



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 Forty-first year of Ministry.**

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

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

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

Veronica Floyd, Moderator

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

We extend a 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)

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 November 26, 2023, Advent 1 readings week 2, Eschatology 3 of 6 Year A  
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:** Is 40:1-11 NRSV 1st Test. pg. 667

**Psalm:** 85, verses 8-13 with a responsorial verse.

**Second Reading:** 2 Peter 3:8-15a NRSV 2<sup>nd</sup> Test. Pg. 238

**Gospel:** Mark 1:1-8 NRSV 2<sup>ND</sup> Testament page 34

**\*We use the term 1st for the "Old" Testament and 2nd for the "New" Testament.  
The NRSV Bible, 1st Testament numbers, are in the front, and the 2nd Testament  
numbers are in the back of the book. 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 the 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.

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 honor the 39 lashes Jesus endured that we now celebrate in victory and gratitude for our Salvation. "The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes, we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5) 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 \_\_\_\_\_, and I am in the City of\_\_ in the State of \_\_. 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. You may participate in some or all parts of this worship event as you are comfortable. We announce all instructions, page, and song numbers and use a psalm response verse to assist people with various stages of visual impairment.

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.

**Leader-2:** Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_. Good morning, and welcome ■ (\*\* Reader, stop, look up at the people, and smile.\*\*) Everyone is welcome to receive Holy Communion with us during the second part of this worship event. Membership in this or any church is not required. We celebrate the Lord's open table. People participating on the Internet, please bring the following items to your table at this time to prepare: 1) a cup with some wine or grape juice, 2) a small piece of bread, cracker, or matzo on a plate, 3) a second cup with some water, and 4) a side napkin.

**Leader-1:** Today's bulletin order of worship and music supplement are 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). Take a moment now and gather these items. We will start shortly; thank you.



**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 LGBTQIA2s+ 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.rayofhopechurch.com/faith.htm](http://www.rayofhopechurch.com/faith.htm)) ([www.rayofhopechurch.com/purpose.htm](http://www.rayofhopechurch.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 spending time with us. In Romans, Chapter 15:7, the Scriptures instruct us to:

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

**Leader -1:** You are as welcome here as Christ Jesus himself. (\*\* Reader, stop, look up 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!** 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:** Jesus promised to be with the Church to the end of the age. We joyfully give God thanks and praise.

**ALL: Praise the Lord! Bless the Lord! Alleluia.**

Pastor: We come here to pray. The definition of the word liturgy is the "prayer-work" of the people. The people lead, serve, organize, and facilitate this public time of assembly to worship and experience God and one another. The people are actively praying and serving those present and God.



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

**Today is November 26, 2023, the First Sunday of Advent, the start of a new year in the church calendar in our 41st year of ministry.**

Today's theme: Praying for World Peace.

**We are following the Lectionary Readings today for week two - Peace, so that next Sunday, the one closest to World AIDS Day, we can use the readings for Hope.**

**Today is also week 3 of 6 weeks on the theme of Eschatology.**

There is the continuation of the theme of the Good Shepherd we had last week continued in today's readings. This first song asks the Good Shepherd to rescue the Human Race from all the cruelty we enact upon each other. Save us, O Lord, from war, corrupt governments, failure in the Church, and the breakdown of relationships, and you can go on with your list. Save us, O Lord, from Racism, Homophobia, Transphobia, fear of gender expression, fear of bisexual family structure, fear of polyamorous families, from all the ways your Holy Spirit is calling us to a better society. People of fear and control are trying to stop the progress of the Holy Spirit. We need an intervention today brought to us by the Good Shepherd of Israel, the Shepherd of Souls, the Head of the Church, His Body. In this first song, we make a plea for His assistance.

**FIRST SONG: Save Us, O Lord** Words and Music by Bob Dufford, SJ, b. 1943. Glory And Praise second edition #301 Text: Based on Psalm 80. Text and music © 1981, Robert J. Dufford, SJ, and OCP. All rights reserved.

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**+ The Advent Wreath Week 1, 2023 – \*the candle of Peace.\***

**Leader -1:** Please be seated. Today, we begin the season of Advent, the beginning of a new year in the Church. We start over in the cycle of Sunday Scripture readings to listen anew to the living Word of God. Advent is a time of renewal, fresh beginnings, ages old, present, and future.

**ALL: Advent is also a season of longing, filled with expectation, excited by hope, sprinkled with potential and promise.**

**Leader -2:** The Advent Wreath shows many meaningful symbols. The evergreen reminds us of the eternal promises of God's sustaining grace. God is faithful and will fulfill every promise made in Scripture. The four candles remind us of our place in time as we move forward in God's plan. Each candle has a name and a theme.

This year, the first candle is purple, named for Peace. We are dedicating it to our prayers for World Peace.

The second candle is also purple, named for Hope. On the second candle we display the Red AIDS Ribbon for World AIDS Day.

The third candle is the rose color for Joy, and it is when we celebrate Pride in the Winter and have our holiday party.

The fourth candle is purple and named for Love. On the 4th Sunday, we will celebrate Holy Mother Mary and all Holy Women of Faith, a Holy Mother's Day in the Winter.

**Leader -3:** At this time, we will bless our Advent Wreath or Advent Yule Log with Holy Water. First, we must bless the water to make it holy. Please pick up and hold the container with the water or touch it and pray silently as I pray out loud. (**\*please pause\***) 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 sprinkle your Advent Wreath or your Advent Log now. If you have incense, you may light it now as a symbol of prayer rising before God.

**Leader -1:** The Book of Malachi, Chapter one, verse eleven reads; "From the rising of the sun to its setting my Name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my Name, and a pure offering; for my Name is great among the nations, says the Lord of Hosts." In the Gospel of Luke, chapter one, verses eight through eleven we read, the father of John the Baptist, was serving as priest before God. Zechariah entered "the sanctuary of the Lord and offered incense. <sup>10</sup> Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. <sup>11</sup> Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense."

Also, in the Book of Revelation, we read about elders holding bowls of incense, "which are the prayers of the saints." (Revelation 5:8) We therefore see from these three readings that incense symbolizes our prayers rising to the Lord.

**ALL:** "May our prayers rise before you, O Lord, as incense to the sky, the raising of our hands like an evening oblation." (Psalm 141:2)

**Pastor:** We pray aloud together now:

**ALL:** O Loving and Gracious God, we ask your Holy Spirit to bless these Advent decorations, to bless this holy season, and to bless us as we begin anew our journey with You. We dedicate ourselves and these next four weeks of Advent to you. We ask you to speak to us, to guide us, and to impassion our hearts with your Divine Love. We



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

**ask**

**Leader -2:** We light the first candle for World Peace. Please do show it on your camera if you can. (\*Please wait to see candles in the camera.\*) Thank you. You may return your camera to the normal position. (\*Please wait a few seconds.\*)

**Leader -2:** Together, we say the following prayer out loud.

**ALL:** Shatter the silence of Advent longing with the voice calling out, "Prepare the way of the Lord." We open our hearts, minds, and beings to receive your message and your holy love that is teeming through all creation. Move us ever closer toward your love that is all-encompassing and eternally present. Continue to fill all your people everywhere with your awesome essence of life. We ask this in the name of (\*+\*) God, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Leader -2:** Please rise as you are able and sing O Come, O Come Emmanuel.



**O come, O come, great Lord of might, who to your tribes on Sinai's height in ancient times did give the law, in cloud and majesty, and awe.**

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

**O come, O Rod of Jesse's stem, from every foe deliver them that trust your mighty power to save, and give them victory o're the grave.**

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

**Amen, Alleluia.**

**Leader -3:** Together, we continue forward in peace, holy peace.

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

**Leader - 3:** Please be seated now.



## **WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS**

### **+ Confession and Forgiveness of our sins.**

**Leader -2:** Please be seated. (wait) So far, we assembled, greeted one another, and praised God in song. Now, Ray Of Hope Church provides another service: Christ forgiving our sins through the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit.

**Leader – 3:** Hear the Word of God in First John, Chapter One, verses eight and nine: "<sup>8</sup> If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, Jesus, who is present, faithful, and just, will forgive and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

(Source: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=i+John+1%3A8-10&version=NRSVUE>  
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**Leader -2:** In silent prayer, consider our relationships with God and others.

Then, confess faults, sins, and failures to Christ, who will forgive us immediately.

**(silent prayer)**

**Leader -2:** We pray together:

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

**Leader -4:** Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_.

War cripples the Human family. Hundreds and thousands of innocent people are suffering and being killed; we pray, Lord, have mercy.

**ALL: Lord, have mercy.**

**Leader -4:** The lives of children experiencing war are changed forever and result in physical and psychological long-term injuries; we pray: Christ, have mercy.

**ALL: Christ, have mercy.**

**Leader -4:** The message of Christ and His Church is peace and respect between all people, but the messengers are staying quiet; we pray, Lord, have mercy.

**ALL: Lord, have mercy.**

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

**ALL: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the World, grant us peace, grant us peace, may all people seek the true peace of Christ.**

**Pastor:** We pray that all of God's people may one day be reunited in God's Kingdom without losing anyone. Therefore, we ask Almighty God to

have mercy on all of us, forgive all our sins, and keep us in everlasting life.  
**ALL: Amen.**

**Leader -4:** Through confession and forgiveness, we have prepared our hearts to accept the renewal God offers when we listen to the Word, the Holy Scriptures. The Church now provides the service of praising God in thanksgiving together.

**Pastor:** Please rise as you are able, and we pray.

**Spoken:**

**Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to God's people on Earth.  
You are the One God, Sovereign of the Universe,**

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

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

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

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

**+ Opening Prayer**

**Leader 5:** Eternal Word of God, as we listen to your Word, bless us with understanding and desire to put what we learn into action, seeking your

honor and glory in all we do through Christ our Lord.

**ALL: AMEN.**

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

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



## THE SERVICE OF THE WORD OF GOD

+ First Reading:

**Reader:** \*\*\*\* **If an introduction is needed:**\*\*\*\* Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_. The first reading is Isaiah, chapter 40, verses 1-11, in the NRSV 2021 updated edition. The 1989 pew Bibles have a similar reading on page 667 in the First Testament. Here begins the reading.

### **God's People Are Comforted**

**40** Comfort, O comfort my people,  
says your God.

<sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her

that she has served her term,  
that her penalty is paid,

that she has received from the LORD's hand  
double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup> A voice cries out:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.

<sup>5</sup> Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,  
and all flesh shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

- <sup>6</sup> A voice says, "Cry out!"  
And I said,<sup>[a]</sup> "What shall I cry?"  
All flesh is grass;  
their constancy is like the flower of the field.
- <sup>7</sup> The grass withers; the flower fades,  
[[when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;  
surely the people are grass.
- <sup>8</sup> The grass withers; the flower fades,]]<sup>[b]</sup>  
but the word of our God will stand forever.
- <sup>9</sup> Get you up to a high mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good news;<sup>[c]</sup>  
lift up your voice with strength,  
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;<sup>[d]</sup>  
lift it up, do not fear;  
say to the cities of Judah,  
"Here is your God!"
- <sup>10</sup> See, the Lord GOD comes with might,  
and his arm rules for him;  
his reward is with him  
and his recompense before him.
- <sup>11</sup> He will feed his flock like a shepherd;  
he will gather the lambs in his arms  
and carry them in his bosom  
and gently lead the mother sheep.

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

**ALL:** Thanks be to God!

[Read full chapter](#)

**Footnotes**

- a. [40.6](#) Q ms Gk Vg: MT *and he said*
- b. [40.7–8](#) Q ms Gk lack *when the breath . . . flower fades*
- c. [40.9](#) Or *O herald of good news to Zion*
- d. [40.9](#) Or *O herald of good news to Jerusalem*

(Source: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+40%3A1-11&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.)

**+ Psalm:** \*\*\*\*\* **If an introduction is needed:**\*\*\*\*\* Hello. My name is

\_\_\_ I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_.

Today's Psalm is 85 verses 8-13 with a responsorial verse. Today's response is, " Lord, we wait and long for the fullness of your Kingdom."

**R. Lord, we wait and long for the fullness of your Kingdom.**

I will hear what God proclaims; the LORD—proclaims peace to the people. Salvation is near indeed to those who love and respect God. It is glory dwelling in our land.

**R. Lord, we wait and long for the fullness of your Kingdom.**

Kindness and truth shall meet; justice and peace shall kiss. Truth shall spring from the earth, and justice shall look down from heaven.

**R. Lord, we wait and long for the fullness of your Kingdom.**

The LORD will make us prosper; our land shall yield its harvest. Justice shall walk before the LORD to prepare the way of God's steps, and peace shall follow the way.

**R. Lord, we wait and long for the fullness of your Kingdom.**

+ Second Reading

**Reader:** \*\*\*\*\* **If an introduction is needed:**\*\*\*\*\* Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_. The second reading is in the Second Letter of Peter, chapter 3, verses 8-15a, in the NRSV 2021 updated edition. The 1989 pew Bibles have a similar reading on page 234 in the Second Testament. Here begins the reading.

<sup>8</sup> But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you,<sup>[a]</sup> not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance. <sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be destroyed with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, <sup>12</sup> waiting for and hastening<sup>[c]</sup> the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and destroyed and the elements will melt with fire? <sup>13</sup> But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

## **Final Exhortation and Doxology**

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish, <sup>15</sup> and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

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

**ALL:** Thanks be to God!

### Read full chapter

#### **Footnotes**

- a. 3.9 Other ancient authorities read *on your account*
- b. 3.10 Other ancient authorities read *will not be found or will be burned up*
- c. 3.12 Or *earnestly desiring*

(Source: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=+2+Peter+3%3A8-15&version=NRSVUE>  
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## **+ 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.

### **Opening 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 Mark, chapter 1:1-8, in the NRSV updated edition of 2021. The 1989 pew Bibles have a similar reading on page 34 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 Mark.  
**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 Proclamation of John the Baptist**

**1** The beginning of the good news<sup>[a]</sup> of Jesus Christ.<sup>[b]</sup>

**2** As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,<sup>[c]</sup>

"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,<sup>[d]</sup>  
who will prepare your way,



<sup>3</sup> the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord;  
make his paths straight,"

<sup>4</sup> so John the baptizer appeared<sup>[e]</sup> in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup> And the whole Judean region and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him and were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup> Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup> He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals. <sup>8</sup> I have baptized you with<sup>[f]</sup> water, but he will baptize you with<sup>[g]</sup> the Holy Spirit."

Reader: This is the Gospel of the Lord!

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

[Read full chapter](#)

- a. [1.1](#) Or *gospel*
- b. [1.1](#) Other ancient authorities add *Son of God*
- c. [1.2](#) Other ancient authorities read *in the prophets*
- d. [1.2](#) *Gk before your face*
- e. [1.4](#) Other ancient authorities read *John was baptizing*
- f. [1.8](#) Or *in*
- g. [1.8](#) Or *in*

(Source: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+1%3A1-8&version=NRSVUE>.)

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## Closing 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 - sds the  
 5 Christ! And, to the Ho - ly Spi - rit, for - ev - er You're Our God!  
 9 You brought us out of dark - ness, in - to Your mar - ve - lous Light! Your Word is our  
 13 joy! For this we give You glo - ry, both now and ev - er more!  
 17 For - ev - er we are Yours! For - ev - er we are Yours!

**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 GLBTQISA2ss+ 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**

It is my opinion the preaching tradition and theological influence of every pastor and teacher is firmly grounded in their particular adherence to one of the four schools of Eschatology.

I am grounded in Premillennial and Dispensational schools when it comes to the study of the Last Things.

Basically, the question in Theology is what is this "kingdom" or "realm" we read about and when will it, or has it, or is it happening.

**Spiritual / Metaphorical / Symbolic / Myth and Allegorical** - It is impossible to know anything about God, Jesus, the Church, the Bible. The Bible should not be used to understand the past or to anticipate anything in the future. The Bible is an interesting collection of pieces of literature from a wide spectrum of time and place. It is useful in as much as one can find some good ethical teachings in it. The concept of a "kingdom of Christ" in the past, or present, or future is simply a misreading of allegorical texts and should be abandoned. Life goes on so be nice to others and they will be nice to you. Reach out in peace and you will establish peace. Be forgiving and everyone will follow your example and forgiveness will be our policy and goodness the results everywhere in the world.

**Amillennial** - There will never be a literal, future kingdom of Christ for a "mille" thousand "annus" years. The "millennium" is interpreted to mean an indeterminate period of time from the life of Christ until the end of the world. This position is held by the Roman Church, and most "mainline" Protestant Churches. This interpretation began in the middle 5th Century. The institutional church is the expression of the Kingdom of Christ but only influences those who want to be influenced and they are assured of a spiritual forever not fully understood but called Heaven. At times churches have threatened those who do not want to comply with an after-death existence of Hell, but, frankly these churches have never proved or disproved that Heaven or Hell exist as far as non-believers critique their proof.

**Postmillennial** - The church age is the "millennium" though not measured out as 1,000 years. While this school of interpretation has seen some evolution, the current understanding can be traced back to European colonization of non-European countries and even continents "for Christ." Even more recently, beginning in the 1930's and energized by the second half of the 1970's, this group of churches and parachurch organizations is causing social upheaval and pulling back on Scientific and academic progress in the name of "conservatism." This school of Theology encourages the use of all levels of government as the instrument to force pagan, non-conservative-christian, and all forms of social liberal people into compliance with "Christian" laws. It is assumed most people need "Christian laws" and policies to form people into the mindset ordained by God and so a theocracy can be formed. Currently the "MAGA" movement is drawing organizational strength from Postmillennial, Theocratic, Autocratic, "Christian" White Nationalist thinkers, movers, and shakers. One very important aspect of this form of "Christianity" is the idea that Christ cannot return to the Earth to end the world, the millennium, until every human is converted to the uniquely "USA," "evangelical," "conservative," "christian" religion under their leadership. Much of this comes from a few verses in Scripture, Acts 3:19-22

<sup>19</sup> Repent, therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, <sup>20</sup> so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord and that he may send the Messiah<sup>□</sup> appointed for you, that is, Jesus, <sup>21</sup> who must remain in heaven until the time of universal restoration that God announced long ago through his holy prophets. <sup>22</sup> Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you from your own people a prophet like me. You must listen to whatever he tells you. (NRSVUE <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+3%3A19-22&version=NRSVUE> )

This "times of refreshing" is understood as the resurrection from the dead. Therefore, to usher it is as fast as possible, laws must be enacted from Church councils, to city councils, to state houses, to political party platforms, to federal law, to international laws. All law must be brought into compliance with this particular form of "Christianity" so those who refuse to comply may be prosecuted, jailed, and or executed so Christ may return.

**Premillennial** - This school of Theology has roots to the Apostles and the writers of books of the Bible from Moses to John the Beloved Apostle. As the title implies, a simple reading

of Scripture at face value situates many prophecies as yet unfulfilled. Over one hundred prophecies were literally fulfilled in Christ's first coming to the Earth. It is reasonable to expect the remaining prophecies will also be literally fulfilled in due time, exactly as written. The church is not the Kingdom, the world is not the Kingdom. The Kingdom will be the Kingdom when it is established "on Earth as it is in Heaven" as we have prayed all our lives. During this intermittent time "all authority in heaven and earth" has been given to Jesus and he is building his Church. The Church on Earth is the Kingdom in the sense of bringing the Gospel to absolutely everyone and proclaiming the "Blessed Hope" the soon coming return of Christ to end the Church Age by resurrecting and transforming millions and returning to Paradise with them "in the air." Seven years later Jesus will return this time to the Earth, resurrect the House of Israel, and establish the physical Kingdom on Earth with the central capital being Jerusalem on Temple Mount.

During the current age it is clearly understood that Humanity is aligned with fallen Lucifer as "the god of this World" and the "ruler of this Age" (John 12:31) (2 Cor. 4:4) Satan is leading the whole world astray. (Rev. 12:9) Satan is the prince of the powers of the air, that is the fallen spirit world. (Ephs. 2:1-2)

Every person has the free will to choose whom they will serve during this age.

**(Matt. 28:18-20)** <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." <sup>21</sup>

**(Matt. 16:18b)** I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

What do we do???? First, be the church. Do not attend a church service, be the church with your service to all and everyone. Explain to people your hope and motivation to serve them in any way they need, that you are filled with a blessed assurance that Christ is coming and that he will establish his Kingdom. Explain the answer to their question: "What kind of god would allow all this sickness, death, crime, war, murders, all this sin?" The answer: the god of this world system is behind all of this and unfortunately he is gathering many sheep. Jesus describes him as the thief who comes into the flock to capture, crush, kill and destroy the sheep. (read John Chapter 10) People are seduced by what they think is power, security, treasure, satisfaction, and abundance. Then they have to fight to keep it and they turn to the world system.

The God of Creation, Who sent His only begotten Son to redeem us from all this chaos, allows us to make our choices, out of love so we are not bound unwillingly to God's will. We are free to choose and the choices we are making will ultimately steer our eschaton, our final things and events.

Who is driving the car of my life? Only I can answer that question. Perhaps I have given the steering wheel and the keys to the god of this age, "aion" this world system "kosmos." My aim is to daily choose to give the steering wheel and the keys to the Good Shepherd, the Bishop of Souls, the King of Hearts who love Him, the Guardian of my Soul, the Saviour

of the World. Christ has come, Christ is Risen, Christ will come again.

## Here is a quick Premillennial understanding of today's readings.

Today's readings are eternal in scope, as shown with Scripture prophecies yet to be fulfilled: Isaiah 40, verses seven and eight: "The grass withers, the flowers fade away, but the word of our God stands forever." The promises God has made that have not been fulfilled will surely be completed to every last detail. Why? God was here before we were born and will continue after we die; God is forever.

In the following verses, the promise is made that His reward will be with Him when He comes. Later, we read that "all the angels will be with Jesus" and all the dead He has raised and the living He has transformed will be with Him when He comes to establish His kingdom on earth as it is in Heaven. The angels and the resurrected are his "reward" that will be with Him.

Isaiah 40:9-11

<sup>9</sup> Get you up to a high mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good news;<sup>[c]</sup>  
lift up your voice with strength,  
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;<sup>[d]</sup>  
lift it up, do not fear;  
say to the cities of Judah,  
"Here is your God!"  
<sup>10</sup> See, the Lord GOD comes with might,  
and his arm rules for him;  
his reward is with him  
and his recompense before him.  
<sup>11</sup> He will feed his flock like a shepherd;  
he will gather the lambs in his arms  
and carry them in his bosom  
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Today's readings are also present and in the moment in scope. Psalm 85 is our response to these promises.

There is the continuation of the theme of the Good Shepherd we had last week continued in today's readings. This first song asks the Good Shepherd to rescue the Human Race from all the cruelty we enact upon each other. Save us, O Lord, from war, corrupt governments, failure in the Church, and the breakdown of relationships, and you can go on with your list. Save us, O Lord, from Racism, Homophobia, Transphobia, fear of gender expression, fear of bisexual family structure, fear of polyamorous families, from all the ways your Holy Spirit is calling us to a better society. People of fear and control are trying to stop the progress of the Holy Spirit. We need an intervention today brought to us by the Good Shepherd of Israel, the

Shepherd of Souls, the Head of the Church His Body. In this first song, we make a plea for His assistance.

It seems almost impossible given the current condition of people's choices – war, power, greed, and corruption of every kind. We, however, listen for the voice of the Good Shepherd, as we talked about last Sunday in Ezek. 34:11-17 God shepherds those who listen for God's presence and make themselves available to God's instruction. God will establish the House of Israel in her land in peace and rule as the Good Shepherd King over all the earth. We understand how significant it was when Jesus identified Himself as the Good Shepherd in John, Chapter 10. He alone can give us the peace that is eternal. Only Jesus can give eternal peace as he promised in John 14:27: <sup>27</sup> Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

In this present moment, we pray with the psalmist: "Lord, we wait and long for the fullness of your Kingdom." Then, in His Kingdom, "justice, kindness, and peace shall meet." (Psalm 85:8-13)

THE GOSPEL READING: John, the baptizer, was a cousin of Jesus about six months older than Jesus. John and his family, the High Priest Zachariah, his mother, Elizabeth, and many others believed the prophecies. They understood their son and the son of Joseph and Mary were the two who fulfilled the prophecies of the one to Prepare The Way of the Lord. The one who would be the Child sent and given whose Name would be Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God Everlasting, and Prince of Peace, and his Name is Jesus.

So often, we hear it said; this is taking too long. Or, forget about this second-coming myth. Or, we don't need to hang on religious mythology that upholds false hope, etc.. These are false teachers, misguided churches, and false religions who have given up on the faithful Shepherd of Souls. IN THE SECOND READING, we are told not to disbelieve but to wait for God's timing.

2 Peter 3:8-10

<sup>8</sup> But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, <sup>[a]</sup> not wanting any to perish but

all to come to repentance. <sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be destroyed with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.<sup>[b]</sup>

The events described refer to the Kingdom's end after the SECOND COMING and after Jesus rules the Kingdom on Earth for 1,000 years. Then, the Armies of the Anti-Christ will be destroyed, and God will reform the Earth and make it new.

FINALLY, we are waiting for the end of the Church Age, the great "catching up" in Latin rapiemur, named the "Rapture." We are to wait with our lamps trimmed and ready and filled with the oil of the Holy Spirit.

We may wait with perfect peace. 2 Peter 3:14, 15 Final Exhortation and Doxology

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish, <sup>15</sup> and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

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

**+ The Prayers of the People**

**Leader – 3:** Having heard the Word Of God, we pray to God in Christ through the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit with communal and shared prayers. Our response after each prayer will be: Lord, hear our prayer.

**Leader – 3:** We pray that people will turn away from violence in all forms of destruction; we pray to the Lord.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Leader – 3:** The war in Ukraine continues past the 610th day. Attention to this crisis is fading as the public looks to other wars, too. Today marks

the eighth Sunday of the War between Hamas and Israel. We are grateful for progress toward peace, but the unresolved conflicts are deep and dangerous. There are roughly thirty-three Countries at war this morning. We continue to pray that World Leaders work together to end all wars and find diplomatic solutions to conflict; we pray to the Lord.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

See this website for more information: <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/countries-currently-at-war>

**Leader – 2:** We thank you, Lord, for the praise reports of those who have experienced healing. We continue to pray for the people we know who are facing treatments, surgeries, hospice, and recovery. We also pray for the family of Christopher Brockway and all families who will go through these holidays and Holy Days for the first year following the death of loved ones. May they find the deep and lasting peace that only Christ can provide. We add to this list those we hold in our silent prayers and all who have asked for our prayers; we pray to the Lord.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

(<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/02/02/fact-sheet-on-one-year-anniversary-of-reignited-cancer-moonshot-biden-harris-administration-announces-new-actions-to-end-cancer-as-we-know-it/> )

**Leader – 2:** We continue to pray that leaders of world Governments will recognize and respond to the environmental emergency of Climate change with compassion and plans for change that are short and long-term in scope; we pray to the Lord.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Leader:** At this time, everyone may add silent prayers for yourself or others, prayers of thanksgiving, praise, or whatever is on your mind. If you share a prayer aloud, please speak loud enough so everyone can hear you. We begin with \_\_\_\_\_

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

**ALL: Amen**






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

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

**Leader:** At this time, we show our gratitude to God and our dedication to the Church of Jesus Christ, His Body present in the World, by offering our financial gifts and support for this ministry. Every organization has actual expenses, including but not limited to utilities, building upkeep, insurance, taxes, and so on. In the United States, each Church is a private organization and does not receive public funding. Together, we keep this ministry available to our local and International participants by keeping it financially viable.

There are many convenient ways to participate with your donation. Anyone



may use the QRCode  or press control + click or tap on this link: [Donate to Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ](#) in the bulletin or mail a check to Ray Of Hope Church, 380 W. First St. Elmira, NY 14901. People in the Chapel may use the envelopes and the donation box next to the door before, during, or after this worship event.

Finally, the electronic links are always available in posted bulletins, on Facebook, and on our website. So please give what you can, but never give your last.

At this time, we also prepare our Holy Communion Altars and Tables at home and in the Chapel. Internet viewers, please turn to page three and follow the instructions highlighted in yellow under leader two.

We still use individual communion kits in the Chapel as part of our COVID

safety protocol.

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

( \*\* Viewers on the Internet, please read the following statement. \*\* Communion is a gift for the worship community to celebrate together, an action of the local Church. However, if this is an extraordinary situation, and you believe the Holy Spirit is calling you to celebrate at a time other than the live webcast, yield to the direction of the Holy Spirit. Hopefully, you can join us in a live virtual worship event soon. (\*This practice policy was changed on Gaudete Sunday, December 13, 2020.\*) )

**OFFERTORY SONG** **Change My Heart Oh God** Words and Music by Eddie Espinosa © 1982 Mercy / Vineyard Publishing (Admin. by Integrity Music) CCLI Song # 1565. Used with permission through our Christian Copyright License Incorporated License Number 706121 and Christian Copyright License Incorporated Streaming Plus License 21787152.

**Leader -2:** (\* **Improvise a prayer for the offerings received, giving thanks and praise.**\*) (When your prayer is complete, please say:) " Please rise as you are able to conclude the Service Of The Word Of God with a doxology."

(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**

**Leader:** Please gently hold the communion kit for the following two prayers. Viewers at home pour your wine or grape juice into your cup if you have not already done so. Then, add a small amount of water

to the cup. With this water, we remember Jesus is human. With this fruit of the vine, we remember He is divine forever.

**Pastor:** Blessed are you, Lord, God of all Creation. Through your goodness, we have this bread, and 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 bread will become for us the Bread From Heaven (Exodus 16:2, Psalm 78:24, John 6:32, 41,50,58), and 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), and together they will be the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the very Body and Blood Of Christ (John 6:54-56; 1Corinthians 10:16).

**ALL: Blessed be God forever.**

(Other titles include the Bread of the Angels (Psalm 78:25), the Bread of God (John 6:33), 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)

**Pastor:** Please set down your communion kit.

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

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

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

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

**Leader:** You may relax your arms and hands.

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

**(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 Reception of Holy Communion**

**BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD BEHOLD HIM WHO TAKES BEHOLD THE BREAD OF LIFE AND THE CUP**

**Lord, you make me worthy to receive you and by your Word, I am healed.**

**Pastor:** Open your kit and receive Holy Communion at this time. The Gift of God for the People of God....

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

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

**PRIVATE PRAYER FOR A SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.**

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

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

Spiritual Communion Prayer from the Episcopal National Cathedral Prayer Book.

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

## + The Lord's Prayer

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

**ALL: Our Father, who art in Heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on Earth as it is in Heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us; and  
lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,**

**forever and ever. Amen**

### + Final Doxology

**Pastor:** Together, we pray:

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

## Doxology/Amen!

To my friends in Christ  
at Ray Of Hope Church

"Music For Worship"

Music by: Gaude! Liturgical Arts  
October 31, 1993

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

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

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

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### + Sign Of Peace

**Veronica Floyd, Moderator:** The Peace of the Lord Jesus Christ is with you.

**ALL:** And also with you.

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

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

**A silent prayer one might pray during Holy Communion:**

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

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

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

**COMMUNION SONG: Like A Shepherd. Words and Music by Robert J. Dufford, SJ.** Text: Based on Isaiah 40:9ff; Ezekiel 34:11ff; Matthew 11:28ff. Text and music © 1976, Robert J. Dufford, SJ, and OCP. All rights reserved. Glory & Praise second edition #708. Onelicense Song #80672. Used with Print Permission and Streaming License A-74127.



**General Offering** for the week of October 22 \$78.00 (some people give monthly rather than weekly)  
Attendance 9

**General Offering** for the week of October 29 \$1743.00 (some people give monthly rather than weekly)  
Attendance 12

**General Offering** for the week of November 5 \$108.00 (some people give monthly rather than weekly)  
Attendance 10

**General Offering** for the week of November 12 \$207.00 (some people give monthly rather than weekly)  
Attendance 12

**General Offering** for the week of November 19 \$TBA (some people give monthly rather than weekly)  
Attendance 6

**\*\*Special Gifts\*\***

**New Gifts This Week:**

**Recent Gifts:**

Ed Askins donated time and labor this week, caulking, sanding, and painting exterior siding and window trim. Ed also oversaw the repair of the broken storm window from the second floor on the front of the building. Ed donated \$168.00 for the liability insurance. Thank you Ed.

There is a new door installed at the exit from the Carley Room. An anonymous donation of \$675.57 was made for the purchase and installation of a new secure exit door after the previous door was vandalized. We are very grateful to the donor and thankful for the skills of Jerry and Travis who installed the new door.

Lisa Frost donated a new coffee maker that has a thermal 12 cup stainless steel coffee carafe. We will enjoy the coffee staying hot during our social hour. Thank you Lisa.

April Struhm donated the docking station for the Toughbook computer that will be used for new music compositions. Thank you April.

Kaiden has been donating many extra hours of help this week, especially with our new project of Wednesday Noon Mass, Kaiden has to set up the building on Wednesday as she sets up for Sunday. Kaiden has helped in the background with many extra tasks this week and we are grateful.

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

## **UPCOMING EVENTS ON OUR CALENDAR**

\*\* See the Q.R. Code on the last page.\*\*

November 26, Advent, week 1 **Eschatology - 3 of 6** (backed up one week) - World Peace Sunday

**NOVEMBER 26, SUNDAY Gaudete Party exchange NAMES DUE.**

Tuesday, November 28, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Bible Enrichment

Wednesday, November 29, Noon Traditional Mass in English - in person.

November 30, Thursday, 3:00 p.m. Council Meeting

**December 3, Advent, week 2 – Hope, World AIDS DAY Celebration**

**Eschatology - 4 of 6**

Tuesday, December 5, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Bible Enrichment

Wednesday, December 6, Noon Traditional Mass in English - in person.

**Thursday, December 7 5:00 p.m. Hanukkah Night 1**

**Friday, December 8 5:00 p.m. Hanukkah Night 2**

**Saturday, December 9 5:00 p.m. Hanukkah Night 3**

**December 10, GAUDETE SUNDAY – GAUDETE PARTY – Joy, Pride**

**Sunday in the Winter Eschatology - 5 of 6**

**Sunday, December 10, 5:00 p.m. Hanukkah Night 4**

**Monday, December 11, 5:00 p.m. Hanukkah Night 5**

**Tuesday, December 12, 5:00 p.m. Hanukkah Night 6**

Tuesday, December 12, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Bible Enrichment

Wednesday, December 13, Noon Traditional Mass in English - in person.

**Wednesday, December 13, 5:00 p.m. Hanukkah Night 7**

**Thursday, December 14, 5:00 p.m. Hanukkah Night 8**

**Sunday, December 17, Advent, week 4 – Love, Holy Women and Mother's Day in the Winter Eschatology - 6 of 6**

Tuesday, December 19, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Bible Enrichment

Wednesday, December 20, Noon Traditional Mass in English - in person.

**December 24, Sunday, 10:30 A.M. NATIVITY – Celebration of the Birth of Jesus.**

December 29, Friday, 2:00 p.m. Council Meeting

As for the Gaudete Party exchange we agreed to the following: Our practice this year for the Gaudete gift party exchange will be as follows so we can incorporate both on-line and in person participants.

Anyone who wishes to participate in the \$10 limit gift exchange needs to submit their name to the Moderator/Clerk - Veronica Floyd either via email (veeflo@aol.com) or just let her know at an upcoming Worship service or Bible Enrichment. If you are an on line participant, Veronica will need your mailing address to pass onto the person who receives your name.

Participant names must be received no later than Sunday November 26th. Veronica will take all names and put in a bowl and match the names of participants with the names she draws out of the bowl. Veronica will contact each participant and let them know whose name they have no later than Sunday November 26th. If you receive the name of a person who is participating on-line, you will need to send them their gift via mail or delivery service so it reaches them by Saturday December 9th. (An option may be to find a small gift item on Amazon and have it sent directly to the person). The gift exchange will take place on Gaudete Sunday December 10th.

Thank you  
Veronica

June 1, 2023, was the TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF THE ELMIRA CHAPEL.



<http://www.rayofhopechurch.com/P2023-Bookmark.htm> In celebration, we launched the new mobile-friendly version of our website.

\*\*\*\*\* INTERESTING WEB INFORMATION TO KNOW:

<https://www.loreal.com/en/articles/commitments/our-partners/>

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**NOTE: Whitney Tipton** recommended the 2016 Documentary "13th" which may be found on Netflix. The caption reads; "In this thought-provoking documentary, scholars, activists and politicians analyze the criminalization of African Americans and the U. S. prison boom. I have watched it and found it to be very informative and I recommend it as well. Thank you, Whitney.



## We Are Sent Forth To Serve

**Pastor:** **SAINTS** The Lord is with you!

**ALL: And also with you!**

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

**ALL: Amen**

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

**Leader-4:** We go forth in peace and Love to serve all 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.**

**CLOSING SONG:** **NTBK# 51 Majesty** Words and Music by Jack Hayford © 1981 New Spring For use solely with the SongSelect® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com CCLI Song #1527 CCLI License #706121 and Christian Copyright License Incorporated Streaming Plus License 21787152.

POSTLUDE: Organ How Great Thou Art.

**BROTHER:** All of our freedom of Scientific inquiry, social studies, psychological research, Biblical research, and laws came to us by voting. All of it can be overturned by vote; that is how a democracy works.

Religion is invoked in the presentations of the rationale for reversing rights gained in social, educational, healthcare, and even religious settings. The only way to protect what we have is to stay informed and involved in the process. (Br. Benedict 8-5-23)

**Scientific Discovery, Academic Knowledge, the Holy Scriptures,**

**and Spirituality are Universal and Unified. (Br. Benedict 8-6-23)**

**We have to EDUCATE and ACTIVATE the young adult LGBTQSINAE2ss+ Electorate! This is an Electorate Emergency. This is not a drill! (Br. Benedict 8-6-23)**

=====STUDY TEXT=====

The Holy Quran's Message To Jews & Christians. Sixth Edition 2001  
Compiled and Edited by: Dr. Arafat El-Ashi COPYRIGHT © 1996 By Arafat El-Ashi First published Dec. 1995 5,000 copies Second reprint February 1996 10,000 = Third Edition May 1996 10,000 = Fourth Edition June 1997 10,000 = Fifth Edition 1999 10,000 = Sixth Edition 2001 10,000 = Printed in Canada All Rights Reserved. For permission to reprint contact the author at Muslim World League  
191 The West Mall, Suite# 1018  
Etobicoke, Ontario  
M9C 5K8, Canada

EL-Ashi, Arafat. The Holy Quran's Message to Jews & Christians . UNKNOWN. Kindle Edition.

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Visit and follow us on our new TikTok Page: [Right Click Here](#) Here is the link if you need to copy and paste it into your browser:  
<https://www.tiktok.com/@rayofhopechurchlgbtqgia? t=8UgoVv5ekqg& r=1> Thank you, Heather and Michael for making this project possible and producing our videos.

=====

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

**\*\*\* Millennial Series by Dr. John F. Walvoord**  
<https://walvoord.com/series/328>

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. Isaiah 9:7 This is all God's fault, God's design, God's doing from start to end.

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



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

The Third Sunday of Pride, 2019

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

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

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

Everyone may 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.

You are not required to 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 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 it, 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 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.

After extensive consideration, I 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 educate people about this gift. I have said **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 to that life.

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

We begin by inviting those on the fringe of Society, those pushed aside, poor, not accepted, sick, and who need God's help in extraordinary ways.

We welcome and bring the Eucharist to everyone told they cannot receive it by other Denominations. In conclusion, to everyone 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, revised 3-3-2023)

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

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



## Ray Of Hope Church Weekly Schedule

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

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

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

### **Policy Concerning Minors at Events**

Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ welcomes all youth and children to worship with us and participate in our activities. We endeavor to provide a safe and non-threatening environment for all children. To this end, we have a Policy Concerning Minors at Events, which is available from the Clerk upon request and is on our website;  
[http://www.rayofhopechurch.com/Minors\\_At\\_Events.htm](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 as we try to do our part to stop the spread of COVID-19. Call for an appointment if you want some time to come in and pray. Our regular services will be blended with live participation in the Chapel and live on Skype and Facebook Live. To read the information on how to use Skype to participate with us, [Click Here](#).. Visit our Facebook page [Click Here](#). 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)

