give God thanks and praise for this unique ministry for all people. There are many convenient ways to participate with your donation, including



this QRCode, this link in the bulletin: [Donate to Ray Of Hope Church Of Our](#)



[Lord Jesus Christ](#); other live links on [our website](#), the envelopes and donation box next to the door always available in the Chapel. Checks sent in the mail are also accepted. [Right-Click Here](#) for our contact information, including our street address. We always say, "Give what you can, but never give your last."



## The Reception of Holy Communion

**Offertory Song:** Alleluia composed by Jerry Sinclair

- 1) Alleluia
- 2) Lord, we praise you.
- 3) Lord, we thank you.
- 4) Alleluia

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**Leader - 3:** (\*\*You may improvise a prayer or use this one.) God, we bless you and praise you for all the gifts we have received to support this ministry. We bless you for those who can give financially, and for those who give with their skills, prayers, and many other ways. We bless you for those who could not give at this time, and pray that all their needs will be met. We dedicate all this to the Name of Jesus, Amen.

(We sing **The Doxology here.**)

**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

**Pastor or?:** 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. For those 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.

**Brother Benedict:** Now, please lift your cup with me as I pray this prayer. 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.**

**Kaiden:** Please set down your cup.

**Pastor:** Truly present and risen among us; **SAINTS** 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: (An improvised prayer is said here.)**

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

## 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

Ho - ly Ho - ly Ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and  
5 might. Hea-ven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the  
10 high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.  
16 Bless - ed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.  
22 Ho - san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Ho -  
27 san - na in the high - est.

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

**Leader - 3:** At Ray Of Hope Church, we pray together and ask the Holy Spirit to give us the same gifts 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** well-being. We ask this in the Name of Jesus. Amen

Leader - 1: You may relax your arms and hands.

+ The Words Of The Institution Of The Holy Eucharist

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION SONG: Remember Me.** Words and Music by Gerrit Gustafson and Martin J. Nystrom © 1991 Integrity's Hosanna! Music. c/o Integrity Music, Inc., P.O. Box 16813, Mobile, AL, 36695. All rights reserved. International copyright secured. CCLI Song # 451177 Used with permission through our Christian Copyright License Incorporated License Number 706121 and Christian Copyright License Incorporated Streaming Plus License 21787152.

+ The Lord's Prayer

**Kaiden:** 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**

Music setting information: **The Lord's Prayer Composed by Albert Hay Malotte.** ©1935 G. Schirmer, Inc. (Admin. by Music Sales

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### The Reception of Holy Communion

**Pastor:** Please raise the Blessed Sacrament as a sign of praise and pray together:

**ALL: Behold the Lamb of God. Behold the Christ 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, they shall live forever, and I will raise them up on the last day.**

**Leader - 2:** Blessed are those who come to this table; everyone is welcome.

**ALL: Lord, you make me worthy to receive you, and by your Word, I am healed.** 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! \_\_\_\_

**Kaiden:** Please open your kit and receive Holy Communion at this time. Receive now the Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Gift of God for the People of God. Receive these gifts of love to strengthen your resolve to serve others and God and to fortify your Salvation. 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, and will be raised by Christ to new life, and live forever.

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

### **PRIVATE PRAYER FOR A SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.**

**Veronica:** We understand that some of you watching do not have actual Holy Communion Bread and Wine. We invite you to pray for a Spiritual reception of Holy Communion based upon a prayer in a Prayer Book at the Episcopal National Cathedral. This prayer assures all the benefits and blessings of a physical reception. Together;

**Oh, My Jesus, I believe you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things and 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. Still, circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion.

### **+ Sign Of Peace**

**Leader-1:** The Peace of the Lord Jesus Christ is with you.

**ALL: And also with you.**

**Leader-1:** 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.

**Leader-1:** 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.

**COMMUNION SONG Holy and Anointed One.** Words and Music by John Barnett.

**Verse 1**

Jesus, Jesus.  
Holy and Anointed One,  
Jesus.

**Verse 2**

Jesus, Jesus.  
Risen and Exalted One,  
Jesus.

**Chorus**

Your name is like honey on my lips.  
Your Spirit like water to my soul.  
Your Word is a lamp unto my feet.  
Jesus, I love You, I love You.

**Ending**

Jesus, Jesus.

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**NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION UPDATED EDITION (NRSVUE)**

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**THE TREASURER'S REPORT FOR NOVEMBER, 2024, given by Ed Askins, Treasurer, at the December 19, 2024 of the Church Council.**

**General Fund** opening balance at the beginning of November was \$401.88. Donations to the General Fund for the month were \$2,592.31. This included undeposited funds of \$77.67 which hit the bank early December. Pastoral compensation of \$495.00 per week for 4 week was paid equaling \$1980.00, Verizon \$62.38 and Paypal charges of \$24.64 came out of this account.

After these were paid the ending balance of this account at the end of the month was \$849.50.

**Building Fund** opening balance was \$1,134.08. Donations to the Building Fund were as follows: Brother Shawn Benedict \$640.00, Kaiden Benedict \$450.00. Regular bills that came out of the fund this month was the Credit Card bill with Key Bank of \$58.51, electric \$590.92, gas bill \$253.00, and the water bill of \$112.01. Ending balance of this fund was \$1,209.64.



**Building Improvement Fund** opening balance on this account was \$6,231.38. Donations to this account for this month were Ian and Christina \$450.00 at the beginning of the month and \$500.00 at the end of the month. The \$500.00 did not hit the bank until early December, so that is part of the Undeposited funds on the balance sheet. I paid Isaac's Heating and Air Conditioning \$5,960.75 for the boiler repair. The ending balance on this account is \$720.63.

NOTES OF THANKS TO EVERYONE FOR GENEROSITY GIVEN TO THE LORD THROUGH RAY OF HOPE

**General Offering** for the week of November 24 \$360.00 Attendance 10 on Sunday  
Wednesday, November 27, Attendance 6

**General Offering** for the week of December 1 \$1,625.00 Attendance 11 on Sunday  
Wednesday, November 27, Attendance 6

**General Offering** for the week of December 8 \$1,475.00 Attendance 9 on Sunday  
Wednesday, December 11, Attendance 6

**General Offering** for the week of December 15 \$100.00 Attendance 14 on Sunday  
Wednesday, December 18, Attendance 11

**\*\* Special Gifts this week and recently\*\***

**A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE CHAPEL ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE FOR OUTSTANDING WORK ON THE DECORATIONS: Chairperson - Kaiden Benedict, committee helpers: Wayne Harris, Glenn Rathbun, and Katrina Lourdiane**

Week of December 22-29 Brother Benedict donated \$700.00 to the Building Fund.

Everyone expresses gratitude to our Church Council Members: Christina McLaughlin - Acting Moderator, Veronica Floyd - Clerk, and Ed Askins - Treasurer for the many hours they each volunteer doing the behind the scenes administrative duties for the Church.. We do appreciate our Council Officers.

Thank you to Wayne and Glenn for donating paper products for social times, and supplies for the restroom. Your donations are greatly appreciated. This is the second time in a month Wayne and Glenn have donated paper products. Thank you.

Everyone is very grateful for all the cooking talents that have been recently shared. Thank you Wayne Harris, Katrina Lourdiane, Ruth Goyette, Gary Davis, Lisa Frost, and Ed Askins.

Kaiden is Chairperson of the **Chapel Assistance Committee**. Kaiden wishes to thank Glenn Rathbun, Wayne Harris, and Katrina Lourdiane for continuing to help with the chapel decorations. Again, thank you Wayne and Glenn for the addition of new decorations; new purple, new pink, and reviving the AIDS Names Memorial board.

Thank you, Kaiden for your \$400.00 donation to the Building Fund

Thank you, Veronica for your special donation toward the internet expenses.

Thank you , Veronica for your special \$300.00donation toward the pastoral SE Tax line item.

Ed Askins donated \$100.00 to the Pastor SE Tax budget line. Thank you, Ed. Ian and Christina donated \$500.00 to the Building Improvements Fund, thank you both. Brother donated \$640.00 to the Building Fund, thank you.

To be added to our email list, fill out the email information form at the hospitality table and place it in the offerings/donations box at the door. Internet participants can email [rayofhopechurch@aol.com](mailto:rayofhopechurch@aol.com) and write "email list" in the Subject box.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS ON OUR CALENDAR**

December 29, Sunday CHRISTMAS AT RAY OF HOPE

December 30, Monday 5:00 PM Hanukkah Night 5 of 8 live on Facebook

December 30, Monday 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Kwanzaa at Ray Of Hope Church, live in-person and online. The Seven Principles of Kwanzaa are Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-Determination), Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility), Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity), and Imani (Faith). Kwanzaa, National museum of African American History & Culture  
([https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/initiatives/kwanzaa#:~:text=These%20principles%20are%3A%20Umoja%20\(Unity,%2C%20and%20Imani%20\(Faith\).](https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/initiatives/kwanzaa#:~:text=These%20principles%20are%3A%20Umoja%20(Unity,%2C%20and%20Imani%20(Faith).) )

December 31, Tuesday 5:00 PM Hanukkah Night 6 of 8 live on Facebook

No other meeting scheduled for Tuesday December 31, 2024

January 1, Wednesday, No Noon Mass scheduled for this date.

January 1, Wednesday, 5:00 PM Hanukkah Night 7 of 8 live on Facebook

January 2, Thursday 5:00 PM Hanukkah Night 8 of 8 live on Facebook

Sunday, January 5, Holy Name Sunday

January 6, Monday By-Laws work will likely continue 3 - 4:30

January 7, Tuesday 6:30 - 8:00

January 8, Wednesday Noon Mass

Sunday, January 12, EPIPHANY - Orthodox Christmas (on or near 1-7-25)

January 13, Monday By-Laws work will likely continue 3 - 4:30

January 14, Tuesday 6:30 - 8:00

January 15 Wednesday Noon Mass

January 16, Thursday 6:30 - 8:00 PM COUNCIL MEETING COUNCIL Votes on new By-Laws and 2025 Budget

January 17, Friday Annual Reports to Veronica

Sunday, January 19, Dr. Martin Luther King and Civil Rights Sunday AND The Baptism Of The Lord \*\*Annual Reports available.\*\*

January 20, Monday, No events are scheduled for this date.

January 21, Tuesday, Bible Enrichment 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

January 22, Wednesday Noon Mass

### **SUNDAY JANUARY 26 ANNUAL MEETING AND PASSING NEW By-Laws 2025**

Monday, January 27, 2025 at Noon, The Third Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ Annual Prayers At Noon Together on the International Holocaust Remembrance Day will be held on both in-person and online, and online. The prayers are three psalms, a Scripture reading, and a closing prayer. Psalms will be sung congregationally and led by Pastor Br. Shawn Benedict of Ray Of Hope Church.

MARCH 5, 2025 ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP will be presented by the Elmira Area Clergy with up to ten churches participating. It will be hosted by Bethany Lutheran Church 256 S. Walnut St., Elmira, NY 7:00 PM. Details will follow in singing in the choir, and serving in the worship

event. Please plan to be in attendance.

- Inquiries Class #1 Friday March 7, 2025 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Statement of Purpose, Statement of Faith
- Inquiries Class #2 Friday March 14, 2025 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Worship and Common Threads
- Inquiries Class #3 Friday March 21, 2025 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Polity & Practice (Liturgical Calendar +)
- Inquiries Class #4 Friday March 28, 2025 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Human Sexuality and the Bible
- Inquiries Class #5 Friday April 4, 2025 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. Human Sexuality and the Bible

??? APRIL COUNCIL MEETING BEFORE GREAT VIGIL MEMBERSHIP SO, APRIL 10????

- APRIL 13, 2025 Palm Sunday 10:30 AM HOLY WEEK
- APRIL 17, 2025 HOLY THURSDAY 7:00 PM
- APRIL 18, 2025 PASSION FRIDAY 7:00 PM
- APRIL 19, 2023 GREAT VIGIL OF THE RESURRECTION OUR EASTER EVENT MEMBERSHIP

- May 11, Sunday Mother's Day and Foundresses Day
- June 1, Sunday Ascension Sunday
  - June 7, Saturday, Pride Elmira
- June 8, Sunday Pentecost
  - June 14, Saturday, Pride Corning
- June 15, Sunday, Father's Day and 29th Ordination Anniversary
- June 22, Sunday Juneteenth Celebration (19th)
- June 29th PRIDE SUNDAY

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**We Are Sent Forth To Serve**

**Leader - 2:** SAINTS: The Lord is with you!

**ALL: And also with you!**

**Leader - 2:** We bless and praise you, God, for this time of worship we have enjoyed together today. Send us forth now to share what we have experienced with others. We ask you, Almighty God, to bless us with quiet miracles, the warmth of love, and fill us with wonder and peace; (\*+\*) In the Name of God, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

**ALL: Amen**

**Leader - 2:** We pray Romans Chapter fifteen, verse thirteen together, saying:

**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 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.

**LAST SONG:**

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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

**Made by you and for you, because we are**

The Third Sunday of Pride, 2019

Ray Of Hope Church Weekly Schedule

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

**Bible Enrichment-** Tuesday 6:30–8 PM-380 W. First St. Parsonage /Monastery.  
Or Join us live on SKYPE: rayofhope26 is our contact name. Sign on by 6:15  
PM [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](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, the way it used to be from 7:00 AM to 11:59 PM daily, 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 to pray, read, or visit The Blessed Sacrament. 1-607-280-0374 Our regular services will be blended with live participation in the Chapel, live on Skype and Facebook. To read the information on how to use Skype to participate with us, [Click Here..](#) Recordings of most of our Worship events are on our Facebook page, to see [Click Here.](#) We will reopen the Chapel as soon as it is reasonably safe and prudent.

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.

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Visit us online:

Our website: <http://www.rayofhopechurch.com/> Mobile-Friendly website version: <http://www.rayofhopechurch.com/P2023-Bookmark.htm> Facebook Page (like and follow) [Click Here](#). Our YouTube page: [www.youtube.com/rayofhopenyglbtqs](http://www.youtube.com/rayofhopenyglbtqs)

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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)

