



**"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 5-18-25, The Fifth Sunday of The Great 50 Days C
Ray Of Hope Church teaches the same Christian Faith of ancient ecumenical consensus.
St. Vincent of Lerins, a fifth-century monk and theologian, described it as

"what has been believed always, everywhere, and by all."

Scientific Discovery, Academic Knowledge, the Holy Scriptures, and Spirituality are Universal
and Unified. (Br. Benedict 8-6-23)

Scripture Readings for this worship event:

First Reading: Acts 14:21-27 NRSV 2nd Test. Pg. 134

Psalm: 145:8-13 responsorial Psalm in this bulletin.

Second Reading: Revelation 21:1-5 NRSV 2nd Test. Pg. 259

Gospel: John 13:31-35 NRSV 2ND Testament Pg. 108

***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 1st 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. 1st 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

Leader – 1: 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, Ray Of Hope Church, Inc., is a franchise location of the Body Of Christ, the Church. The Members and Friends are the working staff here today to facilitate this worship event. Today, May 18, 2025, we are broadcasting on Zoom with our own

account for the first time. Please be patient with us as this is our first time as the Host of the webcast. To participate fully, please look for today's bulletin, Order of Worship, and Music Supplement available on Facebook Live; right-click 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. The Zoom link is also posted there.

We announce all instructions, pages, and song numbers and use a psalm response verse to assist people with various stages of visual impairment.

Leader-2: 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 some or all of the parts of this worship event as you feel comfortable.

Everyone is welcome to receive Holy Communion with us during the second half of this worship event. You need not be a member of this church or any church to receive Communion with us if you choose to. To the people watching on the Internet, to participate in Communion, please also 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) (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 2nd ring will announce the start of the worship event.

Leader – 2: (** Reader, look up at the people and smile.***) 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)

Leader -2: 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.

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

****Sunday, June 1, 2025, will be the TWENTY-SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF THE ELMIRA CHAPEL.****

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

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

Pastor: The grace of the 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.

Pastor: Welcome to your Spiritual Service Station and Faith Repair Shop. We promise to do our best to help you worship God in Christ, with the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit. Today is May 18, 2025, The Fifth Sunday of the Resurrection during the Great Fifty Days, Year C.

RED Martyr dry martyr, wet martyr. People feel crushed under the weight of massive firings across the United States caused by the new President and His Administration. We will have more to say on this during the Sermon today. **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>)

The theme for the moment is "This is the Day that the Lord has made, we rejoice and we are glad." (Psalm 118:24)

Pastor: 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.



FIRST SONG: Shepherd Of Souls. Refresh and Bless; G&P 501 Text: CM; verses 1, 2, James Montgomery, 1771–1854; verses 3, 4, anon. Music: John B. Dykes, 1823–1876. Onelicense Song #84164 Glory and Praise 2 nd Edition 501 Used with permission. Onelicense #81048 Used with Print Permission and Streaming License A-741278.

+ The Candle Of Hope

Leader - 2: Today, we light our **Resurrection Candle Of Hope** to celebrate our Faith and trust in the promised "Blessed Hope," also known as "The Rapture," the return of Christ, who will transform the living faithful and raise all to new life. Those viewing at home may light a special candle and bring it to your table. Now, everyone, please join me and recite these words of Jesus to celebrate the Truth they promise 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)

Leader -2: In 1983, Ray Of Hope Church was started in part to form a unique ministry to persons affected by and infected with HIV and AIDS and to extend a radical welcome to all people to worship with us. Our witness

to God's unconditional love for everyone is as relevant today as it was in 1983. Here we are forty-one 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.

Therefore, at Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, we continue to read aloud over **110,000** names sewn into the AIDS Memorial Quilt to keep HIV/AIDS in the conscious prayers of people. Scroll the page to see the panels on block 149.



These are the names on Block # 149

- Mel Foote (1)
- Claude Clark (2)
- Douglas Brashears (3)
- Doug Olsen (4)
- Mr. Bill (5)
- Jerry Walters (6)
- Michael Adelman (7)

• John Easton (8)

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

Leader -2: In silent prayer, we also remember the names of family and friends who have died from COVID-19-related and other illnesses. We pray that those who feel left behind in the face of death experience a blessing from the Holy Spirit when they remember their loved ones.

(**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>)

SECOND SONG: Easter Song Words and Music by Anne Herring

©1974 Latter Rain Music CCLI Song#12279 with recording The Easter Song. Bill & Gloria Gaither Israel Homecoming Track 1 | Length: 2:31 Source: Spring House (HSE) available on Spotify. Used with permission by our Christian Copyright License Incorporated License Number 706121, and Christian Copyright License Incorporated Streaming Plus License 21787152.



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)

L-3: Filled with the Holy Spirit, we are called to show the love of Jesus, the Risen Christ of God, in all circumstances. Lord, have mercy.

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

L-3: With Christ living in us, we can understand and choose to act upon the will and love of God. Christ, have mercy.

ALL: Christ, have mercy.

L-3: We are baptized into Christ and experience Jesus truly present. Jesus, the Good Shepherd of our Souls, sends us to go everywhere and, by showing God's love, welcome everyone into the Church of Jesus Christ. Lord, have mercy.

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

Leader -2: We pray together:

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

Pastor: May Almighty God have mercy on all of us, forgive all our sins, and keep us in everlasting life.

ALL: Amen. 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.

Leader - 3: The Church now provides the service of praising God in thanksgiving together. Please rise as you are able as we sing "The Gloria."

WORDS ONLY HERE. MUSIC SCROLL DOWN

"The Gloria"

From "Music for Worship"

© Words and Music: Gaude! Liturgical Arts 7/25/19 - 1/21/24 Br. Shawn F. Benedict, O.S.B. Dedication :Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc. 40th Anniversary.

Refrain:

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to all people on earth.
Glory to God in the highest.
We give you thanks and praise. Alleluia!
We give you thanks and praise.

Verse 1:

You are the One God,
Sovereign of the Universe,
Only Holy God, we worship You,
we give You thanks,
we praise You for Your great glory!

Refrain:

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to all people on earth.
Glory to God in the highest.
We give you thanks and praise. Alleluia!
We give you thanks and praise.

Verse 2:

Lord, Jesus Christ;
The Only Begotten Son of God
You are 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.

Refrain:

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to all people on earth.
Glory to God in the highest.
We give you thanks and praise. Alleluia!
We give you thanks and praise.

Verse 3:

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 God.
In the Holy Spirit, in the Holy unity of God.

Refrain:

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to all people on earth.
Glory to God in the highest.
We give you thanks and praise. Alleluia!
We give you thanks and praise.

Verse 4:

Amen; We give you thanks and praise.
Amen; We give you thanks and praise.
Amen; We give you thanks and praise.
Amen.

From "Music for Worship" © Words and Music: Gaude! Liturgical Arts 7/25/19 - 1/21/24 Br.
Shawn F. Benedict, O.S.B.

Dedication: Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc. 40th Anniversary.

Dedication:
Ray Of Hope Church
Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc.
40th Anniversary

The Gloria

"Music for Worship"

Words and Music
Gaude! Liturgical Arts
7/25/19-1/21/24
Br. Shawn F. Benedict, O.S.B.

Refrain

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and

4 peace to all peo - ple on earth Glo - ry to God in the high - est

8 We give you thanks and praise. Al - le - lu - ia

10 We give you thanks and praise.

Verse 1

12 You are the One God, Sov - ereign of the Un - i - verse, On - ly

16 Ho - ly God, we wor - ship You, we

18 give you thanks, we praise You for Your great glo - ry!

Refrain

21 Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and peace to all peo - ple on earth

25 Glo - ry to God in the high - est We give you thanks and

2





85

Verse 4: Amen

A_ men_ We

We give You thanks and praise!

Lord we praise You, Lord we bless You, We

4

87

give You thanks and praise!

We give You thanks and praise!

give You thanks, We give You praise We give You thanks and praise

89

A men

A men. Al - le - lu - ia.

Lord we praise You, Lord we bless You men. Al - le - lu - ia.

PASTOR: Please remain standing for the opening prayer.

+ Opening Prayer

Leader-4: The Lord is with you.

ALL: And also with you.

Leader-4: Together, we lift up our hearts.

ALL: We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader-4: 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

Leader-4: 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

Reader: (Introduction only if needed.) Hello. My name is _____ and I am in the City of _____ in the State of _____.

Our first reading is in the Book of The Acts of the Apostles chapter 14, verses 19-27. You will find this on page 134 in the back of the NRSV Bible. I will be reading from The Inclusive Bible. Here begins the reading:

¹⁹ Some members of the Jewish party from Antioch and Iconium arrived and won the people over. They stoned Paul and dragged him out of the town, leaving him there for dead. ²⁰ His students quickly formed a circle about him, and before long he got up and went back into the town. The next day, he left with Barnabas for Derbe. ²¹ After they had proclaimed the Good News in that town and made numerous disciples, they retraced their steps to Lystra and Iconium first, then to Antioch. ²² They put fresh heart in the disciples there, encouraging them to persevere in their faith. "We all have to experience many hardships," they said, "before we enter the kingdom of God." ²³ In each church they appointed elders and, with prayer

and fasting, commended them to God, in whom they had put their faith.²⁴ Then they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia.²⁵ After proclaiming the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia.²⁶ From there they sailed back to Antioch, where they had first been commended to the grace of God for the work they had now completed.²⁷ On their arrival, they assembled the church and gave an account of all that God had done with them, and of how they had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.²⁸ Then they spent some time there with the disciples.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord!

ALL: Thanks be to God!

(Acts 14:21-27. Priests for Equality. The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation (p. 2964). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Kindle Edition. The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation Page 726. Copyright © 2007 by Priests for Equality. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. To Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc., September 4, 2024. Please accept this correspondence as authorization and permission to use the cited material at no charge. Please do use appropriate citation and referencing protocols. The Rights & Permissions Team, Globe Pequot International Sales, Marketing & Rights, Part of the Globe Pequot Publishing Group Representing the Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, now part of Bloomsbury.)

+ Psalm

Reader: (Introduction only if needed.) Hello. My name is _____ and I am in the City of _____ in the State of _____.

The Psalm today is 145, verses 8 - 16. Our response today is; "Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia."

R. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

⁸ You are kind and full of compassion,
slow to anger, abounding in love.

⁹ How good you are, LORD, to all,
compassionate to all your creatures.

R. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

¹⁰ All your creatures shall thank you, O LORD,
and your friends shall repeat their blessings.

¹¹ They shall speak of the glory of your reign
and declare your might, O God,

¹² to make known to all your mighty deeds
and the glorious splendor of your reign.

R. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

¹³ Yours is an everlasting kingdom;
your rule lasts from age to age.

You are faithful in all your words
and loving in all your deeds.

¹⁴ You support all those who are falling
and raise up all who are bowed down.

R. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

¹⁵ The eyes of all creatures look to you
and you give them their food in due season.

¹⁶ You open wide your hand,
grant he desires of all who live.

R. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Give praise to the Living God.

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

To the Spirit who reigns in our hearts.

Both now, and forever. Amen.

Psalm 145:8-16 Praise of God's Glory. (inclusive language - 1993) ©1963, 1986, 1993 The Grail (England). Onelicense Song #23630. 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

Reader: (Introduction only if needed.) Hello. My name is _____ and I am in the City of _____ in the State of _____.

Our second reading is found in the Book of The Revelation of Jesus Christ, chapter 21, verses 1 through 5. You will find this on page 259 in the back, the second testament of the NRSV Bible. I will be reading from the Inclusive Bible. Here begins the reading:

21 :1 Then I saw new heavens and a new earth. The former heavens and the former earth had passed away, and the sea existed no longer. ² I also saw a new Jerusalem, the holy city, coming down out of heaven from God, beautiful as a bride and groom on their wedding day. ³ And I heard a loud voice calling from the throne, "Look! God's

Tabernacle is among humankind! God will live with them; they will be God's people, and God will be fully present among them. ⁴ The Most High will wipe away every tear from their eyes. And death, mourning, crying and pain will be no more, for the old order has fallen." ⁵ The One who sat on the throne said, "Look! I'm making everything new!" and added, "Write this, for what I am saying is trustworthy and true."

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord!

ALL: Thanks be to God!

(Revelation 21:1-5. Priests for Equality. The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation (p. 3243). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Kindle Edition. The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation Page 798. Copyright © 2007 by Priests for Equality. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. To Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc., September 4, 2024. Please accept this correspondence as authorization and permission to use the cited material at no charge. Please do use appropriate citation and referencing protocols. The Rights & Permissions Team, Globe Pequot International Sales, Marketing & Rights, Part of the Globe Pequot Publishing Group Representing the Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, now part of Bloomsbury.)

+ 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!

Reader: (Introduction only if needed.) Hello. My name is _____ and I am in the City of _____ in the State of _____.

The Gospel reading is on page 108 in the back of the NRSV Bible. The reading is in the Gospel of John, chapter 13, verses 30-35.

³⁰ As soon as Judas took the piece of bread, he went out into the night. ³¹ Once Judas left, Jesus said,
"Now is the Chosen One glorified
and God is glorified as well. ³² If God has been glorified,
God will in turn glorify the Chosen One
and will do so very soon. ³³ My little children,
I won't be with you much longer.
You'll look for me,
but what I said to the Temple authorities, I say to
you: where I am going, you cannot come. ³⁴ I give you a new
commandment:
Love one another.
And you're to love one another
the way I have loved you.
³⁵ This is how all will know that you're my disciples:
that you truly love one another."

Reader: This is the Gospel of the Lord!

ALL: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

(John 13:31-35. Priests for Equality. The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation (pp. 2899-2900). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Kindle Edition. The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation Page 710. Copyright © 2007 by Priests for Equality. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. To Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc., September 4, 2024. Please accept this correspondence as authorization and permission to use the cited material at no charge. Please do use appropriate citation and referencing protocols. The Rights & Permissions Team, Globe Pequot International Sales, Marketing & Rights, Part of the Globe Pequot Publishing Group Representing the Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, now part of Bloomsbury.)

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

NOTES

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

The LGBTQISA2ss+ Pride Activities, and Social Events Center of Elmira, NY.

The only Church in Central New York founded and fostered by the GLBTQISA2ss+ community for 39 years. October 31, 2022 - 39th Anniversary now in our 40th year in Ministry.

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and God's grace toward me has not been in vain. 1 Cor. 5:10

REMINDER of this great resource that is available for your private study: *** Millennial Series by Dr. John F. Walvoord <https://walvoord.com/series/328>

SEASON OF THE RESURRECTION 40 + 10 = The Great 50 Days.

Ascension Thursday is May 29 – 40 days. We will celebrate Ascension on Sunday, June 1st, which is also the 22nd Anniversary of the first public worship event in our chapel at 380 W. 1st St.

(Saturday, June 7, Elmira Pride)

Ten days from the actual Ascension Day (May 29) is Sunday, June 8 – the Feast of Pentecost – The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit

(Saturday, June 14, Corning Pride)

June 15 – Trinity Sunday, Father's Day, and the 29th Anniversary of Ordination

1 This is the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to show the faithful what must soon take place. God made it known by sending an angel to John, a faithful servant, who, in writing down everything he saw testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ.

³ **Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written in it; for the time is near!**

Over these last three Sundays of the Season of the Resurrection, our second reading will be from the Book of Revelation. Why during the Season of the Resurrection? Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega (Rev. 1:8, 21:6, and 22:13), the Author and Finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). All authority in Heaven and on Earth has been given to Jesus (Matthew 28:18). Jesus has authority over the final events of this Age, and so, we will read the highlights of those events during this season.

4-27-25 Week 2: Rev. 1:1-20

5-4-25 Week 3 Rev. 5:1-14

5-11-25 Week 4 Rev. 7:9-17

5-18-25 Week 5 Rev. 21:1-5

5-25-25 Week 6 Rev. 21: 10 – 27

6-1-25 Week 7 Ascension Sunday special readings Rev. 22:12-14,
16-17, 20

Jesus the Only Begotten Son John 1:1-5, 14 -18; 3:16,18; 1John 4:9;

Psalm 2:7 <http://rayofhopechurch.com/faith.htm>

(<http://rayofhopechurch.com/files/Jesus%20the%20Only%20Begotten%20Son%20Of%20God.pdf>)

We learn about our resurrection bodies during this season.

Today is the Fifth of seven Sundays in the season of the Resurrection,

2025. Why is it a season? Our Lord was seen in the resurrection body multiple times during the 40 days between the morning of the resurrection and the morning of the ascension into Paradise. To give us a real-time sense of the time God allowed people to see, touch, feel, eat with, sleep with, and talk to Jesus in his resurrection body, the church calendar counts out these 40 days. It was a long period of time, and it was loving grace that God did this for us. May 29, Thursday, is Ascension Day. Then ten days later is the celebration of Pentecost, for a total of fifty days. The Jewish Community also celebrates these fifty days.

I decided to look further into this to see if this might be where we Christians derive our Great Fifty Days from, from Resurrection to Pentecost. The answer is yes, it is.

There is a Jewish Tradition of counting 50 days that is Biblical. This year it started at nightfall on Sunday, April 13, our Palm Sunday, and will end at nightfall on June 1, Pentecost Sunday. This year, our worship calendars are almost lined up.

From the website: <https://www.reformjudaism.org/jewish-holidays/counting-omer/counting-omer>

The seven-weeks between [Passover](#) and [Shavuot](#) is known as "the omer" period.

An *omer* ("sheaf") was an ancient measure of grain, and refers to the barley offering brought to the Temple on the second day of Passover. Starting on that day, the Torah instructs: "you shall count off seven weeks. They must be complete: you must count until the day after the seventh week – 50 days" (Leviticus 23:15-16). The festival of Shavuot is observed on the 50th day.

The counting of the Omer (*S'firat HaOmer*), which lasts for 49 days, takes place at night, commencing on the second night of Pesach. Those who "count the Omer" recite a blessing each night of the 50-day period:

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותיו, וצונו על ספירת העמר.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu al s'firat ha-omer.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who sanctifies us with mitzvot, and commands us concerning the counting of the Omer.

A very detailed article is found on Wikipedia, "[Counting of the Omer](#)"

Another Article / Source: **Shavuot: The Feast of First fruits: The Birthday of Judaism and the Birthday of the Church**

(https://lifeinmessiah.org/feasts-shavuot?gclid=Cj0KCQjwpv2TBhDoARIsALBnVnmHMwuFHM1LEbEVqkidf9U97_LKK20u1R5GIM3XfO2i3r3LCvOw-14aAp2REALw_wcB)

The end of the 50 days is known as the festival of Shavuot. Take time to read the first page of this website, and see that the Rabbis have changed the name and purpose of this festival over the centuries. It is referred to by four different Hebrew names, indicating different spiritual purposes, with four sets of Scripture verses.

Two Traditions have survived. The first Tradition is the celebration of the **giving of the Torah** on the 50th day. The other Tradition marks the beginning of the summer wheat harvest **as the wheat is sprouting and showing that it will grow** at this time. When the language of common usage moved to Greek in some regions of the world, the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek. This work is known as the Septuagint and includes the Apocryphal books. It was created by Greek-speaking Jews in Alexandria, Egypt, in the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC and was used in the early Christian Churches. Most scholars set the dates for this work as beginning in 250 BC and finishing in about 100 BC. **In Greek, this festival is known as Pentecost**, which adds up to the great 50 days.

The Christian Church has used the word Pentecost ever since the writing of the Septuagint was adopted as the official Scriptures for Greek speaking, i.e. Gentile Christians.

We are in the Great Fifty Days which the Christian Church celebrates from sunset the beginning of the feast of the First Fruits.

But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at his coming... (1 Corinthians 15:20-23)

The three major spring feasts of the Law of Moses are Passover, First Fruits, and Pentecost.

The feast of First Fruits is observed on the third day after Passover. The instructions for it are found in Leviticus 23:9-14. The observance of this ritual brought the promise of a greater harvest to come.

God raising Jesus from the dead was not just a display of God's power over death. God raised Jesus on the third day after Passover, the Feast of the First

Fruits. It was not accidental. Jesus is the "first fruits of the dead." Jesus is the promise of the greater harvest to come, namely through Jesus, all will be made alive: "Christ, the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at his coming.." (1 Cor. 15:20-23)

Jesus was buried at Passover and raised by God on the third day, the feast of the First Fruits. As the Jewish men were going up the steps of the Temple to bring the acceptable offerings for first fruits according to Leviticus 23:9-14, Jesus was ascending to the Throne of God, the Tabernacle made without hands, to present Himself as the final acceptable offering. (John 20:17; Hebrews 9:11). This is the significance of "on the THIRD DAY" Jesus was raised from the dead.

In the early morning of the resurrection Jesus told Mary Magdalene she could not touch him as he had not yet ascended "to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God." (John 20:17). HOWEVER, that night Jesus shows him his physical body, and from that time on they were allowed to touch him and know that he was not a ghost. (John 20:19 and following). He had been to the Throne of God that day and presented Himself as the First Fruit, the final offering to God.

There are many excellent websites with more detailed information on this. Here is one: <https://unlockingthebible.org/2016/03/why-the-resurrection-is-more-than-you-may-think-it-is/>

1st reading today, we see Paul is beaten in the streets for betraying the faithful Jewish believers. Trying to see it from their point of view, Saul of Tarsus was a great teacher in Judaism. When he started proclaiming this new apostasy, claiming the son of Joseph of Nazareth to be a God or a Son of God, that was too much for them to handle, so they came after him to try to beat some sense into Saul, who took a new name, Paul. Notice the reading says Paul had disciples who circled him to protect him. The next day, Paul was on the road again, for Jesus. Here we see the Apostles beginning to set up a structure for order in the Christian assemblies. The Apostles appoint the Elders.

Our Psalm 145 continues last week's Psalm, now with the response, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. This is an excellent prayer for you to pray at home. We have already noted these psalms, and the readings from Revelation show us Creation is at worship. Two of my favorite verses in Psalm are verses 10 and

11: "All your creatures shall thank you, O Lord, and your friends shall repeat their blessing. They shall speak of the glory of your reign and declare your might, O God." I realize that one's accent words in these sentences can give different meanings. I like thinking the "creatures" are thanking the Lord and speaking of the Lord's glory. Then, we are described as God's "friends" who "repeat their blessing." It could be read that we are repeating the praise of Creation; creatures are first, and we are second. I like that

In the Second Reading in Revelation, John is consoled to be shown that God will prevail with a New Heavens and a New Earth and be at home with God in Creation forever.

Gospel: This reading returns to Holy Thursday night on the way to the Garden of Gethsemane. John 13:34-35 "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another."³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Joh 13:34 A new^{G2537} commandment^{G1785} I give^{G1325} unto you,^{G5213}
That^{G2443} ye love^{G25} one another;^{G240} as^{G2531} I have loved^{G25} you,^{G5209}
that^{G2443} ye^{G5210} also^{G2532} love^{G25} one another.^{G240}
Joh 13:35 By^{G1722} this^{G5129} shall all^{G3956} men know^{G1097} that^{G3754} ye are^{G2075}
my^{G1698} disciples,^{G3101} if^{G1437} ye have^{G2192} love^{G26} one to another.^{G240 G1722}

G25

ἀγαπάω

agapaō

ag-ap-ah'-o

Perhaps from *ἀγαν* *agan* (*much*; or compare [H5689]); to *love* (in a social or moral sense): - (be-) love (-ed). Compare G5368.

Total KJV occurrences: 142

G26

ἀγάπη

agapē

ag-ah'-pay

From **G25**; *love*, that is, *affection* or *benevolence*; specifically (plural) a *love feast*: - (feast of) charity ([*-ably*]), dear, love.

Total KJV occurrences: 116

ON MARRIAGE EQUALITY

<https://www.lgbtqnation.com/2025/05/gop-lawmaker-in-iowa-ask-supreme-court-to-end-same-marriage/>

https://www.lgbtqnation.com/2025/05/pope-leo-says-marriage-is-between-a-man-and-a-woman/?utm_campaign=daily-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_edition=202505160600&utm_source=newsletter

https://www.lgbtqnation.com/2025/05/ghana-lawmakers-introduce-cruel-anti-gay-bill-that-also-punishes-lgbtq-activism/?utm_campaign=daily-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_edition=202505160600&utm_source=newsletter

Pilgrim Hill Reformed Fellowship <https://www.lgbtqnation.com/2025/05/pete-hegseths-pastor-says-homosexuality-is-caused-by-can-be-cured-by-jesus/>

<https://www.pilgrimhill.church/>

<https://crechurches.org/>

"God wouldn't give him purpose and talent and then damn him for being gay."
Scott Hoying, Pentatonix Star <https://www.lgbtqnation.com/2025/05/i-took-my-son-to-conversion-therapy-heres-when-i-knew-it-was-an-awful-mistake/>

*** * * 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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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)

Leader – 4: Having heard the Word Of God we bring our prayers to God in Christ, through the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit

Brother: PRAYERS FOR THE PEOPLE:



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

Leader: Worship is our primary activity as a church. We are grateful for all the people over these last forty-one years of ministry who have given help and assistance so that Ray Of Hope is here in this new year of 2025. Thank you to everyone who has contributed with your gifts, "seen and unseen." Your giving has been exemplary and extraordinary; 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 QRCode, 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."

OFFERTORY SONG: Alleluia! Alleluia! Give Thanks G&P 389

Words and Music by Donald Fishel Text: Donald Fishel, b.1950, © 1973, Word of God Music. Tune: © 1973, International Liturgy Publications Text: © 1973, International Liturgy Publications. Oneliscence Song # 71342 Ritual Song 581 Used with Print Permission and Streaming License A-741278

Leader - 3: (**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 with their skills, prayers, talents, and other ways. We bless you for those who could not give at this time and pray that all their needs will be met. We dedicate all this to the Name of Jesus, Amen.

(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.

Leader 4: Please set down your Bread. For those at home, pour your wine or grape juice into your cup if you have not already done so. Then, add a small amount of water to the cup. With this water, we remember Jesus is human. With this fruit of the vine, we remember He is divine forever.

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.

Leader 4: Please set down your cup.

Pastor: Truly present and risen among us; **SAINTS**, the Lord is with you!

ALL: And also with you!

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

ALL: We lift them up to the Lord!

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

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

Pastor: (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.

"Music for Worship"

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 **Epiclesis**

Leader - 3: 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. This prayer asking for action by the Holy Spirit is called an Epiclesis prayer. 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

Leader - 1: You may relax your arms and hands.

+ 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

Leader 3: Having heard the Word of God and remembering the sacrifice of the Cross, we invite everyone to pray together the prayer of Jesus.

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

Music setting information: **The Lord's Prayer Composed by Albert**

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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.

Leader - 2: 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! ____

Leader 4: 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.

PRIVATE PRAYER FOR A SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.

Veronica: 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 upon a prayer in a Prayer Book at 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 that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive Holy Communion at that moment. Still, circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion.

+ Sign Of Peace

Leader-1: The Peace of the Lord Jesus Christ is with you.

ALL: And also with you.

Leader-1: 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.

Leader-1: Now, we clean our tables and altars. Please be sure all of the crumbs are in your cup. Add some water and swirl it around inside the cup. Drink the water. Dry the cup with the side napkin. Clear your worship table and altar.

COMMUNION SONG: **All Creation Worships You. Words and Music by Jim Mills, Kirk Dearman** ©1988 Integrity's Hosanna! Music (Administered by Integrity Music) CCLI Song # 190469 All rights reserved. International copyright secured. Used with permission through our Christian Copyright License Incorporated License Number 706121 and Christian Copyright License Incorporated Streaming Plus License 21787152 with accompaniment recording: All Creation Worships You. Album: The Cup of Life. Songs of Worship for the New Millennium. Track 5 | Length 4:49 Used with permission through our Christian Copyright License Incorporated License Number 706121 and Christian Copyright License Incorporated Streaming Plus License 21787152.

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General Fund opening balance at the beginning of March was \$1,988.41. Donations to the General Fund for the month were \$3,274.11. This included special donations of \$20.00 toward the cost of the Inquiries class notebooks. I also transferred in \$36.27 from the Building Fund. Payments out of this account were: Pastoral compensation of \$2,060.00, Verizon \$62.47, Corning Pride application fee of \$50.00, a reimbursement to Brother for \$184.08 (which was coded to the following accounts: Fire Alarm Maintenance for CO2 detector \$36.27, copy expenses for notebooks for inquiries class \$81.42, wine and grape juice purchase from Ash Wednesday service \$66.39) Appointed Pastor Self Employment tax was moved to saving in the amount of \$23.32 and Paypal charges for the month were \$30.26. After these were paid the balance of this account at the end of the month was \$2,888.66. There was undeposited funds in this account of \$1.99 and I recorded a \$90.00 Gift in Kind from Wayne and Glenn for dry cleaning of the choir robes.

Building Fund opening balance was \$1,481.44. Donations to the Building Fund were as follows: Brother Shawn Benedict \$648.00, Ian and Christina \$450.00 and Wayne and Glenn \$200.00. Bills that came out of the fund this month was the Credit Card bill with Key Bank of \$56.27, electric \$276.92, gas bill \$253.00, Liability Insurance \$275.60, water bill \$78.56 and I transferred \$36.27 to the General Fund to repay that account for the CO2 detector. Ending balance of this fund was \$1,802.82. Undeposited funds in this account was \$50.00 from Katrina Lourdiane.

Building Improvement Fund opening balance on this account was \$864.36. There was no activity on this account so the ending balance is \$864.36

Savings (Council) Account opening balance \$665.33. \$23.32 was transferred into this account from the General Fund towards the Appointed Pastor's self- employment tax.

The ending balance on this account was \$688.65. \$250.00 of this is the self- employment tax.

I wanted to add just a few additional notes.

I sincerely thank you all for your generous donations. God is and has been so faithful to us. Every gift the Church receives is so greatly appreciated as we press on to do what God has called us to do. You can see from the above report what is involved concerning finances alone to make the Church function. Our income for the first three months of 2025 totals \$14,204.20. Our expenses for the first three months of the year were \$12,654.39. I'm holding \$330.00 which was given for a specific expense, so figuring that in, we have a difference of \$1,219.81 of income over expenses. We are clearing expenses by about \$400 per month.

The credit card balance as of the last statement is \$2,399.94 with a credit limit of \$4,000.00. Our payment is \$53.00 a month with \$29.00 of that being interest.

As of today, April 10,2025. The balance in the General Fund is \$1,878.66, Building Fund \$1,232.30, Building Improvement Fund \$864.36 and Savings (Council) Account \$438.65.

Both NYSEG bills (electric & gas) have been paid this month in addition to the liability insurance and the Self-Employment tax payment due 4/15 has been paid. Also, the Real Property Tax Exemption Form has been completed and mailed in.

veeflo@aol.com <veeflo@aol.com>

Sent: Thursday, February 6, 2025 at 12:14:42 PM EST

Subject: New area of concern that has surfaced regarding website

Dear Members and Friends, to keep you informed, we wanted to share with you that we have been notified by an organization called PicRights International Inc. that we alleged used images that were copyrighted on our website in 2021. This is a new area of concerns that we are facing as Pic Rights operates on behalf of the Associated Press and EPA photographers. We are being told that this is a copyright violation and were initially fined a total of \$1,875 for 5 images. The images used were all linked to an article that was posted for educational and religious education purposes. They in essence were part of the article.

Although we believe all rules of the Fair Use Act were applied and materials well sourced on our website, I was told that those rules of engagement do not apply to the use of these images on our website. Br. Benedict has worked tirelessly and continues to do so to ensure everything we do is in compliance and we thank him for all the hours he has donated to this.

The council is 100% committed to getting clarification on what the rules of engagement are and putting into place compliance with those rules if indeed they are not what we believe to be the case so this is not a recurring issue. We have spoken with a friend of the church who provided us with some attorneys that specialize in Intellectual property and copyright laws. We are moving forward with contacting an attorney to represent us.

We were able to negotiate an offer with PicRights due to our status as a Not for Profit Religious Corporation as well as the impact such a stiff fee would have on our church finances. The reduced fee is a 60% reduction to \$750. We were given a due date of February 14, 2025 to take advantage of the negotiated rate. We will be speaking with an attorney prior to that time to see if this is the best course of action for us at this time and how to proceed in the future.

I am bringing this to the attention of all our members and friends to first make you aware of the concern. Secondly, if you would like to assist with website maintenance expenses, please contact our treasurer Ed Askins. Any amount of donation would be beneficial. Also, if you know anyone who has copyright law experience that could help us moving forward, please let any council member know. We will keep you informed of any updated developments.

As always, we thank you for your generosity and support as we endeavor to do God's work together and give God glory and praise.

Christ Peace be with you,
Veronica Floyd, Moderator Ray Of Hope

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

General Offering for the week of April 20 \$100.00 Attendance 13 on Holy Saturday Vigil of the Resurrection

General Offering for the week of April 27 \$792.40 Attendance 10 on Sunday
Wednesday, April 9, Attendance 5

General Offering for the week of May 4 \$1,425.00 Attendance 9 on Sunday
Wednesday, May 7, Attendance 6

General Offering for the week of May 11 \$445.00 Attendance 14 on Sunday
Wednesday, May 7, Attendance 5

**** Special Gifts made this week:**

Lisa Frost made a special donation of \$50.00 toward the credit card balance, thank you Lisa. Wayne and Glenn made a special donation of paper products, thank you both. Katrina, in addition to all of her donated time as the Pastoral Administrative Assistant, donated a new table cloth, seeds and other items, thank you Katrina.

**** Special Gifts made in addition to offering plate gifts made recently****

Ian made an additional \$25.00 donation to the Building Fund that accidentally was not reported last week, thank you Ian. We want to note all of the extra volunteer work that has been happening. Michael Merrick assisted us with our computers. Ed has been investing many hours in the records of the Treasury. Katrina has been giving many hours to help at the Monastery with household tasks and laundry, giving rides, assisting with liturgical preparations in the chapel, working on cushions for the Carley Room, and with clerk tasks. Christina has been assisting with hospitality, housekeeping, working on cushions for the Carley Room, Wednesday morning setup for Mass and keeping a watchful eye on the building. Veronica and Brother have been working out tests for using Zoom. Wayne and Glenn planted all of the flowers people gave during Holy Week and weeded both garden beds. Brother mowed the lawns. There are other acts of help that many have given this week in particular. Thank you to everyone who gives financially, we appreciate your steady commitment and care. Thank you to everyone "seen and unseen" who helps us on a daily basis. We appreciate you.

Ian and Christina made a \$450.00 donation to the Building Fund, thank you both.

Katrina Lourdiane \$20.00 for Liturgical supplies, thank you. Brother made a \$648.00 donation to the Building Fund for April, thank you. Wayne and Glenn donated \$100.00 to the Building Fund and an air conditioning unit for the Carley Room. Thank you to both of you, Wayne and Glenn. Ian and Christina McLaughlin donated \$450.00 (for March) to the Building Fund, thank you both.

Katrina made a \$50.00 donation to the Building Fund. Thank you, Katrina.

Brother made a \$648.00 donation to the Building Fund for March, thank you.

Thank you, Katrina for making two Membership Books and continuing working on the psalms for our use in worship. Thank you Wayne and Glenn for a \$200.00 donation to the Building Fund, and paper products for social hour and for the restroom.

We are always very grateful to everyone who helps around the Monastery; Christina, Katrina and others who stop in and lend a hand. Thank you to everyone who bakes for our social hours.

**** We received a \$500.00 gift from the Novant Community Benefit Fund (Robinson), a donor-advised fund of The Winston-Salem Foundation. The advisor donors are Dr. Elwood and Denise Robinson, Veronica Floyd's sister and brother-in-law. We thank the Robinson's for their friendship, support, prayers and participation in the life and mission of Ray Of Hope Church through the years.**

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 and write "email list" in the Subject box.

UPCOMING EVENTS ON OUR CALENDAR

May 18, Sunday, the Fifth Sunday of the Resurrection (**today would mark the **97th birthday of Martha Cummings**, an Elmira Chapel Foundress, and Lisa Frost's mother.)

****May 20, Tuesday NO SCHEDULED event. **Brother at conference.**

May 21, Wednesday, 12:00 Noon Mass

May 25, Sunday, Sixth Sunday of Resurrection, Memorial Day Weekend

May 27, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Bible Enrichment

May 28, Wednesday, 12:00 Noon Mass

****May 29, Ascension Thursday** ecumenical worship at Bethany Lutheran

May 30, Friday Council at 6:30 p.m. -8:00 p.m.

June 1, Sunday Ascension Sunday – 22nd Anniversary of the first public worship event in our chapel at 380 W. 1st St., the start of PRIDE MONTH

June 7, Saturday, Pride Elmira

June 8, Sunday Pentecost

June 14, Saturday, Pride Corning

June 15, Sunday, Trinity Sunday, Father's Day, and the 29th Ordination Anniversary

June 22, Sunday, Juneteenth Celebration (19th) at Ray Of Hope and Solemnity of Corpus Christi, relicense Servants of the Eucharist.

June 29th PRIDE SUNDAY



We Are Sent Forth To Serve

Leader - 2: **SAINTS:** The Lord is with you!

ALL: And also with you!

Leader - 2: 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

Leader - 2: 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)

Leader-4: We go forth in peace and Love to serve all people and the Lord ...

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

ENDING SONG:

G&P 378 Jesus Christ Is Risen Today, Alleluia

Text: 77 77 with alleluias; Verse 1, Latin, 14th cent.; para. in Lyra Davidica, 1708, alt.; Verses 2-3, *The Compleat Psalmist*, ca. 1750, alt.; Verse 4, Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt. Music: Later form of melody fr. Lyra Davidica, 1708. Contributors: EASTER HYMN, Lyra Davidica, Lyra Davidica. Glory and Praise Second Edition #378 Onlicense # 84000 Used with Print Permission and Streaming License A-741278

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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.

The Third Sunday of Pride, 2019

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 SKYPE: rayofhope26 is our contact name. Sign on by 10:15 a.m.
Syracuse Worship- looking for a host in Syracuse. For more information
[Click Here](#).

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

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

Policy Concerning Minors at Events

Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ welcomes all youth and children to worship with us and participate in our activities. We endeavor to provide a safe and non-threatening environment for all children. To this end, we have a Policy Concerning Minors at Events, which is available from the Clerk upon request and is on our website;
http://www.rayofhopechurch.com/Minors_At_Events.htm. 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.

Visit us online:

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

