



**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 Thirty-eighth year of Ministry.

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

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

“This is the time we need to shine.”

“We are standing in Faith and Expecting Victory.”

Veronica Floyd, Moderator

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

*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 a time of refreshments and sharing.

May 9, 2021 – Resurrection Wk 6

Mother's Day and Foundresses Day

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:** Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48 NRSV

2nd Test. pg. 129

**Psalm:** 98 selected verses with responsorial in this bulletin.

**Second Reading:** 1 John 4:7-10 NRSV 2<sup>nd</sup> Test. Pg.241

**Gospel:** John 15:9-17 NRSV 2<sup>ND</sup> Test. page 109

\*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

**Bells 1<sup>st</sup> ring.** 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. 1<sup>st</sup> 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 are in honor of 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) We always ring the bell before worship and Bible Enrichment sessions. Listen carefully and see if you can hear all 39 rings.

\*\* We will welcome the Facebook Live guests before the second bells are rung.\*\*

**Bells 2<sup>nd</sup> ring to announce the start of the worship event.**



## WE GATHER TO PRAISE THE LORD AND TO GIVE THANKS

### **+ Pastoral Welcome**

**Leader – 1:** Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_. 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. You are as welcome here as Christ Jesus himself. In Romans Chapter 15:7 the church is commanded:

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

**Leader -1:** Please take a moment now to welcome one another, and introduce yourself to those around you for the glory of God. \*\*During COVID we may simply wave into the camera across the Internet.

**Pastor:** We begin in the name of God, Christ Our Saviour, and the Holy Spirit.

**ALL: Amen**

**Pastor:** Grace, peace, and fellowship be with you from God, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 1:3, 2 Corinthians 13:14, 2 Peter 1:2-4)

**ALL: And also with you.**

**Pastor: (\*\*introduction of the theme of the day\*) Resurrection WK 6. Mother's Day and Foundresses Day**

**Month of May.**

**Pastor:** We begin now to worship God in the beauty of holiness, in spirit, and in 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. At this time we light our Resurrection Candle Of Hope. This is a testimony to our anticipation of the resurrection of all the dead, and the transformation of the living faithful, when Christ returns.

**ALL: Jesus said: "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 -1:** Our faith community is looking forward and waiting “for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.” (Titus 2:13 NRSV) We named this candle the Candle of Hope in honor of the “Blessed Hope,” the return of Christ who will raise all to new life. (John 5:25)

**Leader -2:** Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_. It is our custom to read panel entries from the Names Project Aids Memorial Quilt to help us remember those who died of AIDS, especially since many who were very sick and dying were rejected by the churches, were very much alone, and needed spiritual guidance. We remember them here and pray for their families.

**Leader -3:** Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_. (Names are read at this time.)

**Leader -2:** We also remember in our hearts the names of our family and friends who have passed. May the candle's flame remind us of the joy and happiness known in life, the comfort offered us 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, 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) At this time we prepare our hearts to be renewed by receiving God in Word and Sacrament by confessing our sins to Christ in silent prayer.  
(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 God in any way. I ask you, my brothers and sisters, all the angels and the saints to pray for me to the Lord our God.

**Leader -4:** Almighty and eternal God, you have shared with the Human Race the ability to bring new life into the world. We pray that people everywhere would appreciate this beautiful gift. Lord, have mercy.

**ALL: Lord, have mercy.**

**Leader -4:** Christ Jesus, Our Lord, you are present in your church. You call us to see one another as friends. You raised friendship to the highest form of love. You guide and challenge us to proclaim the glory of God, to praise God, to live for God, and to guide others to God. We should be in awe at all of the possibilities you give us. Christ, have mercy.

**ALL: Christ, have mercy.**

**Leader -4:** Holy Spirit, you are with us as the Helper, the Comforter, our Advocate, our Intercessor, our Counselor, our Strengthener, the one who will always stand by us. Help us to see these gifts as ways we can show forth God's gift of motherhood to those who need it.

**ALL: Lord, have mercy.**

**Pastor:** May Almighty God 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 thanks and praise to God for the forgiveness of our sins by praying the Gloria.

**Song:**

**Glory be to the one God, and to the Christ, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.** (Traditional Gloria Patri hymn with inclusive language.)

**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



**THE SERVICE OF THE WORD OF GOD**

## + First Reading

**Reader:** Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_. The first reading is in the Book of Acts, chapter 10, verses 25-26, 34-35, 44-48. The reading is on page 129 in the back of the NRSV Bible. Here begins the reading:

25 On Peter's arrival Cornelius met him, and falling at Peter's feet, worshiped him. 26 But Peter made him get up, saying, "Stand up; I am only a mortal."

34 Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, 35 but in every nation anyone who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to God. 44 While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, 46 for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God.

Then Peter said, 47 "Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" 48 So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

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

**ALL: Thanks be to God!**

## + Psalm

**Reader:** Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_. The Psalm today is number 98, selected verses with a responsorial verse. The response today is "The Lord has revealed to the nations the power of salvation."

**R. The Lord has revealed to the nations the power of salvation.**

Sing to the LORD a new song, for the LORD

has done wondrous deeds;  
winning victory by the right hand and holy arm.

**R. The Lord has revealed to the nations the power of salvation.**

The LORD has made salvation known:  
in the sight of the nations, and revealed Divine justice. God  
has remembered kindness and faithfulness toward the  
house of Israel.

**R. The Lord has revealed to the nations the power of salvation.**

All the ends of the earth have seen the  
salvation by our God.  
Sing joyfully to the LORD, all you lands; break into  
song; sing praise.

**R. The Lord has revealed to the nations the power of salvation.**

## + Second Reading

**Reader:** Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_. The second reading is in the Book of the First Letter of John chapter 4, verses 7-10. The reading is on page 241 in the second testament, in the back of the NRSV Bible. Here begins the reading:

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup> God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent the only Son into the world so that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

**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

We love Your Word, O Lord for it set us free. We know the

6 truth, O Lord; We are Yours e - ter - nal - ly. So we stand to hear Your

11 Word. We praise You for Your Word. Al-le - lu - a! for Your Word. It heals our

16 hearts, souls and minds. For Your Word, Al - le - lu - ia! Thank You Je - sus!

©1993 by Gaude! Liturgical Arts. All Rights Reserved. International Copyright Secured. Reprinted here under CCLI#706121

**Reader:** The Gospel reading is on page 109 in the back of the NRSV Bible. The reading is in the Gospel of John, chapter 15, verse 9 through 17.

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

**ALL: And also with you.**

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

**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.**

9 As God has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. 10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept God's commandments and abide in Divine love. 11 I

have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

12 "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command you. 15 I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from God. 16 You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that God will give you whatever you ask in my name. 17 I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

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

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

### 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

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!

**+ Sermon**

NOTES

Matthew 24:6-8

<sup>6</sup> And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. <sup>7</sup> For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places: all this is but the beginning of the birth pangs.

Jesus said: "And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." John 8.32 -----

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

(Isaiah 56:7)

Isaiah 25:7, 8 The Lord will destroy on this mountain  
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,  
the sheet that is spread over all nations;  
8 he will swallow up death forever.

with

Hebrews 2:14 and 15 <sup>14</sup> Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup> and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

with

1 Corinthians 15:26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

\*\*\* 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.



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John 14:12-18 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.



Our Elmira Chapel Foundresses pictures are hung above and become part of the Credence Table /Altar dedicated to the Incarnation of the Eternal Word and His Blessed Mother Mary.



+ Martha Cummings  
born 5/18/1928  
Member, 1997  
Entered Paradise 2/15/2014



+ Margaret E. Walker  
born 2/26/1918  
Member, 1997  
Entered Paradise 9/4/2006



+ Betty Lou LeHew Goodrich  
born 1/31/1923  
Member, 1997  
Entered Paradise 4/26/2010



+ Jane Mc Dermott  
born 3/12/1937  
Member, 1997  
Entered Paradise 10/1/2019



Lisa Cummings Frost  
born 7/17/1957  
Member, 1997

Visit our Foundresses, Founders, and Friends of the Congregation page on our website. [Right Click Here.](#)

Mother's Day from Wikipedia [Right Click Here](#).

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For the sixth consecutive year the birthrate has dropped in the United States. It is at the lowest level since 1979. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported a 4% from 2019 – 2020, where it usually has been 1 – 2% since 2015. (Source: <https://www.usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2021-05-05/us-births-see-steeper-decline-in-2020-fertility-rates-at-record-lows>) For those who are putting forth fear that there are far fewer caucasian births than other ethnicities in the United States see this graph: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/241514/birth-rate-by-ethnic-group-of-mother-in-the-us/>

At Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc. we welcome persons of all sexual orientations and all gender expressions. This “welcome” is not just a static tolerance, but a heart-felt embrace, a celebration of the whole person who is in the very person of Christ Himself. This is why we embrace the command of Romans Chapter 15, verse 7 “Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God.” (NABRE) It is also why we repeat the words of Fr. O'Brien; “You are as welcome here as Christ Himself.”

It can be challenging at times to hear about or think about a sexual orientation or gender expression that is not one's own. This is one way we call each other to grow, by listening to other's experiences.

Today, Mother's Day 2021, is a good day to thank God for Heterosexuality, and the very special gift that is enjoyed in the heterosexual physical union that may result in God granting new life. Certainly, God has granted to the Human Race the gift of participating in the ongoing act of Creation by our being able to birth children. When the family is organized around this gift of birthing and then raising, children the spiritual joys may be innumerable. When two people decide to be parents and raise children, they marry and form a family. God blesses their efforts as God designed this idea. When God is central to this family unit the spiritual benefits will be countless as the children grow up. Obviously for a society to survive there must be new babies born at least at the rate of adults passing away. If people are the building blocks of a society, they must be replaced all the time. So, we honor those who have the gift, the desire, the sacrificial character to bring children into the world and carefully raise them.

Today, it is very possible for persons of any gender to enter this type of union. Today there are many ways to form a family and to raise children. A quick review of humanity in different ages and locations will reveal many different structures of family, even communal family. All of the possibilities of family formation are equally blessed by God because family love is based on friendship. In today's readings the theme of love based on friendship runs throughout all sacred text we are reading today. Jesus raises friendship to the highest form of human love and then calls us his friends. The Quakers got it right when they named themselves “the Society of Friends.”

One of the greatest joys in a mother's life, in a parent's life is to hold their newborn baby. The song, “Because He Lives” might seem a little dated in style, but it has a beautiful second verse. It reads: “How sweet to hold a newborn baby, And feel the pride and joy he gives; But greater still the calm assurance: This child can face uncertain days because He lives.” (Text: Gloria Gaither and William J. Gaither) The song was written in 1971, before we were thinking about inclusive language. I like to sing, And feel the pride and joy they give, so that all children are included. If we have time, we might sing this song later today.

In every family the elders participate in showing the motherhood of God to those who are younger. God blesses us with the gifts of motherhood in ways that perfectly reflect God's own self, God Who is "male and female" according to Genesis 1:27 and many other verses. Our modern "Western" society has taken a very hard and binary standard of male and female. As we come into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, many in our society emphasize the failure of this "either male or female" standard. Many religious traditions, even ones that predate the Christianization of this Continent, celebrate and practice gender and parenting as much more fluid than our strictly binary system. There are many verses in the Bible where God shows forth God's "feminine" side. We are called to do the same.

Today we are thankful for those who bond together in life intending to bring new life into the world and make a home, a place, a nest in society to raise the children. We are grateful that people are willing to make the sacrifices parenting requires. Today we give thanks to God for anyone who ever held us, who helped us, who listened to us with a motherly love. Today we thank God for our mothers, for the women who carried us in the womb so that we could have life. Our second reading today 1 John 4:7-10 teaches us that love is of God for God is love. So, in as much as we love we bring the Divine God to another and share in God's real presence.

We are not pretending things always work out so textbook perfectly. So, today we are also grateful for those who stepped into our lives when the normal family structure had to change for so many reasons. We are also grateful today for parents who raised us who may not have been our genetic parents. We are grateful today for those grandmothers, aunts, and other women who reached out to help us understand the changes in life. We are grateful today for the times when we shared motherly love with those who needed it. We are grateful for those moments that surprised us when God helped us help others in very motherly ways.

Going forth we might think of ways we can support mothers who are raising children. Perhaps we might offer to help or run some errands or offer to be the secure listener. Also, we might think of ways we can increase the dignity of elderly women in society. We might consider taking Holy Communion and sharing the readings for example. As we prepare for Pentecost, perhaps we might ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in these areas.

We are grateful for all holy women of any gender who live, work, and pray among us, those on Earth and those in Paradise. To the many mothers "seen and unseen" we have met, we shall meet, and we might become, we give thanks to God on this very Mother's Day.

Notes from the readings for today: **The Faithful Friend**

<sup>14</sup>A faithful friend is a sure shelter,  
whoever finds one has found a rare treasure.

<sup>15</sup>A faithful friend is beyond price,  
there is no measuring their worth.

<sup>16</sup>A faithful friend is a life-saving medicine, the elixir of life,  
and those who respect and love God will find one.

<sup>17</sup>Those who love and respect God make true friends,  
and true friends create true friendships.

(From the Bible, the book of Sirach or Ecclesiasticus Chapter 6, verses 5 – 17 written between 200 and 175 B. C. E.)

**Jesus elevated friendship** to the highest human love with these words:  
John 15:12-15 New King James Version (NKJV)

<sup>12</sup>"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup>Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. <sup>14</sup>You are My friends if you do whatever I command

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you. <sup>15</sup> No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you."

Here Jesus says the highest love is to lay down one's life for their friend and then of course, this is exactly what He does. On the cross Jesus gave up His life for us, His **friends**. Now we are called to love everyone around us with **true friendship**, the kind of love-friendship Jesus has for us. God wants us to enjoy this friendship with us, and God wants us to share that level of care for each and every person we encounter in life. Actually, this is the core of "**marriage**" to be Faithful Friends. The best part about this is God would not ask of us something we are not capable of living out. With God's help we can be this kind of friend in all of our friendships. Life will be so much better, and we will make true friends! (Br. Shawn Benedict, 8-23-17 revision 1. See other side for contact details.) \*\*Make copies to give and share with others. Share in media and electronic means so others may enjoy these Scriptures.\*\*

First Reading: Acts 10: 34-35, + 34 Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, 35 but in every nation anyone who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to God. 44 While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, 46 for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God.

## G1484

ἔθνος

ethnos

eth'-nos

Probably from [G1486](#); a *race* (as of the same *habit*), that is, a *tribe*; specifically a *foreign (non-Jewish) one* (usually by implication *pagan*): - Gentile, heathen, nation, people.

**Total KJV occurrences: 164**

**"Once we were not a people, God's people now are we..." Once we were not an ἔθνος, God's ἔθνος now are we...**

On page 118 of her book: Our Tribe, Rev. Nancy Wilson writes: "The word *nation* is actually the Greek word *ethni* from which we derive our word ethnic. The term refers to a *race, culture, or people*. Peter makes the connection that among every race, culture, or people, those who fear God and "do what is right" are eligible for baptism, for inclusion in the people of God. .... An *ethni* may be defined by a common history, vocabulary, dialect, culture, institutions (schools, libraries, clubs, churches, synagogues, social organizations, businesses), heroes, political leaders, scholars, values, and the ability to recognize each other even when submerged in the dominant culture. If these constitute an *ethni*, gay and lesbian people are included in the word *nation* used in Acts 10:35."

Special Bible Enrichment May 18 Tuesday night: Was Jesus Crucified on Wednesday or Friday? We will examine some theories around this



question. Save the date!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Su-QUI9spMw> This Is The Day. John Rutter

=====PREPARING FOR PENTECOST=====

**Prayer for our Congregation:**

Lord Jesus Christ, we ask that your Holy Spirit continue to move in our congregation in ways always new and refreshing. We open our hearts to be a dwelling place, a home, a temple of your Holy Spirit. Empower us as you see fit with the gifts of the Holy Spirit to be used as servants of God, disciples of Christ, and witnesses of God's love and God's eternal plan. Come Holy Spirit, come, and impassion us with your Divine Love. Stir and enkindle within us the flames of compassion, forgiveness, patience, empathy, Joy in believing, thanksgiving and praise, and love for God's holy Will. Build up within us an expectant faith with a view of church that is full of possibilities and potential. Guide our lives, we pray through Christ our Lord, Amen.

=====PREPARING FOR PENTECOST=====

**Everyone has access to the Holy Spirit, the gift of God to us.**

Below is a rendering of John chapter 16, verse 7 by the translators of the Amplified Bible that I find particularly enlightening. This verse gives many of the attributes of the Holy Spirit, in English, that are all packed and hidden in the original Greek Word parakletos. Each of the capitalized words in the verse below tells us how the Holy Spirit is ready to help us. All we have to do is ask with a short prayer like this: "Oh God, give me the awareness to know you are with me in all these ways through the Holy Spirit, Amen."

Here is the verse in the Amplified Bible

Jesus taught, saying: "But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor-Counselor, Strengthener, Standby) will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him (the Holy Spirit) to you [to be in close fellowship with you]." John 16:7

Did you realize the Holy Spirit is with you to bring you all those actions of God? If we understand the Real Presence of God is with us in Christ through the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit, we will experience more confidence, love of ourselves and our neighbors, and be able to feel better about our lived experience. You can have all this and more. Start with that simple prayer above.

Signed: Pastor Benedict, 3-6-21. Read this on our website.

[Right Click Here.](#)

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## **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](#).

=====



**WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD**

**+ (optional) Profession Of Faith**

**Creed #1: The Apostles' Creed**

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

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.

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)

**+ The Prayers Of The People: Shared Prayer**

**Leader – 4:** Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am in the City  
of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_. Having heard the Word Of God we  
bring our prayers to God in Christ, through the powerful ministry of the  
Holy Spirit. Everyone is welcome to pray out loud for themselves, for

others with prayers of praise and thanksgiving, or whatever is on your heart. Please keep the prayers brief so as many people as possible may participate in the given time. We invite you to speak your prayers loud enough so everyone may hear your prayer and join you in spirit and in truth. So, we begin with \_\_\_\_\_  
(The person leading will invite prayers from the various rooms in the service.)

**Leader – 4:** (when all prayers have been heard) Lord Jesus, we lift our spoken and unspoken prayers and 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 - 5:** Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_. At this time we show our gratitude to God and our dedication to the Church of Jesus Christ, which is His Body present in the world, by offering our financial gifts and support for this ministry. During our COVID Infection Prevention procedures, we have many ways you can continue to support this ministry. To be directed to our website where you may make a secure Paypal donation using any debit or credit card, and you do not have to have a Paypal account to use this, [Right Click Here](#). Those in the chapel may use the offering plate, or you may send your donation to Lisa Frost directly or to Ray Of Hope Church, 380 W. 1<sup>st</sup> St. Elmira, NY 14901. We always say give what you can, but never give your last.

At the same time, we will prepare our Holy Communion Altars and Tables at home and in the chapel. Bring to your table at home some wine, or grape juice, a small piece of bread, a little bit of water in a side cup, and a side napkin. The ideal situation is you are celebrating with us during the live webcast. We do understand you may be viewing this video at another time. We do not encourage private practice and reception of Communion as your normal, weekly worship routine. 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.\*)

(\* The offering is received. The Altar and Tables are set. A song may be sung or silent prayer is maintained. \*)

**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**

**Pastor:** Lord God, we ask you to receive our worship this day. We pray that you will be pleased with our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving we offer you with humble and contrite hearts.

**ALL: May the Lord accept our lives as a sacrifice for the praise and glory of God's name, for our good and the good of all God's people. Amen**

**Pastor:** Please lift your bread at this time as I pray this prayer. (\*Another person may be invited to say this prayer out loud.\*)

**Pastor:** Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. It is through your goodness that 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.**

**Pastor:** Please set down your bread.

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

Now, please lift your cup with me at this time as I pray this prayer. (\*Another person may be invited to say this prayer out loud.\*)

**Pastor:** Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. It is through your goodness that 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:** We offer ourselves, with our whole heart, our whole soul, and our whole mind unto you Almighty God. Accomplish your desires for us in our lives. Mold us to be more like you every day. Receive us along with these gifts of bread and fruit of the vine to be made holy,

and through them make us into a perfect offering to you, One and Only Holy God. We ask this in the name of Jesus, Our Lord.

**ALL: Amen.**

**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.**

**\*\*\*\*\* the people may be invited to offer prayers of thanks and praise.**

**\*\*\*\*\* the Pastor continues with a Eucharistic Prayer.**



## 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 two sharps (F# and C#) 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. est."

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

**Pastor:** Here at Ray Of Hope Church, everyone prays together to ask the Holy Spirit to give to us the exact same gifts that Jesus gave when He instituted Holy Communion for His Church. At this time I 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 Spiritual and physical well-being. We ask this in the Name of Jesus. Amen**

**+ The Words Of The Institution Of The Holy Eucharist**

**Pastor:** Please lower your hands now. Please lift at this time the Eucharistic Body Of Christ, the Bread of Salvation and together we will say aloud 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.**

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

**Pastor:** Please set down the Bread of Life. Please lift now, the cup of salvation. Now, for the cup we say aloud:

**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:** Please set down the Cup of Salvation.

**+ Optional Christological Canticule:**

**#1 Philippians 2:6-11**

**Though He was in the form of God, Jesus did not deem equality with God something to be grasped at.**

**Rather, He emptied Himself and took the form of a slave, being born in the likeness of men.**

**He was known to be of human estate, and it was thus that He humbled Himself, obediently accepting even death, death on a cross!**

**Because of this, God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name above every other name, So that at the name of Jesus every knee must bend**

**(optional\*\*genuflect or bow\*\*)**

**in the heavens, on the earth, and under the earth, and every tongue proclaim to the glory of God:**

**JESUS CHRIST IS LORD!**

**#2 Colossians 1:15-20**

**Christ is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation. In Christ everything in heaven and on earth was created, things visible and invisible.**

**All were created through Him;  
all were created for Him.  
Jesus is before all else that is.  
In Him, everything continues in being.**

**It is Jesus who is head of the body, the Church!  
He who is the beginning, the first-born of the dead, so that primacy may be His in everything.**

**It pleased God to make absolute fullness reside in Christ and, by means of Him, to reconcile everything in His person, both on earth and in the heavens, making peace through the blood of His cross.**

- a) Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**
- b) Dying you destroyed our death, rising you restored our life.  
Lord Jesus, come in glory.**
- c) When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your  
death, Lord Jesus, until you come in glory.**
- d) Lord, by your cross and resurrection you have set us free.  
You are the savior of the world.**
- e) Keep in mind that Jesus Christ has died for us and is risen  
from the dead. He is our saving Lord. He is joy for all ages.**
- f) Jesus Christ has died for us, Christ our Lord is risen,  
Christ will come again someday. Oh deep in my heart, I do  
believe that Jesus Christ will come again.**
- g) Christ has spoken in times past. Christ is speaking to us  
today. Christ will speak and take us into the future.**

**+ Prayers of Dedication and/or Intercession for other Ministries.**

**Pastor (or other person designated):** While we are gathered here together we ask your blessing on all religious leaders of every religion known to humanity. We pray that religious leaders everywhere would 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 and respect for everyone. We ask your blessing, Almighty God upon every community of seekers, and those with no faith or formal Religion.

We also pray for all people who have been driven from faith because of the sins of those who have misused religion to hurt others. We pray for those who have been cast aside, excommunicated, and wrongly not included. May all people everywhere come to the knowledge that they

too are the living light of God. We eagerly await your promised renewal of all creation when you shall be all in all. (1 Corinthians 15:28)

## + Final Doxology

**Pastor:** Please elevate the Holy Eucharist as a gesture of praise, thanksgiving, honor, gratitude, and the offering of the entire Church, the Body Of Christ, to God.

**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!



## The Reception of Holy Communion

### + The Lord's Prayer

**Pastor:** Having heard the Word of God and having remembered 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**

### + Sign Of Peace

**Pastor:** The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ is with you.

**ALL: And also with you.**

### + The Lamb Of God

**Pastor:** Please break the bread as we pray together:

**ALL: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
have mercy on us.**

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

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

**Pastor:** You may set the bread down and pray silently as I pray this prayer.

## + **Priestly Prayer For All People**

**Pastor:** Lord Jesus Christ, trusting in your love and your mercy we now partake of your body and blood as you commanded. We pray that our participation does not bring us condemnation as St. Paul warned, but brings us sanctification and healing in mind, body, soul, and spirit. We pray that all God's people will one day be reassembled without the loss of anyone in your kingdom of love and glory. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**ALL: AMEN**

## + **Invitation to the Lord's Table**

**Pastor:** At this time I ask you to lift with me the Blessed Sacrament.

**Pastor:** Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. 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 they 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.)

**Pastor:** Please set down the Bread and Cup at this time.

**Pastor:** I assure you, by the promises of Christ, that anyone who receives this Holy Communion today will surely live forever and be raised by Christ to new life.

**Leader-1:** Communion is now served. Everyone is invited to receive Holy Communion at Ray Of Hope Church. It is not required that you be a member of this church or any other church to receive Holy Communion. This is the Table of Jesus Christ, He invites you to come and receive Him in this Eucharistic banquet.

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

**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.

When you come forward, the person serving you will say; “The Body and the Blood of Jesus Christ for you.” Respond with “Amen” or “Alleluia” or some other acclamation of appreciation or faith. Then take a piece of the bread and dip it into the cup and serve yourself. If you are here with family or friends you may come to Holy Communion together and serve each other. Please wait after you receive Holy Communion because the person serving you will pray with you before you return to your seat.

Serving Holy Communion today will be: \_\_\_\_\_  
We sing during Holy Communion and maintain our worship. We begin.  
The Table of Christ is served.

**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.



**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)

**Pastor:** We go forth in peace and love to serve the Lord ...

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

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GIFTS AND DONATIONS**

**General Offering** for the week of May 2 was \$1,793.00. Attendance 7. **We give God thanks and praise for all the gifts given.**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Visit our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/lgbtqgia2ssByYou/>

May 11 Tuesday Bible Enrichment 6:30 p.m.

May 16 Sunday Ascension of the Lord

Special Bible Enrichment May 18 Tuesday night: Was Jesus Crucified on Wednesday or Friday? We will examine some theories around this question. Save the date!

May 22 Sunday Pentecost Sunday

June 12 Saturday volunteer day at Tanglewood Nature Center. 10 am to 1 pm

June 13 Central NY Pride Sunday

June 20 Father's Day and Celebration of the Silver Jubilee of Brother's Ordination and Solemn Profession of Benedictine Vows.



The following information, published by the Secular Coalition for America, is included by me, personally, as part of my response to the Ray Of Hope Church Statement of Purpose. Ray Of Hope has not endorsed the Secular Coalition For America in any way, officially or implied. I am including this information here to assist people who may want to take action now to encourage their members of the Senate of the United States to know the facts and identify the false information being put forth in the hearings that are happening now on the Equality Act. SIGNED: Rev. Br. Shawn F. Benedict, Pastor, 3-20-21 7:00 p.m.



Dear Friend,

Last month the House passed the [Equality Act \(H.R. 5\)](#). For those unaware, this important legislation would amend existing civil rights laws, such as the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*, to include sexual orientation, and gender identity as protected characteristics under law. The bill also expands federal non-discrimination protections regarding discrimination based on race, color, national origin, **religion**, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity in public settings, and protects against sex-based discrimination in government services and federally-funded programs.

This week, the Senate held its first ever hearing on the [Equality Act](#) and as expected, the debate was heated. It seems opponents of the bill (Senate Republicans) are promoting [several misconceptions](#) about its purpose and scope which include:

- “The Equality Act would destroy religious freedom in this country.”

- **NOT TRUE.** Freedom of religion is already protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Nothing in the *Equality Act* would change that. The bill simply extends those rights that most vulnerable groups are already afforded to those who have been denied them, such as the **LGBTQ community**. In fact, the bill actually protects freedom of religion by preventing the imposing of one's religion upon another.
- *"The Equality Act will make athletics unfair for females."*
  - **NOT TRUE.** Schools across the nation already have policies in place to ensure a level playing field for all students, and they are working. Additionally, except for a very small percentage, most students who participate in high school sports do not continue on with their athletic endeavours after high school. The possibility that perhaps one or two transgender students in an entire student body would ruin that opportunity for another is almost nonexistent. *Title IX* is extremely important in regards to girls athletics, and the bottom line is that **nothing in the Equality Act changes that**. Instead, we should be calling for increased funding for girls athletics.
- *"The Equality Act will allow men to harass women in public restrooms."*
  - **NOT TRUE.** We already have laws in place to prevent such acts, and the *Equality Act* does nothing to change that. Additionally, **21 states** have had similar nondiscrimination laws on the books for decades now and they have worked, as there have been no increases in public safety incidents in bathrooms since they were codified.



[Tell the Senate to Support the Equality Act - Secular Coalition for America](#)

It is important that we dispel these untrue myths about this legislation, which seeks only to provide the same protections that most of us already are afforded to those who are not. We must always push back against these false narratives whenever they are presented. Only by doing so will we be able to do away with the myths and focus on the facts of the issue, which is equal treatment under the law for everyone, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual identity, or sexual orientation.

May 9, 2021 Mother's Day Foundresses Day page: 36

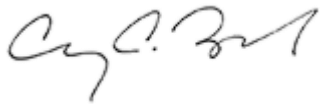
If you would like to contact your Senators in Washington to tell them that you would appreciate their support of the *Equality Act*, you can do so by clicking the [link](#) provided below. We are closer than we have ever been before, and now is the time to voice your support!

[\*\*Please click here to tell your Senators in Washington to support the Equality Act!\*\*](#)

To be a part of our team, and celebrate with us when we secure the passage of the Equality Act in the Senate, please click the "[\*\*I want to help\*\*](#)" button below. Every dollar goes to representing you on Capitol Hill, and strengthening the wall of separation between religion and government. With *your* help, we can make even greater progress on the issues we care about!

[\*\*I want to help!\*\*](#)

Your advocate on the Hill,



Casey C. Brinck

Director of Policy & Government Affairs  
**Secular Coalition for America**



## 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 web site;

[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 at this time as we try to do our part to stop the spread of COVID-19. All of our regular services will be available live on Skype and we are adding Facebook Live. To get the information on how to use Skype to participate with us [Click Here](#).. Visit our Facebook page [Click Here](#). As soon as it is reasonably safe and prudent the chapel will be reopened. Call for an appointment if you want some time to come in and pray.

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*.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**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 on line:

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

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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)