



**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 you 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.

March 14, 2021 – Laetare Sunday, Rose Sunday in Lent Wk 4  
Women’s History 2nd Sunday.

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:** 2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23 pg. 420

**Psalm:** 122 with responsorial in this bulletin.

**Second Reading:** Ephesians 2: 1-10 NRSV 2<sup>nd</sup> Test. Pg. 192

**Gospel:** John 3:13-21 NRSV 2<sup>ND</sup> Testament page 94

**\*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\*)** Lent Week IV  
Laetare Sunday, Rejoice Sunday, Covenant: Salvation by trusting God,  
Women's History Month 2nd Sunday.

**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.”(Titus2:13 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**

**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 good God, you continue to give us yourself in moments of life and the beauty of Creation. We have our own ways of ignoring your presence and somehow thinking our ways are far more important. Lord, have mercy.

**ALL: Lord, have mercy.**

**Leader -4:** Christ Jesus, Our Lord, you are present in your church. You call us to proclaim the glory of God, to praise God, to live for God, and to guide others to God. We seem to be skilled at filling our days and nights with things and agendas that keep moving you down the list of priorities. Christ, have mercy.

**ALL: Christ, have mercy.**

**Leader -4:** Holy Spirit, you are with us as the Helper, the Comforter, our Advocate, our Intercessor – Counselor, our Strengthener, the one who will always Standby us. Believe us when we tell You, we actually

need your help to clear our minds so we are aware of You. Lord, have mercy.

**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 Second Chronicles, chapter 36, verses 14-16 and 19-23. It is on page 420 in the front of the NRSV Bible. Here begins the reading:

In those days, all the princes of Judah, the priests, and the people added infidelity to infidelity, practicing all the abominations of the nations and polluting the LORD's temple which he had consecrated in Jerusalem.

Early and often did the LORD, the God of their fathers, send his messengers to them, for he had compassion on his people and his dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, despised his warnings, and scoffed at his prophets, until the anger of the LORD against his people was so inflamed that there was no remedy.

Their enemies burnt the house of God, tore down the walls of Jerusalem, set all its palaces afire, and destroyed all its precious objects.

Those who escaped the sword were carried captive to Babylon, where they became servants of the king of the Chaldeans and his sons until the kingdom of the Persians came to power.

All this was to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah: "Until the land has retrieved its lost sabbaths, during all the time it lies waste it shall have rest

while seventy years are fulfilled.”

In the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia,  
in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah,  
the LORD inspired King Cyrus of Persia  
to issue this proclamation throughout his kingdom,  
both by word of mouth and in writing:

“Thus says Cyrus, king of Persia:

All the kingdoms of the earth  
the LORD, the God of heaven, has given to me,  
and he has also charged me to build him a house  
in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

Whoever, therefore, among you belongs to any part of his people,  
let him go up, and may his God be with him!”

**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 122, with selected verses. The  
response today is “I rejoiced when I heard them say, let us go to the house  
of the Lord. Alleluia. Alleluia.”

**Refrain: I rejoiced when I heard them say, let us go to the  
house of the Lord. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

I rejoiced because they said to me,  
"We will go up to the house of the LORD."  
And now we have set foot  
within your gates, O Jerusalem.

**Refrain: I rejoiced when I heard them say, let us go to the  
house of the Lord. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

To the house of the LORD the tribes go up,  
the tribes of the LORD,  
According to the decree for Israel,  
to give thanks to the name of the LORD.



In the house of the LORD are set up judgment seats,  
seats for the house of David.

**Refrain: I rejoiced when I heard them say, let us go to the house of the Lord. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!

May those who love you prosper!

May peace be within your walls,  
prosperity in your buildings.

**Refrain: I rejoiced when I heard them say, let us go to the house of the Lord. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

Because of my relatives and friends

I will say "Peace be within you!"

Because of the house of the LORD, our God,  
I will pray for your good.

**Refrain: I rejoiced when I heard them say, let us go to the house of the Lord. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

## + 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 Ephesians, chapter 2, verses 1-10. It is on page 192 in the second testament, in the back of the NRSV Bible. Here begins the reading:

From Death to Life

2 You were dead through the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. 3 All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which God

loved us 5 even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—**by grace you have been saved**— 6 and raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the ages to come God might show the immeasurable riches of grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For **by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God**— 9 not the result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

**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!

**Reader:** The Gospel reading is on page 94 in the back of the NRSV Bible. The reading is in the Gospel of John, chapter 3, verse 13 through 21.

**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.**

**Reader:** 13 No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. 14 And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

**\*\*NOTE: JESUS IS SPEAKING. Jesus is therefore referring to someone else or he would say ME and I.\*\***

16 “For God so loved the world that He (God) gave His (the) only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him (God) may not perish but may have eternal life.

17 “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him (God). 18 Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. 19 And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. 20 For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. 21 But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

**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  
 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!

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### + 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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“The names of the Sundays come directly from the first words  
used in the *Introit* or Entrance Antiphons in the original Latin:

**LAETARE:**

**Latin:** Lætare Jerusalem: et conventum facite omnes qui diligitis  
eam: gaudete cum lætitia, qui in tristitia fuistis: ut exsultetis, et  
satiemini ab uberibus consolationis vestræ.

**English:** Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her. Be joyful, all  
who were in mourning; exult and be satisfied at her consoling  
breast.

**GAUDETE:**

**Latin:** Gaudete in Domino semper: iterum dico, gaudete. Modestia vestra nota sit omnibus hominibus: Dominus enim prope est. Nihil solliciti sitis: sed in omni oratione et obsecratione cum gratiarum actione petitiones vestrae innotescant apud Deum.

**English:** Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.

Both *Gaudete* and *Laetare* are Latin verbs for rejoice, but with slightly different meanings. James-Charles Noonan, Jr. in his *The Church Visible* separates them in this manner:

*Gaudete* means expressed or exuberant joy. *Laetare* means internal joy, a joy of anticipation felt within the solemn season of Lent (p. 209).” Source:

<https://www.catholicculture.org/commentary/laetare-jerusalem-rejoice/>

**We also take this Sunday as a day to Rejoice in the Love of Our Lord made known to us specifically through the church in the second half of the Twentieth Century and into our time. We take the time to especially thank God for the message of the Gospel freely given to persons of every sexual orientation and every gender expression known to the Human Race. We thank God for freeing us from the teachings and practices of religious traditions that would exclude us by a misrepresentation of the Sacred Texts in the Holy Bible.**

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Brother’s Laetare Covenant. On Sunday Laetare Sunday March 11, 2018 I promised 30 more years of active ministry to Our Lord. Of course, that could take many different forms, but 30 it is. As a reminder, while I did take life-long vows as a Benedictine here at Ray Of Hope, it does not mean Ray Of Hope cannot be free of me. At anytime Ray Of Hope can terminate receiving those vows and not renew my License to Ministry. However, I have promised to God 30 years of additional active ministry and have every reason to believe God will see it through in whatever form God chooses. So as of today, Laetare Sunday, 2021 I have completed three years and have twenty-seven to go. I rejoice and look forward to the journey.

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**Notes from the second reading for today:**

Romans 9:14-16

What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.

Exodus 33:19

And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion."

[Source: https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Grace,-And-Salvation](https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Grace,-And-Salvation)



**Next week** we look at ministry of Bishop Yvette Flunder and her influence on women in the church, women's rights, women of color, and lgbt women in the church.

Yvette A. Flunder is an American singer and senior pastor of the City of Refuge United Church of Christ in Oakland, California and Presiding Bishop of The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries. [Wikipedia](#)

**Born:** July 29, 1955 (age 65 years), [San Francisco, CA](#)

**Church:** [United Church of Christ](#)

**Spouse:** [Shirley Miller](#) Edwin Hawkins Shiley Miller <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGw9W0jeac0>

Flunder's spouse is Shirley Miller, the cousin of Walter Hawkins; they have been committed partners since the mid-1980s.

**Ordination:** by [Walter Hawkins](#)

**Books:** [Where the Edge Gathers: Building a Community of Radical Inclusion](#)

The **Transcendence Gospel Choir**, based in the [San Francisco Bay Area](#), is the first documented [transgender gospel choir](#).<sup>[1]</sup> It was founded by record producer Ashley Wai'olu Moore, with Yvonne Evans as its first conductor, and was a community choir and music ministry affiliated with the City of Refuge [United Church of Christ](#).<sup>[2][3]</sup>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oE89vS5Br3c> Bless Me - Bishop Yvette Flunder & Transcendence Gospel Choir

## Special Gift-Rehearsal- Bishop Yvette Flunder

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPEeOD\\_AD8o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPEeOD_AD8o)

### NEWS RELEASE

>>From Metropolitan Community Churches

>For Immediate Release: April 27, 2009

Bishop Yvette Flunder To Receive Clergy Credentials  
in Denomination of Metropolitan Community Churches

May 3rd Event In Washington DC Another Step In Deepening  
The Relationship Between MCC, The Fellowship, Says MCC Moderator



### **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, Strengtheners, 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](#).

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## 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, 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.

**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.

**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:** The Lord is with you!

**ALL:** And also with you!

**Pastor:** Together we lift up our hearts!

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

**Pastor:** Together 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

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.

## + 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 Canticle:**

**#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**

**#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**

(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!**

**of Him, to reconcile  
everything in His person,  
both on earth and in the  
heavens, making peace  
through the blood of His  
cross.**

## **+ The Mystery Of Faith**

- 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 liberty and justice 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! \_\_\_\_

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## 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 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 His promises, 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.

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.

**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.

**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 ...

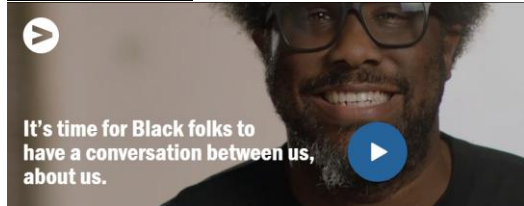
**ALL:** ... on our journey into renewal, fresh beginnings, new possibilities, and a renewed embrace of our potential! Thanks be to God

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GIFTS AND DONATIONS**

**General Offering** for the week; Worship March 7, 2021 Offering \$113.00. Attendance - 7.  
**Special Gifts. We give God thanks and praise for all the gifts given.**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**RESOURCE: THE CONVERSATION: Between Us, About Us**



Visit our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/lgbtqisia2ssByYou/>

MARCH IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH.

March 9 Tuesday **Bible Enrichment 6:30 p.m.**

March 14, 2021 Laetare Sunday, Rose Sunday in Lent Wk 4

March 26 Friday Council 2:00 p.m.

**HOLY WEEK 2021**

March 28, 2021 Palm Sunday

April 1, 2021 Holy Thursday 7:00 p.m.

April 2, 2021 Sacrifice of the Cross

Daytime Elmira Ecumenical Clergy Noon at Eldridge Park

Evening 7:00 p.m.

April 3, 2021 Vigil of the Resurrection 7:45 p.m.





## 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.

Other \_\_\_\_\_



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

Our YouTube page: [www.youtube.com/rayofhopenyglbtqs](http://www.youtube.com/rayofhopenyglbtqs)

—————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)