

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

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

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

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

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

Participate in some or all parts of this worship event as you are comfortable.  
We are building a wonderful Christ-centered Community here, and we invite you to share in  
our Joy! After the Worship Service, please join us for refreshments and sharing.

Today is 3-1-26, Lent WK II, Women's History Month Wk I, 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: Readings from the  
Revised Common Lectionary, Lent Wk 2 year A**

**First Reading:** Genesis 12:1-4a NRSV 1st Test. Pg. 10

**Psalm:** 121 with responsorial in this bulletin.

**Second Reading:** Romans 4:1-5, 13-17 NRSV 2<sup>nd</sup> Test. Pg. 154

**Gospel:** John 3:1-17 NRSV 2<sup>ND</sup> Testament page 93

\*We use the term 1st for the "Old" Testament and 2nd for the "New" Testament. The  
NRSV Bible 1st Testament numbers are found in the front portion, and the 2nd  
Testament numbers are found in the later portion. If this confuses you, ask  
someone around you to assist you. Thank you.

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## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

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

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

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



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

**+ Pastoral Welcome**

**Veronica Floyd:** Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am in\_(city) \_\_\_\_\_, \_(State)\_\_\_\_\_. Good morning. Welcome to Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the faith community founded in Central New York and now all across the World through the Internet, where everyone is welcome. This church is your Spiritual Service Station, and Faith Repair Shop, where our Loving Creating God is C.E.O., the owner of record is Jesus, the Christ, and the Operations Manager is The Holy Spirit. Our Congregation is a franchise location of the Body Of Christ, the Church. The Members and Friends are the working staff here today to facilitate your worship experience. Today is March 1st, 2026. We announce all instructions, pages, and song numbers and use a

psalm response verse to assist people with various stages of visual impairment.

To all who are online or may view this recording later, to facilitate your participation, please look for today's bulletin, Order of Worship, and the Music Supplement on Facebook Live by right-clicking the "Featured Links" icon. On Zoom, 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). The Zoom link is also posted on the webpage.

**Katrina Lourdiane:** Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am in\_(city) \_\_\_\_\_, \_(State)\_\_\_\_\_. Good morning, and welcome. (\*\* Reader, please remember to look at the people and smile.\*\*) We invite you to participate in as many or as few parts of this worship event as you feel comfortable. To people watching online, you may receive Holy Communion with us during this worship event. To participate in Communion, please bring to your table 1) a cup with some wine or grape juice, 2) a small piece of bread, cracker, or matzo on a plate, and 3) a second cup with some water and a side napkin. We will use these in the second half of the worship service. Now, gather all these items, and we will start shortly.



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

**Katrina Lourdiane:** (\*\*PLEASE wait for the second bells to ring, and remember to look up at the people and smile.\*\*) Good morning, my name is Katrina Lourdiane. Thank you for choosing to spend time with us today. In Romans, Chapter 15, verse 7, the Scriptures instruct us to:

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

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

**Pastor:** Good Morning, **SAINTS!** I ask you, in whose Name are we meeting?

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

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

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

**Brother:** Welcome to your Spiritual Service Station and Faith Repair Shop, where we promise to do our best to help everyone worship God in Christ, through the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit. At Ray Of Hope, we embrace a free-thinking standard, meaning, in part, that what you believe is between you and God. You are welcome here from any faith tradition, and even if you have no faith at all. God will take care of the relationship between God and you. We are here to welcome, love, and affirm all of who you are.

Today is March 1, 2026, Lent Wk II, and the first week of Women's History

I encourage everyone to explore these websites fully  
[NWHA National Women's History Alliance](#)

and the [Smithsonian American Women's History Museum](#)

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

Ray Of Hope Church officially began on Reformation Day, October 31, 1983, the vigil of the Feast of All Saints. October 31, 2024, marked our forty-first anniversary, and we are now in our forty-second year of ministry.

The first public worship event in the Southern Tier was held on Saturday, September 14, 1996, The Feast of the Triumph Of The Cross. September 14, 2025, was the twenty-ninth anniversary of the first worship event. We are in our 30th year of ministry in the Southern Tier.

Sunday, June 1, 2025, was the twenty-second anniversary of the opening of the Elmira Chapel. We are in our 23rd year at 380 W. First Street, Elmira, NY.



**Colby Dense:** We begin to worship God in the beauty of holiness, spirit, and truth. (Psalm 96:9; John 4:23-24)

**ALL: Together, we give God thanks and praise.**

**Colby Dense:** Our first song today is "Blessed Assurance" in the electronic Music Edition, the words are below. Please rise as you are able for our first song, "Blessed Assurance."

**FIRST SONG: WORDS ONLY Blessed Assurance**

Verse 1

Blessed assurance Jesus is mine  
O what a foretaste of glory divine  
Heir of salvation purchase of God  
Born of His Spirit washed in His blood

Chorus

This is my story this is my song  
Praising my Savior all the day long  
This is my story this is my song  
Praising my Savior all the day long

Verse 2

Perfect submission perfect delight  
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight  
Angels descending bring from above  
Echoes of mercy whispers of love

Verse 3

Perfect submission all is at rest  
I in my Savior am happy and blest  
Watching and waiting looking above  
Filled with His goodness lost in His love

Fanny Jane Crosby, Phoebe Palmer Knapp

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**+ The Candle Of Hope**



**Kaiden:** Please be seated. We light our Candle Of Hope to celebrate the Truth Jesus promises us. Jesus said: (John 5:25 and Titus 2:13)

**ALL:** "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)

**Kaiden:** Please look over and watch as the Candle of Hope is lit. When the flame flickers, we pray our proclamation of Faith.

**Kaiden:** Together:

**ALL:** Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

**Kaiden:** Ray Of Hope started in part to form a Church with an intentional ministry to persons affected by and infected with HIV and AIDS. It is forty-three years later, and still, some churches, religions, and, yes, even some countries continue rejecting the sick, lonely, and dying people with HIV and AIDS who deserve comfort and spiritual guidance. The World Health Organization reported nearly 40 million people were living with HIV globally in 2023. In 2024, the United Nations AIDS, UNAIDS organization, reported the number had risen to 40.8 million people, and we are confident the number will continue rising in 2026. Therefore, to keep HIV and AIDS in the conscious prayers of people, we continue to read aloud over **110,000** names sewn into over 50,000 panels of the AIDS Memorial Quilt at the National AIDS Memorial. Scroll the page to see the panels on block 180



These are the names on Block # 180

- Chuck Solomon (1)
- Russ Gardner (2)
- Ricardo Hernandez (3)
- Alan Cherry (4)
- Michel Foucault (5)
- Randy Hindman (6)
- Milt Criger (7)
- Ray Tuite (8)

(source: <https://www.aidsmemorial.org/interactive-aids-quilt>)

**Kaiden:** In silent prayer, we also remember the names of family and friends who have preceded us in death. **(\*\*pause for silent prayer.\*\*)** May this candle's flame help bring to mind the Joy and happiness known in life, the comfort offered by the Holy Spirit in our loss, and the promise of the "Blessed Hope" we have in the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

**ALL: Amen**

(National AIDS Memorial website where you can visit over 48,000 panels and over 110,000 names on the Quilt virtually: <https://www.aidsmemorial.org/interactive-aids-quilt>)

**Katrina Lourdiane:** Our second song is "Goodness of God" in the Electronic Music Edition. The words are also below. Please rise as you are able to sing, "Goodness of God."

**Second Song:** Goodness Of God Words and Music by Jenn Johnson, Ed Cash, Jason Ingram, Ben Fielding, and Brian Johnson.

### Verse 1

I love You Lord  
Oh Your mercy never fails me  
All my days  
I've been held in Your hands  
From the moment that I wake up  
Until I lay my head  
I will sing of the goodness of God

### Chorus

All my life You have been faithful  
All my life You have been so so good  
With every breath that I am able  
I will sing of the goodness of God

### Verse 2

I love Your voice  
You have led me through the fire  
In darkest night  
You are close like no other  
I've known You as a father  
I've known You as a friend  
I have lived in the goodness of God

### Bridge

Your goodness is running after  
It's running after me  
Your goodness is running after  
It's running after me  
With my life laid down

I'm surrendered now  
I give You everything  
Your goodness is running after  
It's running after me

**Goodness Of God.** Words and Music by Jenn Johnson, Ed Cash, Jason Ingram, Ben Fielding and Brian Johnson.

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## WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS

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

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

(**\*\*\*Please wait to provide some silence for private prayers and confession.\*\*\***)

**Marcus:** Loving, Creating, and Eternal God, all life in the Universe gives You praise and glory. You invite us to see beyond ourselves and to experience life's energy and flow. When we become self-absorbed, we close ourselves to seeing your beauty in all its forms. Lord, have mercy.

**ALL: Lord, have mercy.**

**Marcus:** Christ Jesus, you call us to present the Love of God to everyone we meet. The stress of society, with its conflicting ideas, agendas, and systems, can dim our resolve to speak of your presence among us. Christ, have mercy.

**ALL: Christ, have mercy.**

**Marcus:** Holy Spirit, you desire to help us understand our circumstances and

the world system we live in. You desire to open our minds to a fresh understanding of the Sacred Scriptures, the Bible. Society would have us prioritizing everything above time to pray, time dedicated to reading the Word, and all the resources we have available. Lord, have mercy.

**ALL: Lord, have mercy.**

**Kaiden Benedict:** We pray for forgiveness and renewal together.

**ALL: Lord Jesus, hear our confession, and receive our sins. Touch our hearts and shape our desires so that we will seek your Will daily in our lives. Send your Holy Spirit now to heal the wounds in our memories. Inform our conscience with the fire of your divine love so we will follow you without reservation. Draw us closer to you with your gentle voice and loving arms. We accept your forgiveness and restoration, in the Name of God, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Amen and Alleluia.**

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

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

**Kaiden Benedict:** The Church now provides the service of praising God together in thanksgiving. Please rise as you are able to give thanks and praise to God for the forgiveness of our sins by praying the Gloria.

**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.

**Wayne Harris:** Please remain standing for the opening prayer.

#### + Opening Prayer

**Wayne Harris:** The Lord is with you, Alleluia!

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

**Wayne Harris:** Together, we lift up our hearts.

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

**Wayne Harris:** We make this exhortation together:

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

**Wayne Harris:** Saint Origen, who lived from 185 – 254 A.D., wrote this prayer. His prayer is our prayer on this day. Please be seated now and listen with all

your heart, soul, and mind as we open the Word of God.



## THE SERVICE OF THE WORD OF GOD

**Pastoral Introduction, Brother:** The Scripture readings for the five Sundays of Lent review the dispensations of time and covenants in the Bible: Innocence, Conscience, Government, Promise, Law, Grace, Tribulation, Kingdom, New Creation. Last Sunday, Lent week one, we covered Innocence, and Conscience. We also deepened our understanding of God's response to human prevalence of desire to sin by reviewing the Doctrine of Universal Salvation, using the second reading for the day: Romans 5:12-21. Today's readings are taken out of the Revised Common Lectionary because the Roman Catholic Readings include the Transfiguration today, which we read two weeks ago. The lectionary of readings progressed from Innocence to Conscience, and skipped over Government (the sons of Noah), and went directly to the Age of Promise, the time of Abraham and his trust in God.

### + First Reading

**Ed Askins:** Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_.

The first reading is in the Book of Genesis, chapter 12, verses 1-4a. We are reading from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition of © 2021. The NRSV pew bibles have a similar reading on page 10. Here begins the reading:

### **The Call of Abram**

**12** Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." [a]

<sup>4</sup> So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

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

**ALL: Thanks be to God!**

[Read full chapter](#)

**Footnotes**

- a. [12.3](#) Or by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves

(<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+12%3A1-4&version=NRSVUE> )

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

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**+ Psalm:**

**Katrina Lourdiane:** (Introduction only if needed.) Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_.

The Psalm today is number 121, with a responsorial verse. The response today is "The Lord is my help and my protection!"

**Response: The Lord is my help and my protection!**

<sup>1</sup> I lift up my eyes to the mountains;  
from where shall come my help?

<sup>2</sup> My help shall come from the LORD  
who made heaven and earth.

**Response: The Lord is my help and my protection!**

<sup>3</sup> May God never allow you to stumble!  
Let your guard not sleep.

<sup>4</sup> Behold, neither sleeping nor slumbering,  
Israel's guard.

**Response: The Lord is my help and my protection!**

<sup>5</sup> The LORD is your guard and your shade;

and stands at your right.

<sup>6</sup> By day the sun shall not smite you  
nor the moon in the night.

**Response: The Lord is my help and my protection!**

<sup>7</sup> The LORD will guard you from evil,  
and will guard your soul.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD will guard your going and coming  
both now and for ever.

**Response: The Lord is my help and my protection!**

Give praise to the Living God.

To God's Son, Jesus the Christ, Our Lord.

To the Spirit who reigns in our hearts.

Both now, and for-ever. A-men.

Psalm 121. The Lord, our protector: a pilgrimage song. (inclusive language - 1993) ©1963, 1986, 1993 The Grail (England). Psalm (120)121 Onelicense Song #30994. All rights reserved. Published through exclusive license agreement by G. I. A. Publications, Inc. Used with Onelicense Print Permission and Streaming License A-741278. Response verse and Doxology by Brother Shawn F. Benedict

## + Second Reading

**Veronica Floyd:** \*\*\*\* 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 Letter to the Romans, chapter 4, verses 1-5, and 13-17. Again, this is the NRSV Updated Edition of © 2021 (See the citation below the reading.). The NRSV pew bibles have a similar translation on page 154 in the second testament. Here begins the reading:

### The Example of Abraham

**4** What then are we to say was gained by<sup>[a]</sup> Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? **2** For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. **3** For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed<sup>[b]</sup> God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." **4** Now to one who works, wages are not

reckoned as a gift but as something due.<sup>5</sup> But to one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

## God's Promise Realized through Faith

<sup>13</sup> For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. <sup>14</sup> For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. <sup>15</sup> For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there transgression.

<sup>16</sup> For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace, so that it may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (who is the father of all of us, <sup>17</sup> as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations"), in the presence of the God in whom he believed,<sup>[a]</sup> who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord!

**ALL: Thanks be to God!**

[Read full chapter](#)

### Footnotes

- a. [4.1](#) Other ancient authorities read *say about*
- b. [4.3](#) Or *trusted in*

[Read full chapter](#)

### Footnotes

- a. [4.17](#) Or *trusted*

(Source: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+4%3A1-5&version=NRSVUE> )  
(<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+4%3A13-17&version=NRSVUE> ) Scripture quotations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. See notice above announcements in this bulletin.)

**+ The Holy Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ**

**Reader:** We sing an acclamation before and one after the Reading of the Gospel. Please rise as you are able for the Gospel Acclamation.

## Gospel Acclamation

**We Love Your Word!**

To my friends in Christ at Ray Of Hope Church      "Music for Worship"      Music by: Gaude! Liturgical Arts  
October 31, 1993  
Revised 8/2013

We love Your Word, O Lord for it set us free. We know the truth, O Lord; We are Yours e - ter - nal - ly. So we stand to hear Your Word. We praise You for Your Word. Al-le - lu - a! for Your Word. It heals our hearts, souls and minds. For Your Word, Al - le - lu - ia! Thank You Je - sus!

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**Reader:** The Gospel reading is John, chapter 3, verses 1-17. We are reading from the NRSV Updated Edition of © 2021 (See the citation below the reading.). The NRSV pew bibles have a similar translation on page 93 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 Matthew.

**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.**

## Nicodemus Visits Jesus

3 Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. <sup>2</sup> He came to Jesus<sup>[a]</sup> by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person." <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." <sup>[b]</sup> <sup>4</sup> Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" <sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. <sup>6</sup> What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup> Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You<sup>[c]</sup> must be born from above.' <sup>[d]</sup> <sup>8</sup> The wind<sup>[e]</sup> blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." <sup>9</sup> Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

<sup>11</sup> "Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you<sup>[f]</sup> do not receive our testimony. <sup>12</sup> If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? <sup>13</sup> No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.<sup>[g]</sup> <sup>14</sup> And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.<sup>[h]</sup>

<sup>16</sup> "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

<sup>17</sup> "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.

Reader: This is the Gospel of the Lord!

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

[Read full chapter](#)

**Footnotes**

- a. 3.2 Gk *him*
- b. 3.3 Or *born anew*
- c. 3.7 The Greek word for *you* here is plural
- d. 3.7 Or *born anew*
- e. 3.8 The same Greek word means both *wind* and *spirit*
- f. 3.11 The Greek word for *you* here and in 3.12 is plural
- g. 3.13 Other ancient authorities add *who is in heaven*
- h. 3.15 Some interpreters hold that the quotation concludes with 3.15

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

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

(Source: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+3%3A1-17&version=NRSVUE> )

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

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**Gospel Acclamation**

**Forever, We Are Yours!**

To my friends in Christ  
at Ray Of Hope Church  
for the 1996 New Year,  
The Year of The Holy Spirit!

"Music For Worship"

Music by: Gaude! Liturgical Arts  
December 31, 1995



Glo-ry to the One God! Glo-ry to our Sa - vior Je - sus the  
Christ! And, to the Ho - ly Spi - rit, for - ev - er You're Our God!  
You brought us out of dark - ness, in - to Your mar-ve-lous Light! Your Word is our  
joy! For this we give You glo - ry, both now and ev - er more!  
For - ev - er we are Yours! For - ev - er we are Yours!

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**+ Sermon**



## Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc.

The LGBTQSIAN2ss+ Pride Activities, and Social Events Center of Elmira, NY.



The only Church in Central New York founded and fostered by the GLBTQSIAN2ss+ community for 43 years. October 31, 2025 - 42nd Anniversary now in our 43rd 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. 15:10**

2 Corinthians 4:5-6 <sup>5</sup> For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves (workers, servants, assistants) for Jesus's sake. <sup>6</sup> For it is the God who said, "Light will shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. (NRSVUE)

RED for Martyrs; dry martyr, wet martyr. People feel crushed under the weight of massive firings across the United States, a result of the new President and his Administration. \*\*Good news: Federal Judges ordered the Executive Administration to reinstate all Federal Employees who have been fired since the start of this Administration. (Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2025/03/13/politics/judge-opm-probationary-employees-fired-hearing/index.html>)

### =====SERMON NOTES: Brother ===3-1-26=====

Last week, Universal Salvation

### 3-1-26 war with the Islamic Republic of IRAN 1979

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/us-and-israel-launch-a-major-attack-on-iran-and-trump-urges-iranians-to-take-over-your-government>

**Women's History Month has been celebrated since 1995. The month is set aside to honor, acknowledge, and study the accomplishments of women throughout the history of America.**

I encourage everyone to explore these websites fully

[NWHA National Women's History Alliance](#)

**Theme: Women Shaping a Sustainable Future**

[Smithsonian American Women's History Museum](#)

Underline the "We Do Declare: Women's Voices on Independence"

(<https://womenshistory.si.edu/we-do-declare>)

### The Heart of the Stonewall National Monument Visitor Center

<https://mailchi.mp/pridelive/february-theheartofthestonewallnationalmonumentvisitorcenter?e=df5f476c8b>

QUOTATION FROM THE STONEWALL NATIONAL VISITOR CENTER EMAIL: The Colors That Bind Us: A Legacy of Chosen Family.

" Throughout history, love has been a powerful form of resistance. In our community, 'family' often extends beyond biology, with 'chosen families' providing support and love. This month, our bonds were tested when the administration tried to remove the Pride flag from the Stonewall National Monument, aiming to erase our presence. Yet our strength and visibility grow from the vibrant connections within our community, as well as from the symbols we choose to express our authenticity, diversity, and inclusion. We are pleased to share in this issue personal stories of queer love, as told by visitors, reminding us that our love endures. With gratitude, Diana & Anne Marie" (SOURCE: <https://mailchi.mp/pridelive/february-theheartofthestonewallnationalmonumentvisitorcenter?e=df5f476c8b> )

<https://stonewallvisitorcenter.org/>

"Love endures all things, believes all things, bears all things, and hopes all things. Love never ends." (NKJV 1 Cor. 13:7-8)

=====READINGS =====

The Fourth Dispensation is PROMISE. Scofield, III Reference Bible, with the Holy Bible, New King James Version, © 2002 by Oxford University Press, Inc., page 21; Summary. The Covenant comparison is on page 24.

In the second reading, Romans 4:3 "For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed<sup>[b]</sup> God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness."

Romans 4:16, 17 "16 For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace, so that it may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (who is the father of all of us, 17 as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations"), in the presence of the God in whom he believed,<sup>[a]</sup> who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist."

The so-called Three Abrahamic Faiths: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Gospel Reading: Notice the great lengths the NRSVUE goes to avoid the expression "born again."

John 3:3 3 Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." <sup>[b]</sup>

footnote b: or born anew. Why is this?

New TRUST, a NEW PROMISE: John 3:17 <sup>17</sup> "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.

\*)- CONTINUING REVELATION \* \* \* **Keeping Watch** \* \* \* On Sunday, January 19, 2024, I wrote the following in the bulletin. Finally, a hopeful thought to close with: on Friday, January 17, 2025, President Biden announced the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution is the law of the land because all of the required votes of the States have been received. The American Bar Association agrees that all requirements have been met. The National Archivist, Colleen Shogan, only has to certify and publish the 28th Amendment.

(Source:[https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2025/01/17/statement-from-president-joe-biden-on-the-equal-rights-amendment/#:~:text=The%20American%20Bar%20Association%20\(ABA,Constitution%20as%20the%2028th%20Amendment.\)](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2025/01/17/statement-from-president-joe-biden-on-the-equal-rights-amendment/#:~:text=The%20American%20Bar%20Association%20(ABA,Constitution%20as%20the%2028th%20Amendment.)) NPR story on the ERA <https://www.npr.org/2025/01/17/nx-s1-5264378/biden-era-national-archivist-constitution>

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

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## **INTERCESSORY PRAYERS**

**Brother:** Our Prayers of the People will each be followed by our common petition, "Lord, hear our prayer."

**Katrina:** We hold up to You, oh God, all who have asked us to pray for them and those for whom we have promised to pray. We pray to the Lord,

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

**Katrina:** We pray for all who are in danger because of warfare around them. We pray to the Lord,

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

**Katrina:** We pray for those whom we have wronged, and all who have wronged us - or so we may have felt because of ill will or misunderstanding. We pray for guidance from the Holy Spirit that leads to improved communication between people. We pray to the Lord,

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

**Kaiden:** We pray that government leaders will think beyond their own countries and seek to understand the global crisis of approximately 304 million people on the move due to migration. We pray to the Lord,

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

**Kaiden:** We pray for people who have lost access to a home or an apartment, especially those who are in despair. We ask the Holy Spirit to guide social agencies in finding practical solutions that help people regain their footing in society. We pray to the Lord,

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

**Kaiden:** There are over 117 million people globally who are displaced and in some form of refugee status. We pray for insight into how to share our economic opportunities and to welcome people into a sustainable workforce, thereby building up our society. We pray to the Lord,

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

**Colby:** We pray for people who suffer oppression and discrimination, especially when it is based on poverty, social status, ethnicity, sexual identity, and gender expression. We pray to the Lord,

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

**Colby:** We pray for all who are sick, all who are in treatment of any kind, all who care for the sick, and all who support those delivering care and their families. We pray to the Lord,

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

**Colby:** We pray that all people throughout the world, the lukewarm of faith, and those in most need of your mercy, O God, would turn to You and accept your guidance. We pray to the Lord,

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

**Colby:** God, give us the grace to bear with each other's burdens and to be instruments of your peace. We pray to the Lord,

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

**Pastor concludes the Prayers of the People.**

(For more information on government statistics regarding some of the populations mentioned above, see the following source: [https://www.samhsa.gov/newsroom/press-announcements/20250728/samhsa-releases-annual-national-survey-on-drug-use-and-health#:~:text=Among%20people%2012%20or%20older%2C%2016.8%25%20\(or%2048.4%20million,2021%20to%209.8%25%20in%202024](https://www.samhsa.gov/newsroom/press-announcements/20250728/samhsa-releases-annual-national-survey-on-drug-use-and-health#:~:text=Among%20people%2012%20or%20older%2C%2016.8%25%20(or%2048.4%20million,2021%20to%209.8%25%20in%202024) ).



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

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

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



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

**Katrina Lourdine:** As we set the Table of the Lord here in the chapel and in your homes, we are going to sing: "Jesus Name Above All Names." The music is available in the electronic Music Edition, and the words are below. Please sing along as we set the Table of the Lord.

**OFFERTORY SONG TEXT ONLY:** Jesus Name Above All Names  
words and music by Naida Hearn

**Verse 1**

Jesus, name above all names,  
Beautiful Savior, glorious Lord.  
Emmanuel, God is with us.  
Blessed Redeemer, living Word.

**Verse 2**

Jesus, loving Shepherd,

Vine of the branches, Son of God.  
Prince of Peace, Wonderful Counselor,  
Lord of the Universe, Light of the world.

### **Verse 3**

Praise him, Lord above all lords,  
King above all kings, God's only Son.  
The Prince of Peace, who by his Spirit  
Comes to live in us, Master and Friend.

**Jesus Name Above All Names words and music** by Naida Hearn  
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**Ed Askins:** (\*\*You may improvise a prayer or use this one.) God, we bless you and praise you for all the gifts we have received to support this ministry. We thank you for those who can give financially and by sharing their skills, prayers, talents, volunteering, and other forms of support. We bless you, Lord, for those who could not give at this time, and we pray that all their needs will be met. We dedicate all this to the Name of Jesus, Amen. Please rise as you are able **to sing and pray**  
**the conclusion of the Service of the Word with the 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**

**Pastor or?:** Blessed are you, Lord, God of all Creation. Through your goodness, we have this Bread, which the Earth has given us, and human hands have lovingly made. Now, through the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit, this Bread will become for us the Bread From Heaven (Exodus 16:2, Psalm 78:24, John 6:32, 41,50,58), the Bread of the Angels (Psalm 78:25), the Bread of God (John 6:33), the Living Bread (John 6:51), the Bread Of Life (John 6:35, 48, 58), the Bread of the New Covenant (John 6:32, 49, 50,51, 58), the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the very Body Of Christ (John 6:52-56, 1Corinthians 10:16).

**ALL: Blessed be God forever.**

**Brother Benedict:** Now, please lift your cup with me as I pray this prayer. Blessed are you, Lord, God of all Creation. Through your goodness, we have this fruit of the vine, which the Earth has given us and human hands have lovingly made. Now, through the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit, this fruit of the vine will become for us the Cup of Our Salvation (Psalm 116:13), the Cup of Everlasting Life (John 6:54-57), the Cup of the New Covenant (Matthew 26:28, Luke 22:20, 1 Corinthians 11:25), the very Blood Of Christ (John 6:54-56; 1Corinthians 10:16).

**ALL: Blessed be God forever.**

**Pastor:** Please set down your cup.  
Truly present and risen among us; **SAINTS**, the Lord is with you!

**ALL: And also with you!**

**Pastor:** As His Body, we lift up our hearts!

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

**Pastor:** As His Church, we give thanks to the Lord, our God!

**ALL: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

**Pastor: (An improvised prayer is said here.)**

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

## Holy, Holy, Lord!

To my friends in Christ  
at Ray Of Hope Church

"Music for Worship"

Music by: Gaude! Liturgical Arts  
October 31, 1993  
Revised 8/2013

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

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

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

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

**commissioned us to do often in His Holy Name. You alone, O Loving, True God, authenticate for us that this is the Messiah, Christ, New Covenant Meal that Jesus instituted for our physical and spiritual well-being. We ask this in the Name of Jesus. Amen**

**Brother:** You may relax your arms and hands. Kaiden, please show the Bread today, and Wayne, please show the cup. **Today, we pray together in song the words of Institution.**

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

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

### **+ The Lord's Prayer**

**Colby Dense:** Having heard the Word of God and remembering the sacrifice of the Cross, we invite everyone to (pray or sing) together the prayer of Jesus.

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

**and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen**

Music setting information: **The Lord's Prayer Composed by Albert Hay Malotte.** ©1935 G. Schirmer, Inc. (Admin. by Music Sales Corporation) CCLI Song#1534 Used with permission by our Christian Copyright License Incorporated License Number 706121, and Christian Copyright License Incorporated Streaming Plus License 21787152.



**The Reception of Holy Communion**

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

**ALL:** Behold the Lamb of God. Behold the Christ truly present in the Bread of Life and the Cup of Salvation. Behold Him who said whoever eats of this Bread and drinks of this cup, though they die, they shall live forever, and I will raise them up on the last day.

**Pastor:** Blessed are those who come to this table; everyone is welcome.

**ALL:** Lord, you make me worthy to receive you, and by your Word, I am healed. It is through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, that all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, forever and ever.

**Doxology/Amen!**

To my friends in Christ  
at Ray Of Hope Church

"Music For Worship"

Music by: Gaude! Liturgical Arts  
October 31, 1993

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

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

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

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**Ed Askins:** Please open your kit and receive Holy Communion now. Receive now the Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Gift of God for the People of God. Receive these gifts of love to strengthen your resolve to serve others and God, and to fortify your Salvation. I assure you, by the promises of Christ, that anyone who receives this Holy Communion today will indeed receive sanctification and healing in mind, body, soul, and spirit, and will be raised by Christ to new life, and live forever.

**ALL: Thanks be to God. (\*\*Please pause here to give people time to receive.\*\*)**

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

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

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

Spiritual Communion Prayer from the Episcopal National Cathedral Prayer Book.

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

### **+ Sign Of Peace**

**Colby Dense:** The Peace of the Lord Jesus Christ is with you.

**ALL: And also with you.**

**Colby Dense:** 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.

**Katrina Lourdiane:** 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, and clear your worship table and altar.

**Katrina Lourdiane:** We continue our prayers now by singing together: "Hosea." Please turn in the Glory and Praise Hymnal to #471. The music is in the Electronic Music Edition. Please rise as you are able to sing "Hosea."

**COMMUNION SONG: Hosea** Text and Music Weston Priory and Gregory Norbet

Contributors: Gregory Norbet, Weston Priory

Tune: Text: Based on Hosea. Text and music, Gregory Norbet, OSB, © 1972, The Benedictine Foundation of the State of Vermont, Inc. All rights reserved. Used with permission. Onlicense # 81048 Used with Print Permission and Streaming License A-741278

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### **Treasurer's Report for the month of January 2026**

Once again, I'm very grateful to you all for your generous donations. You will see in this report we definitely have some financial challenges. Please pray as we navigate through these challenges that God will direct, lead and supply.

**General Fund** opening balance at the beginning of January was \$1,618.80. Regular donations to the General Fund were \$1,961.33. I transferred into the account from savings \$200.00. Payments out of this account were: Pastoral compensation of \$2,575.00 Verizon \$62.75, One License for copyright \$200.00, Rainah Barnes \$70.00 for reimbursement for the QR code on Pride bookmarks. Larger bills monthly allotment was moved to savings in the amount of \$153.00 and Paypal charges were \$23.33 and I transferred \$83.34 to savings for January Self-Employment tax for the Appointed Pastor. After these were paid the balance of this account at the end of the month was \$612.71. There were no undeposited funds for January.

**Building Fund** opening balance was \$334.59 Donations to the Building fund were as follows: Ian and Christina McLaughlin \$450.00, Brother Shawn Benedict \$710.00 and Ed \$40.00 and Marcus \$400.00. I transferred in from Building Improvement Fund \$2,510.00. Bills that came out of the fund this month was the Credit Card bill with Key Bank of \$48.44, electric bill \$132.42, gas bill \$445.00 Isaac's Heating and Air Conditioning for laundry room boiler repair \$2,510.00 and also \$ \$373.71 for basement water repair, Sewer tax \$36.66 and I transferred \$246.00 to saving toward the large bill allotment. Ending balance of this fund was \$652.36.

**Building Improvement Fund** opening balance on this account was \$2,587.36. Deposits to this account were Katrina \$60.00, Deanna Caputo \$360.00 and Wayne and Glenn \$50.00. I transferred \$2,510.00 to Building Fund for the Isaac's bill. The ending balance in the account was \$547.36.

**Savings (Council) Account** opening balance in this account was \$1,454.53. Transfers to this account were \$153.00 from General Fund for large bills, \$83.34 from General Fund for the Appointed Pastor's self-employment tax for January and \$246.00 from Building fund for large bills. Transfers out of this account were \$200.00 to the General Fund towards One License bill. The balance at the end of the month was \$1,736.87.

Our donations for this month were \$4,031.33 and our expenses were \$6,477.31. The higher expenses were a result of the \$2,510.00 paid to Isaac's in the beginning of January which was funded by the money in the Building Improvement Fund. If you remove that our expenses would have been \$3,967.31... so within \$64.02. January donations in 2025 were \$4,512.28 about \$500 more than this year. That could simply be a timing issue. To explain this, some people might give me a donation the last week of January for their February giving. We record it when we receive it, regardless of what month it is intended for.

**Upcoming bills:** Bills due before the end of February: Transfer to savings for General fund large bills \$160.00, Appointed Pastor's self-employment tax for February \$83.34, transfer to savings for Building Fund large bills \$246.00.

Just a note of explanation. On the large bills, I have done a small spreadsheet on the large bills. From the General fund we have \$1,900.00 a year that is extra expenses from our regular monthly expenses and the Building Fund we have \$2,950.00 in extra expenses. So that is why I set this aside every month.

We have received our new NYSEG bills that are due March 8<sup>th</sup>. February as you know, was a bitterly cold month. February was also our last month of our current budget. With the payment I made in January, we were even with the budget. However, our Gas bill for February was \$812.86 due to the extreme cold. With this being the last month of the budget, it is all due on March 8<sup>th</sup>. I called them yesterday and they were very good to deal with. They said whatever we could not pay, we could enter into a 10 month payment agreement. It would be \$122.00 down and then 9 equal payments until it's paid in full with no interest. She did say they have already calculated our new budget and that is going to be \$367.00 per month. Any payment plan would be in addition to the \$367.00. So here is challenge #1. Our electric budget is \$352.92 each month, our gas without extra payments is \$367.00, our Liability insurance is \$307.00, the credit card runs about \$50.00 a month and the water bill about \$35.00 and our large bills transfer with water is \$246.00. The total of these monthly operating expenses without any extra building repairs or payment plan payments is \$1,357.92 Our current monthly donations for a 4 week month are \$1,138.00. That means a shortage of \$219.92 each month. Our giving to the Building fund has to increase in order to cover basic bills. Also, the NYSEG and insurance bills are all due before the 8<sup>th</sup> of each month. So we have \$1,026.92 coming out of the building fund that first week each and every month. Challenge #2 is how to pay this large electric bill, when we are already in a deficit with our current monthly bills. Discuss credit card here.

### **Credit Card**

The balance on the credit card as of the last statement is \$2,107.89. I did pay CCLI today online, which requires a credit card. That bill was \$453.00, so the church credit card was used. The balance on the card would now be \$2,560.89. There is available credit of \$1,439.11. Our interest rate on this card is 14.74% and we did receive an annual statement on the credit card, that we paid \$353.07 in interest on this card during 2025.

### **Balances as of February 20, 2026**

General fund: \$958.72 (we have Rainah's check still outstanding from the end of January)

Building fund: \$197.04

Building Improvement fund: \$697.36

Savings: \$1,736.87

Savings breakdown is: Appointed Pastor's self-employment tax for January \$83.34, Dishwasher \$150.00, Building fund large bills, \$922.53, General fund large bills \$551.00, Water bill \$30.00.

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

**General Offering** for the week of February 1, \$1,340.00 Attendance 12 on Sunday  
Tuesday February 3 - 6, Wednesday, February 4, Mass -10

**General Offering** for the week of February 8, \$50.00 Attendance 9 on Sunday  
Tuesday February 10 - 8, Wednesday, February 11, Mass -9

**General Offering** for the week of February 15, \$523.00 Attendance 16 on Sunday  
Tuesday February 17 - 8, Ash Wednesday, February 18, Noon Mass -9 Ash Wednesday evening - 13

**General Offering** for the week of February 22, \$800.00 Attendance 10 on Sunday  
Tuesday February 24 - 8, Wednesday, February 25, Mass - 8

**THANK YOU, EVERYONE**, for all the donations made to date on our building improvements. You are making change happen with your generosity. CELEBRATE the accomplishments!!!!!!  
Donations that cause change and growth are not always in cash; many thanks to everyone who donates time and talent, cooking, cleaning, transporting, calling, reminding, making copies, and so many other examples of donated help. Thank you.

**DISHWASHER / APPLIANCE ROOM** **JANUARY, 2026**: Katrina 1-14-26 \$60.00, thank you!  
Deanna Caputo - \$360.00, thank you Deanna! **FEBRUARY, 2026**: see below at Special Gifts made this week.

**Building Improvement Fund:** see below at Special Gifts made this week.

Donations to the Building Improvements are still welcome as we have insulation, drywall, dryer vent, and finishing to do.

**\*\* Special Gifts made this week: \*\*\$2,480.00\*\*** Ed Askins donated \$340 to the Building Improvement Fund, thank you, Ed. Wayne and Glenn donated \$350.00 to the Building Improvement Fund, thank you both. Ian McLaughlin made a \$1,000.00 donation to the Building Improvement Fund, thank you Ian. Marcus made a \$100.00 donation to the General Fund, thank you Marcus. Ian and Christina made a \$450.00 donation to the Building Fund, thank you both. Katrina Lourdiane made a \$100.00 donation on February 27, to the Building Improvement Fund for the building exterior projects, thank you Katrina. Brother donated \$140.00 for the Domain Name renewal for our website, thank you Brother.

**\*\* Recent Special Gifts made in addition to offering plate gifts.\*\*** Brother made a \$650.00 donation to the Building Fund in mid-February, thank you Brother.  
Wayne and Glenn listed above. Thank you to everyone who regularly bring food to the monastery to help us maintain an open table, including: Wayne and Glenn, Ed Askins, Katrina Lourdiane, Michael and Heather Austin, Christina McLaughlin, and Colby Dense. Katrina and Brother donated all costs for four new Membership Books. Thank you, both.  
Ian and Christina made a \$450.00 donation to the Building Fund, thank you both. Ed Askins made a \$40.00 gift to the Building Fund, thank you Ed. Marcus made a \$400 gift to the Building Fund, thank you, Marcus.

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

### UPCOMING EVENTS ON OUR CALENDAR



### **MARCH BIRTHDAYS**

**Marcus Coppola - March 7**  
**Brother - March 7**

The single, and I suggest, the most effective way to help grow our Congregation at this time is to join the Music Ministry. I sincerely believe that every person's participation in the Music Ministry will enhance every aspect of our service to people who are not in this room today but will want to participate as they witness the growth the ministry in worship music will bring. 2-6-26 Br. Benedict.

**Sunday, March 1, 2026, 10:30 a.m. Women's History Week I, 2nd Sunday of Lent**  
See The National Women's History Alliance

Monday, March 2, 2:30 p.m. Inquiries Class #3 Polity and Practice. Veronica & Br. - abbreviated format

Tuesday, March 3, 6:30- 8:00 p.m. Bible Enrichment - The Book of Revelation

Wednesday, March 4, 12:00 Noon ecumenical Mass

**Thursday, March 5, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Baptism Preparation Class #1**

Friday, March 6, 7:00-8:30 p.m. \*\*\*\*\***Music Ministry Rehearsal**\*\*\*\*\* Come and join the Music Ministry, all are welcome. No previous music experience is required.\*\*

**Sunday, March 8, 2026, 10:30 a.m. Women's History Week II, 3rd Sunday of Lent**

Monday, March 9, 1:00 p.m. Inquiries Class #4 Polity & Practice, Human Sexuality and the Bible. \_\_\_\_\_ & Br. - abbreviated format

Tuesday, March 10, 5:30 p.m. NYS Homeland Security and Emergency Services Citizen Preparedness Corps: Training Program - see flyer



## SIGN UP FOR A FREE CLASS TO LEARN ABOUT PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES

With severe weather events becoming more frequent and more extreme, it is more important than ever that New Yorkers are prepared for disasters. The NY Citizen Preparedness Training Program teaches residents to have the tools and resources to prepare for any type of disaster, respond accordingly and recover as quickly as possible to normal conditions. This training course will provide an introduction to responding to a natural or man-made disaster. Participants will be advised on how to properly prepare for any disaster, including developing a family emergency plan and stocking up on emergency supplies. Each family that attends will receive one preparedness kit.

**WHERE:** Friendship Baptist Church  
Fellowship Hall  
120 Pearl Street Ext.  
Corning, NY 14830

**WHEN:** Tuesday, March 10, 2026  
5:30 PM

**REGISTER:**

Registration is required to attend the event. To register visit [www.prepare.ny.gov](http://www.prepare.ny.gov) or scan the QR code



THIS EVENT IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY GOVERNOR HOCHUL IN CONJUNCTION WITH:



Elmira-Corning NAACP, Friendship Baptist Church and Steuben-Chemung Counties LWV

Tuesday, March 10, **No Bible Enrichment Scheduled**



Wednesday, March 11, 12:00 Noon ecumenical Mass

Wednesday, March 11, 6:30 p.m. Chapel Assistants change the chapel to pink

?????????? Thursday, March 12, 6:30 - 8:30p.m. Baptism Preparation Class #2

Friday, March 13, 7:00-8:30 p.m. \*\*\*\*\*Music Ministry Rehearsal\*\*\*\*\*Come and join the Music Ministry, all are welcome. No previous music experience is required.\*\*

Saturday, March 14, 12:00 Noon to 2:00 p.m. NAACP Membership Banquet - Clarion Hotel

**ELMIRA-CORNING NAACP**


**36th ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 2026**  
**12:00 – 2:00 pm**

The Clarion Inn • 760 E. Water Street • Elmira NY

**"MEMBERSHIPS: LIFE BLOOD IS DETECTED  
 WHEN MEMBERSHIPS ARE SELECTED"**

Tickets: \$35 Adult • \$17 Youth Ages 4-10  
 Ages 3 and under free



Speaker  
**Mr. Jonathan D. Mack, ACE CPT**  
 Staff, Integrated Program Planner  
 Lockheed Martin Corporation  
 Owego, NY

**For Ticket Information Call:**  
 (607) 962-8398, (607) 936-6770, (607) 862-5362, (607) 733-7963

**Sunday, March 15, 2026, 10:30 a.m. Women's History Week III, 4th Sunday of Lent - Laetare Sunday - Joy in Lent**

Monday, March 16, 1:00 p.m. Inquiries Class #5 Human Sexuality and the Bible. Veronica & Br. - abbreviated format

Tuesday, March 17, **St. Patrick's Day**, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Bible Enrichment - The Book of Revelation

Wednesday, March 18, 12:00 Noon ecumenical Mass

Wednesday, March 18, 6:30 p.m. **Chapel Assistants change chapel to PURPLE**

????????? Thursday, March 19, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. **Baptism Preparation Class #3**

\*\*\*\*\* Friday, March 20, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. **Council Meeting online and in person**

Friday, March 20, 7:00-8:30 p.m. \*\*\*\*\***Music Ministry Rehearsal**\*\*\*\*\*Come and join the Music Ministry, all are welcome. No previous music experience is required.\*\*

**Sunday, March 22, 2026, 10:30 a.m. Women's History Week IV, 5th Sunday of Lent**

Monday, March 23, 1:00 p.m. Inquiries Class #6 Ed & Br. - abbreviated format

Tuesday, March 24, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Bible Enrichment - The Book of Revelation

Wednesday, March 25, 12:00 Noon ecumenical Mass **The Annunciation of the Lord**

Wednesday, March 25, 6:30 p.m. **Chapel Assistants change chapel to RED**

Friday, March 27, 7:00-8:30 p.m. \*\*\*\*\***Music Ministry Rehearsal**\*\*\*\*\*Come and join the

Music Ministry, all are welcome. No previous music experience is required.\*\*

=====PLANNING AHEAD=====

**HOLY WEEK, 2026**

Sunday, March 29, 2026, is Palm Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

\*\*No Bible Enrichment Session planned for Tuesday, March 31

Tuesday, March 31, is Trans Visibility Day at Steele Memorial Library, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 1, 2026, Noon ecumenical Mass during Holy Week

Thursday, April 2, 2026, 7:00 p.m. Holy Thursday -

Friday, April 3, 2026, 7:00 a.m. Annual A.C.T.S. Good Friday Celebration 7:00 a.m.

Breakfast Buffet 8:00 a.m. Program - Pastor Andy Pollock - United Methodist \$10.00

Friday, April 3, 2026, NOON CHAPEL ASSISTANTS CHAPEL TO BLACK

Friday, April 3, 2026, 7:00 p.m. Sacrifice of the Cross, Good Friday The Stations of the Cross

Saturday, April 4, 2026 NOON CHAPEL ASSISTANTS DECORATE FOR THE VIGIL

Saturday, April 4, 2026, 7:45 p.m. Vigil of the Resurrection - Baptisms, Membership

No events scheduled for Sunday, April 5, 2026

**Music Ministry Schedule:** 2/27/26 through 4/5/26

Friday, March 6, 7:00-8:30 p.m.  3 of 6 before Holy Week	Continue preparation for Laetare - Joy Sunday 3-15-26  One of four Rehearsals before Holy Week Palm Sunday - The King of Glory Holy Thursday - songs about Eucharist Passion Friday - Music for the Stations of the Cross and Lift High The Cross Vigil Saturday - Psalms, Hymns, canticles, chant
Friday, March 13, 7:00-8:30 p.m.  4 of 6 before Holy Week	Last rehearsal for Laetare - Joy Sunday 3-15-26  Two of four Rehearsals before Holy Week Palm Sunday - The King of Glory Holy Thursday - songs about Eucharist Passion Friday - Music for the Stations of the Cross and Lift High The Cross Vigil Saturday - Psalms, Hymns, canticles, chant
Friday, March 20, 7:00-8:30 p.m.	Three of four Rehearsals before Holy Week Palm Sunday - The King of Glory Holy Thursday - songs about Eucharist

5 of 6 before Holy Week	Passion Friday - Music for the Stations of the Cross and Lift High The Cross Vigil Saturday - "The Easter Song," Psalms, Hymns, canticles, chant
Friday, March 27, 7:00-8:30 p.m. 6 of 6 before Holy Week	Final rehearsal for Holy Week  We must rehearse songs that continue into the six weeks of the Season of the Resurrection. We will be singing all styles during this period.

- May 10, Sunday, Mother's Day and Foundresses Day
- May 17, Sunday, Ascension Sunday
- May 24, Sunday Pentecost
- May 31, Trinity, Memorial Sunday
- June 6, Saturday, Pride Elmira
- June 7, Sunday, Corpus Christi - relicense Servants of the Eucharist
- June 13, Saturday, Pride Corning
- June 14, Sunday, 30th Ordination Anniversary
- June 20, Saturday, Juneteenth in Elmira E.O.P.
- June 21, Sunday, Father's Day, Juneteenth Celebration (19th), and 30th Ordination Anniversary
- June 29th PRIDE SUNDAY

There is a sign-up sheet on the table for desserts during the after-worship fellowship time, and we are seeking volunteers to sign up for desserts. Kaiden will text the volunteer during the week to remind them they have signed up to provide snacks that week.

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**We Are Sent Forth To Serve**

**Katrina Lourdiane:** SAINTS: The Lord is with you!

**ALL:** And also with you!

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

**ALL: Amen**

**Kaiden Benedict:** **We pray** Romans Chapter fifteen, verse thirteen together, saying:

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

**Kaiden Benedict:** 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.**

**Katrina Lourdiane:** Please rise as you are able for our final song, Glory & Praise hymnal number 349, and in the Electronic Music Edition, "Change Our Hearts." Please rise as you are able to sing "Change Our Hearts."

### **LAST SONG: WORDS ONLY**

**Change Our Hearts:** Words and Music by Rory Cooney/Jeffrey Honoré

**Refrain:** Change our hearts this time, your word says it can be. Change our minds this time, your life could make us free. We are the people your call set apart, Lord, this time change our hearts.

1. Brought by your hand to the edge of our dreams, one foot in paradise, one in the waste; drawn by your promises, still we are lured by the shadows and the chains we leave behind. But
  2. Now as we watch you stretch out your hands, off'ring abundances, fullness of joy. Your milk and honey seem distant, unreal, when we have bread and water in our hands. But
  3. Show us the way that leads to your side, over the mountains and sands of the soul. Be for us manna, water from stone, light which says we never walk alone. And
- Final Refrain This time change our hearts. This time change our minds. This time change our hearts, change our hearts.

**Change Our Hearts.** Words and Music by Rory Cooney/Jeffrey Honoré © 1984, OCP. All rights reserved. Glory & Praise Second Edition 349 Onelicense Song #81517 Used with Print Permission and Streaming License A-74127

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

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



We never held a vote to decide if we would be an **INCLUSIVE** church for you.

We are not an **OPEN AND AFFIRMING** church for you.

We are not a **RECONCILING CHURCH** or **RECONCILING CONGREGATION** for you.

We are not an **OPEN MINDED** or **ACCEPTING** or **WELCOMING** Church where you can attend as long as you blend in quietly and discretely.

**WE ARE YOU!**

**THIS** is the Church where **YOU** belong.

Ray Of Hope Church is the Church by us, for us, and made by You.

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

The Third Sunday of Pride, 2019

## Ray Of Hope Church Weekly Schedule

**Elmira Worship-** Sunday 10:30 a.m. – 380 W. First St. Parsonage/Monastery . Join us live on Zoom. 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, the way it used to be from 7:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. daily, as we try to do our part to stop the spread of COVID-19. Call for an appointment if you want some time to come in to pray, read, or visit The Blessed Sacrament. 1-607-280-0374 Our regular services will be blended with live participation in the Chapel, live on Skype and Facebook. To read the information on how to use Skype to participate with us, [Click Here](#).. Recordings of most of our Worship events are on our Facebook page, to see [Click Here](#). We will reopen the Chapel as soon as it is reasonably safe and prudent.

Visitors: Please feel free to fill out the information slip below and place it in the collection plate. Please indicate any special needs you may have. All information will be used for church purposes *only*.

**(Optional) Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**(Optional) Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to be included on the church Email list.

I would like to schedule an appointment with the Pastor.



## Ray Of Hope Church Statement Of Purpose

In the Spirit of God, and in the footsteps of Christ Jesus, we the Faith Community at Ray Of Hope Church commit to:

- **guide** and welcome all people to the Free Gift of Salvation in Christ Jesus, with a God-ordained celebration of all sexual orientations, and gender expressions, with an open ministry to persons affected by or infected with HIV/AIDS, their families and friends,
- **declare** and openly assert the Truth that same-sex relationships, founded and fostered in God-centered Love, are holy and blessed, and in fact originate by the work of the Holy Spirit; and, that God equally uses blessed same-sex and heterosexual Holy Unions and Marriages to bring God's own Love and good news of "Salvation to all who believe" into the World,
- **uphold**, proclaim, and teach the historic Biblical Christian Doctrine, build community through worship and prayer, break the Bread, and live the ministry of the Holy Spirit,
- **change** the World around us by living Gospel principles of social justice in everything we do, thereby exposing all forms of prejudice, oppression, racism, homophobia, sexism, and misogyny,
- **proclaim** the ray of hope, which is the soon coming return of Christ Jesus, and the fullness of His Eternal Community where the Will of God will establish liberty, justice, equity, and Peace for all God's People and the Universe.

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Visit us online:

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

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Scripture verses to share with others:—————

Romans 15:13 Now may the God of **hope** fill you with all Joy and Peace in believing, that you may abound in **hope** by the power of the Holy Spirit.

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

John 5:24 Those who hear my Word and **believe in God** who sent me, **have** eternal life, will **never** come under judgment and have passed from **death to life** already.

Romans 10:13 "For **whoever** calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." (repeated @ Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21) "everyone, anyone who" asks. "Lord" here refers to God principally as in the book of Joel that is being quoted, so all persons who call on God shall be saved.

"Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?"  
(Isaiah 43:19 ESV)

"Behold, I make all things new." (Revelation 21:5)

