



CALL TO WORSHIP

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

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

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



WE GATHER TO PRAISE THE LORD AND GIVE THANKS

+ Pastoral Welcome

Leader – 1: Hello. My name is _____, and I am in the City of ___ in the State of _____. 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. We welcome our visitors and guests here in the Chapel and online through Skype and Facebook. To be added to our email list, email rayofhopechurch@aol.com and write "email list" in the Subject.

Visitors in the Chapel can fill out the email information form at the hospitality table and place it in the offerings/donations box on the wall.

Tonight we are celebrating Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the Season of Lent. You may decide to participate in some or all the parts of the worship event as you feel comfortable. We also assist people at various stages of visual impairment by announcing all instructions, page, and song numbers and using a psalm response verse.

Leader-2: Hello. My name is _____, and I am in the City of ___

in the State of _____.

The bulletin order of worship and the music supplement for today are available in three ways. On Facebook Live, right-click the "Featured Links" in the window. On Skype, right-click the "Order of Worship" and "Music Supplement" posted in the Chat window. On our website find the large purple box labeled **ASH WEDNESDAY** WORSHIP INFORMATION at www.rayofhopechurch.com. Take a moment now and gather these items. We will start shortly.

(**Silent Prayer*)



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

Leader – 2: Thank you for choosing to spend this time with us. You are as welcome here as Christ Jesus himself. In Romans Chapter 15:7, the Scriptures instruct us to:

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

Leader -1: Glorify God by introducing yourself and welcoming the people around you. **During COVID, we may wave across the room and into the camera for the Internet.

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

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

Pastor: Peace be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

1) Opening Song: **Hosea**

Text and Music Weston Priory and Gregory Norbet

Contributors: Gregory Norbet, Weston Priory

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2) **Prayerful prose and lyrics based upon Psalm 51**

O God, have mercy on me,
in your goodness, wash away my sin.

Cleanse me even daily of my faults,
and e-rase my failures for-ever.

My conscience keeps me mindful of my failures.
My faults are always be-fore me.

I thank you for the path of rescue,
a path you provide to everyone.

You hear my con-fession, even now;
you understand my deepest thoughts.

From the depths of my heart, I ask for-givenness,
From You and all your people.

Fill my heart with your truth;
In the secret of my depths, teach me wisdom.

May I be pure and clean in my heart;
and washed whiter than snow.

I thank you with joy for your help.
I praise you for giving me strength.

I bless you for helping me stand.

I praise you for the gift of your Spirit.

(** please rise as you are able**)

Praise God, the Christ, and Holy Spirit.

Both now and forever, Amen.

3) **Leader-3:** Hello. My name is _____, and I am in the City of _____ in the State of _____. Please pray silently the prayer I am about to say. O God, we bless and praise you for always being present and ready to forgive us. We pray for everyone in the World tonight who needs your mercy and forgiveness. We pray that everyone will realize who You are and turn to you for love and mercy. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

(**please be seated**)

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

The Scripture reading is in the Book of Genesis, chapter 3, verses 17b-24. We are reading from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition of © 2021 (See the citation below the reading). The New Revised Standard Version pew bibles have a similar reading on page 3. Here begins the reading:

God was speaking to Adam and his wife Eve, saying because you have partaken of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil....

“about which I commanded you,

‘You shall not eat of it,’

cursed is the ground because of you;

in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life;

¹⁸ thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;

and you shall eat the plants of the field.

¹⁹ By the sweat of your face

you shall eat bread

until you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken;
you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.”

²⁰ The man named his wife Eve^[c] because she was the mother of all living. ²¹ And the LORD God made garments of skins for the man^[d] and for his wife and clothed them.

²² Then the LORD God said, “See, the humans have become like one of us, knowing good and evil, and now they might reach out their hands and take also from the tree of life and eat and live forever”— ²³ therefore the LORD God sent them forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which they were taken. ²⁴ He drove out the humans, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a sword flaming and turning to guard the way to the tree of life.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord!

ALL: Thanks be to God!

Footnotes

- a. 3.5 Or *gods*
- b. 3.17 Or *to Adam*
- c. 3.20 In Heb *Eve* resembles the word for *living*
- d. 3.21 Or *for Adam*

(Source:

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+3&version=NRSVUE>)

Scripture quotations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition.

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5) Homily – “short summary.”

The Human Race was not supposed to partake of the knowledge of good and evil. However, God has always given us free will. We chose “to be like the gods” and listened to Lucifer, who knew the difference between spiritual and physical death. According to the Scriptures, we chose the knowledge of good and evil over the wisdom of God. Yay! Look at the mess now that we “know better” or so the temptation

promised. Now we live with the knowledge of good and evil; we live with our ability to handle this extraordinary knowledge and the consequences of human choices made every second of life on Earth. In short, we have not begun to live yet; we have been stuck in our self-will and choices.

The reception of Ashes is a practice, not a Teaching, not a Dogma, not a Doctrine. There is nothing magical about it. It is an action that transforms our remembering into something we do – place dust on our bodies. Customary: “Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.” I have two issues with this custom, first the word “you” rather than “we.” The second issue is our return to dust is not the end of our existence. Every human shall rise from the dead, and it does not matter what religion they practiced or if they did or did not believe. Religious practice and faith (or lack of either) do not change the fact that God said we shall all be raised from the dead. Similarly, we have no impact on the presence of the Universe with its billions of galaxies before or after our short life on this planet.

Therefore, I like to practice the distribution of Ashes with the words “We remember that we are dust and to dust we shall return; but in Christ Jesus, we shall rise to new life.”

You may receive ashes on the forehead or the back of your hand. If you wish to apply the ashes to your partner, family member, or friend who may be with you, you may come forward and do so. Here is how it is done....

6) SPECIAL MUSIC Sung by Mrs. Christina McLaughlin: I Surrender All

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7) Opportunity to receive ashes.

8) Prayerful prose and lyrics based on Psalm 91

When we dwell in the shelter of the Most High .
When we abide in the shade of the Al-mighty .
We pray , Lord, You are our refuge ,
our stronghold , our God in whom we trust .

We pray You will pro- tect us from the snare
of the hunter who seeks to find us;
You promise to conceal as with your pinions ;
and protect us as under your wings .

We fear not the terrors of the night
nor the weapons that fly by day ,
nor disease that hides in the shadows
nor the scourge that ravages at noon .

Though thousands fall at our side ,
ten thousand fall on our right ,
We trust we will not be ap- proached ,
God's faithfulness will shield and pro- tect us.

We open our eyes and under- stand .
We see how the wicked are re- paid .
 We who pray , Lord You are our refuge .
We have made the Most High our haven .

We pray no evil shall fall ,
no plague come near where we dwell .
 God has com- manded the angels ,
to keep us in all God's ways .

The Angels shall sup- port as on their wings
lest we strike our foot on a stone .
On at- tacking vipers we will tread
and trample attacking lions and asps .

****God declares; “You love me, so I will bless you,
pro-tect you for you know my name.
When you call Me I will answer: “I am with you,”
I will save you in distress and give you honor.”**

With length of Life I will bless you.
You will see my saving power.

(** please rise as you are able**)

Praise God, the Christ, and Holy Spirit.
both now and forever, Amen.

9) Closing Prayer: Lisa Frost. O God, we thank you and bless you for this prayer and meditation time together. We bless you for bringing us to the beginning of our journey through the Season of Lent. We pray through Christ, Our Lord.

ALL – Amen

10) Final blessing: Veronica Floyd: The Lord is with you!

ALL: And also with you!

Veronica Floyd: May Almighty God bless us: In the Name of God, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen

11) Sending Forth: April Struhm: We go forth in peace and love to serve all the people, and the Lord ...

ALL: Thanks be to God.

12) Final Song: Come To Me by Gregory Norbet and the Weston Priory, the Benedictine Foundation of Vermont. It is in today's music edition. Tune:

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