



**Ray Of Hope  
Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ**

**"My House shall be a house of prayer for All People."**

(Isaiah 56:7)

**Founded: 10/31/1983. Now in our Fortieth year of Ministry.**

MISSION: Love God, Love your neighbor,  
and make disciples of every person

everywhere. (Matthew 22:37-39; Matthew 28:19)

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

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

Veronica Floyd, Moderator

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

We extend a very special welcome to our visitors.

You are as welcome here as Jesus Christ Himself.

Scripture exhorts us: "Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God" Romans 15:7 (NABRE – 2011)

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 July 30, 2023, Pentecost WK 10 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."***

**Scripture Readings for this worship event:**

**First Reading:** 1Kings 3:5, 7-12 NRSV 1st Test. Pg. 306

**Psalm:** 119 selected verses with responsorial

**Second Reading:** Romans 8:28-30 NRSV 2nd Test. Pg. 158

**Gospel:** Matthew 13:44-52 NRSV 2<sup>ND</sup> Testament page 15

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

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## CALL TO WORSHIP

Visit and greet one another until the bell rings.

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

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



## WE GATHER TO PRAISE THE LORD AND GIVE THANKS

### + Pastoral Welcome

**Leader – 1:** Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am in the City of \_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_. Good morning. Welcome to Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the faith community founded in Central New York and now all across the World through the Internet, where everyone is welcome. You can participate in some or all parts of this worship event as you are comfortable. We announce all instructions, page, and song numbers and use a psalm response verse to assist people with various stages of visual impairment.

To be added to our email list, email [rayofhopechurch@aol.com](mailto:rayofhopechurch@aol.com) and write "email list" in the Subject.

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

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

**Leader-1:** The bulletin order of worship and the music supplement for today are available on Facebook Live, right-click the "Featured Links," on Skype, in the Chat window, and on our website in the large gold box labeled SUNDAY WORSHIP INFORMATION at [www.rayofhopechurch.com](http://www.rayofhopechurch.com). Take a moment now and gather these items. We will start shortly. Ed Askins will play a prelude this morning, "Glorify Thy Name." We ask everyone to listen attentively to enjoy this prayer time and refrain from visiting. Thank you.

- **Music Prelude played by Ed Askins.** "Glorify Thy Name" Words and Music by Donna Adkins CCLI Song # 1383 © 1976, 1981 CCCM Music (Admin. by Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Inc.) Universal Music - Brentwood Benson Publishing (Admin. by Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Inc.) Used with permission through our Christian Copyright License Incorporated License Number 706121 and Christian Copyright License Incorporated Streaming Plus License 21787152.



**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 to announce the start of the worship event.**

**Leader – 2:** Thank you for spending time with us. In Romans, Chapter 15:7, the Scriptures instruct us to:

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

**Leader -1:** You are as welcome here as Christ Jesus himself. Show the glory of God by introducing yourself and welcoming the people around you. To be extra careful, we observe COVID safety protocols by waving across the room and into the camera for the Internet.

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

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

**Pastor:** The Lord is present as He promised. Let the people say alleluia.

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

**Pastor:** We come here to pray. The definition of the word liturgy is the "prayer-

work" of the people. The people lead, serve, organize, and facilitate this public time of assembly to worship and experience God and one another. The people are actively praying and serving those present and God.

**Today is July 30, the tenth week of Pentecost.**

**Today's theme: The Word of God is our source of Wisdom for this Age.**



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

Today we are celebrating the **Fortieth Sunday** in our 40<sup>th</sup> year of ministry. Welcome to the **"WOKE"** Church of Elmira, NY, and the World.

**Romans 13:11 "Now is the time to WAKE from your SLEEP."**

We are proud to be known as the **"WOKE"** Church of Elmira and Central NY. Popularized by African-American young men, **"WOKE"** is: having or being marked by an active awareness of systemic injustices and prejudices, a liberal progressive orthodoxy, especially promoting inclusive policies or ideologies that welcome and embrace ethnic, racial, and sexual minorities. Awake and aware.

Source: Dictionary.com: <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/woke>

In Theological terms: Awakened by the Holy Spirit, alive in Christ, actively supporting persons of all Religions and faiths and those with no faith or religion.

See the Ray Of Hope Church Statement of Purpose for more information. Right Click Here:

<http://www.rayofhopechurch.com/purpose.htm>.

**Pastor:** With our whole heart, mind, and soul, 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: Alleluia! Alleluia! Give Thanks G&P 389** Contributors: 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

## + The Candle Of Hope

**Leader -1:** Please be seated. Now we light our Candle Of Hope to celebrate our faith and trust in the promised "Blessed Hope," the return of Christ who will transform the living faithful and raise all to new life. 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/AIDS. Forty years later, some churches, religions, and even countries still reject the sick, lonely, and dying people with HIV/AIDS who need spiritual guidance. Therefore, we continue to read aloud over 10,000 names sewn into the Names Project AIDS Memorial Quilt to keep HIV/AIDS in the conscious prayers of people.

**Leader -3:** Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_

in the State of \_\_\_\_\_. Looking up at the screen, we see the panel names on  
Block # 83

- Donald (1)
- Bill McTarnahan (2)
- Gerry Parker (3)
- Jay Baughman (4)
- Alex Murphy (5)
- Ronald L. Morris (6)
- Anonymous - Provincetown (7)
- Anthony Martin Digioranni (8)
- Barry Wortheim (8)
- Billy Sandberg (8)
- Don Shoulberg (8)
- Gilles Boughard (8)
- Jacques Belanger (8)
- Jean Guy Dion (8)
- Michael Freedman (8)
- Robert Mitchell (8)
- Ron Andreotta (8)
- Steven Clover (8)
- Those We Love and Lost (8)

**Leader -2:** In silent prayer, remember the names of family and friends who have died from COVID-related illness and other causes of death. Pray for their families to experience a blessing from the Holy Spirit when they remember their loved ones. (\*\*pause for silent prayer.\*\*\*) We hope this candle's flame will bring to mind the joy and happiness known in life, the comfort offered by the Holy Spirit in our loss, and the "Blessed Hope" we have in the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

**ALL: Amen**

(NAMES Project National AIDS Memorial website where you can visit over 48,000 panels and over 100,000 names on the Quilt virtually: <https://www.aidsmemorial.org/interactive-aids-quilt>)

**SECOND SONG:** Joyful People, Come and Worship. NTBK #33 Text: June Norris © 1987; alt. with permission, Music Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824; adpt. The Hymnal Project © 1990 MCC San Francisco Used by permission Used with Print Permission and Streaming License A-741278.



## WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS

### + Confession and Forgiveness of our sins.

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

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

(Source: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=i+John+1%3A8-10&version=NRSVUE>  
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.) (modified for clarity by Br. Benedict)

**Leader -2:** In silent prayer, consider relationships with God and others. Then, confess faults, sins, and failures to Christ, who will forgive us immediately.

(silent prayer)

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

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



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

Daily routines often distract us from our mission to spread the Good News of the Gospel; we pray, Lord, have mercy.

**ALL: Lord, have mercy.**

**Leader -4:** We miss opportunities to plant the seeds of the Word of God by telling ourselves the timing is incorrect or the person is not interested rather than trusting the Holy Spirit to guide us; Christ, have mercy.

**ALL: Christ, have mercy.**

**Leader -4:** When God's Word grows, we see the results, but we often fail to give God credit for helping us; we pray, Lord, have mercy.

**ALL: Lord, have mercy.**

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

**ALL: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the World, grant us peace.**

**Pastor:** We pray that all of God's people may one day be united in God's Kingdom without losing anyone. Therefore, we ask Almighty God to have mercy on all of us, forgive all our sins, and keep us in everlasting life.

**ALL: Amen.**

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

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

**Spoken:**

**Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to God's people on Earth.**

**You are the One God, Sovereign of the Universe,**

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

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

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

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

**+ Opening Prayer**

**Leader 5:** O Loving, Eternal Word of God, lead us to your truth and wisdom. As we listen to your Word, help us initiate action and change in our lives so we are transformed and equipped for service.

**ALL: AMEN.**

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

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



**THE SERVICE OF THE WORD OF GOD**

**+ First Reading**

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

The first reading is The First Book of Kings, chapter 3, verses 5-12 in the NRSV updated edition of 2021. The 1989 pew Bibles have a similar reading on page 306 in the First Testament. Here begins the reading.

<sup>5</sup> At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I should give you." <sup>6</sup> And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. <sup>7</sup> And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. <sup>8</sup> And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. <sup>9</sup> Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great people of yours?"

<sup>10</sup> It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. <sup>11</sup> God said to him, "Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, <sup>12</sup> I now do according to your Word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you.

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

**ALL: Thanks be to God!**

### **Read full chapter**

(Source: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1Kings+3%3A5-12&version=NRSVUE> Scripture quotations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. See notice above announcements in this bulletin.)

### **+ Psalm**

\*\*\*\* **If an introduction is needed:**\*\*\*\* Hello. My name is \_\_\_, and I am in the City of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_.

Today's Psalm is 119 selected verses with a responsorial verse. Today's response is, "We love your Word, O Lord."

**R. We love your Word, O Lord.**

I have said, O LORD, it is my part  
to keep your Word.

The Law of your mouth is more precious to me  
than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

**R. We love your Word, O Lord.**

As you have promised your servants,  
I ask that your kindness comfort me.  
Give me your compassion that I may live,  
for I delight in your Law.

**R. We love your Word, O Lord.**

I love your commands.  
They are worth more to me than the finest gold.  
Daily I walk in your precepts;  
therefore, every false way I detest.

**R. We love your Word, O Lord.**

Your decrees are wonderful;  
I observe them in joy.  
The revelation of your words sheds light,  
and gives understanding to the simple.

**R. We love your Word, O Lord.**

## + Second Reading

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

The second reading is Romans, chapter 8, verses 28-30 in the NRSV

2021 updated edition. The 1989 pew Bibles have a similar reading on page 158 in the Second Testament. Here begins the reading.

<sup>28</sup> We know that all things work together<sup>[a]</sup> for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family.<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>30</sup> And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord!

**ALL: Thanks be to God!**

**Footnotes**

- a. 8.28 Other ancient authorities read *God makes all things work together or in all things God works*
- b. 8.29 *Gk among many brothers*

Read full chapter

(Source: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+8%3A28-30&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 Matthew, chapter 13:44-52 in the NRSV updated edition of 2021. The 1989 pew Bibles have a similar reading on page 15 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.**

### Three Parables

<sup>44</sup> "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

<sup>45</sup> "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; <sup>46</sup> on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

<sup>47</sup> "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; <sup>48</sup> when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. <sup>49</sup> So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous <sup>50</sup> and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

### **Treasures New and Old**

<sup>51</sup> "Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." <sup>52</sup> And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

Reader: This is the Gospel of the Lord!

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

(Source: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+13%3A44-52&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.)

### **Gospel Acclamation**

# Forever, We Are Yours!

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

"Music For Worship"

Music by: Gaude! Liturgical Arts  
December 31, 1995

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

**Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc.**  
 The LGBTQISA2ss+ Pride Activities, and Social Events Center of Elmira, NY.  
 The only Church in Central New York founded and fostered by the GLBTQSA2ss+ 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**

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



<http://www.rayofhopechurch.com/P2023-Bookmark.htm> Celebration, dedication of the new mobile friendly version of our website.

\*\* Lisa Frost's birthday was Monday, the 17<sup>th</sup>. So we will catch up July 30.

Hebrews 4:12 (NRSVUE)

<sup>12</sup> Indeed, the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

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**First Reading:** 1Kings 3:5, 7-12

Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to



govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?"

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your Word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you."

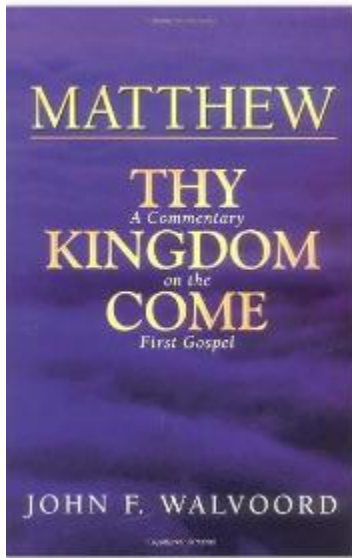
**Psalm:** 119 Psalm of the Word of God. We love our Word.

**Second Reading:** Romans 8:28-30

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, to those who are called according to the purpose and will of God. For those whom God foreknew God also predestined to be conformed to the image of God's Only Begotten Son, in order that Christ might be the firstborn within the resurrected and saved Family of God. And those whom God predestined God also called; and those whom God called are justified; and those whom God justified are also glorified.

**Gospel:** Matthew 13:24-30 NRSV 2<sup>ND</sup> Testament page 14

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## **Matthew: Thy Kingdom Come\*\*\*OP\*\*\*: A Commentary on the First Gospel Paperback – November 20, 1998**

This verse-by-verse commentary of the book of Matthew by popular author and scholar John Walvoord examines the life of Christ and the stages of acceptance and rejection that He endured. The nine parts of the book include: the origin of Jesus Christ; the credentials of the King; the continued ministry of the rejected King; the Olivet Discourse on the end of an age; the period between the two advents; and the death and resurrection of the rejected King.

Gospel commentary on Matthew 13

John F. Walvoord book: Matthew Thy Kingdom Come See Chapter 13

<https://walvoord.com/article/207>

The parables are designed to reveal the mysteries of the kingdom, that is, the present age.

*Mysteries*, a word used of secret rites of various religious cults, refers to truth that was not revealed in the Old Testament but is revealed in the New Testament. More than a dozen such truths are revealed in the New Testament, all following the basic definition of Colossians 1:26, which defines a mystery as that "which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints." A mystery truth, accordingly, has two elements. First, it has to be hidden in the Old Testament and not revealed there. Second, it has to be revealed in the New Testament. It is not necessarily a reference to a truth difficult to understand, but rather to truths that can be understood only on the basis of divine revelation.

The Old Testament reveals, in clear terms, the earthly reign of Christ when He comes as King to reign on the throne of David (which truths are not mysteries). Matthew 13 introduces a different form of the kingdom, namely the present spiritual reign of the King during the period He is physically absent from the earth, prior to His second coming. The mysteries of the kingdom, accordingly, deal with the period between the first and second advent of Christ and not the millennial kingdom which will follow the second coming.

### **Parable of the Treasure, 13:44**

The parable of the treasure is linked with the sixth parable, the parable of the pearl, and the final parable of the good and bad fish, as three parables reflecting the divine point of view rather than the historic human point of view, which was presented in the first four parables. Like the third and fourth parable, no explanation is given, and expositors have tended to find support for their overall view of the chapter. A common interpretation, such as is advanced in Trench's work on parables, is that the man who finds the treasure is the believer who finds Christ, with the same interpretation carried over to the merchant who finds the pearl.<sup>65</sup> Everyone agrees that Christ is a treasure whom all the world has not discovered, but upon close examination, the interpretation is shallow and unsatisfactory.

In the parable, the man was represented as hiding the treasure and selling all he had to buy it. The facts are, of course, that a believer in Christ has nothing to offer and the treasure is not for sale. The believer does not buy a field, representing the world, in order to gain Christ. Further, upon discovery of the treasure, a believer shares it with others rather than hides it.

The key to the parable is to determine what the treasure was that was held in the field. Although the interpretation should

not be dogmatically held, there is scriptural evidence that what was referred to here was none other than the nation Israel. Although Israel is an obvious factor in the world, apart from scriptural revelation, no one would recognize Israel as a treasure, and especially a treasure for which anyone would sell all that he has to buy.

Scriptural support is given for interpreting the treasure as Israel. According to Exodus 19:5, God declared to Israel, "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine." According to Psalms 135:4, "The Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure."

The fact that Israel is a treasure not recognized by the world and therefore hidden is all too evident today. Even among evangelical Christians, there are those who question whether Israel is an important biblical nation today with a prophetic future. Yet as we trace the gospel narratives, it is clear that Jesus came with a special purpose of redeeming Israel, although at the same time He reconciled the world unto Himself. It was Jesus, therefore, who sold all that He had in order to buy the treasure, Israel, and to purchase it with His own blood (Phil 2:7-8; 1 Pe 1:18-19). During the present age, Israel is a hidden entity in the world, only to emerge at the end of the age as a major factor in the prophetic fulfillment leading up to the second coming of Christ.

### **Parable of the Pearl of Great Price, 13:45-46**

In this parable, the same thought was presented as in the preceding one; only here, the pearl seemed to represent the church rather than Israel. In the world of gems, the pearl is uniquely formed organically. Its formation occurs because of an irritation in the tender side of an oyster. There is a sense in which the church was formed out of the wounds of Christ and has been made possible by His death and sacrifice.

The parable emphasized that the church has been made possible by the merchant who sold all that He had to secure the great pearl. So Christ, leaving the glory of heaven, made the supreme sacrifice of dying on the cross in order to make possible the formation of the church. The concept of the church as a living organism, composed of living stones which are added each time a believer is saved, was an apt portrayal of the formation of the true church in the present age, and made clear that this is one of the major purposes of God in the interadvent period. In the treasure and the pearl are the two major purposes of God for Israel and the church from a spiritual point of view, and His purposes for both are realized, even though there is the dual line of development of good and evil culminating in the second coming of Christ.

### **Parable of the Dragnet, 13:47-50**

The seventh parable, similar in many ways to the parable of the wheat and the tares, summarized the main ideas of the entire chapter. Like the first two parables, it was interpreted immediately. The kingdom of heaven was compared to a large net, described by Lenski as "the largest kind of net, weighed below with corks on top, sweeping perhaps a half mile of water." <sup>66</sup> Because of its large character, the net collects a multitude of different kinds of fish, described in the text as "every kind." Nets of this size were too large to empty into a boat and had to be drawn to shore. Here the fish were sorted. Those that were bad, or for any reason unusable, were cast back into the sea. The good fish were gathered into the vessel.

This familiar operation on the shores of the Sea of Galilee was compared to the judgment at the end of the age. Angels were described as separating those who are wicked from among the righteous, the wicked being described as wailing and gnashing their teeth as they were cast into the furnace of fire (Mt 13:50). The situation is parallel to the judgment of the nations in 25:31-46. The righteous who remain after the

wicked are gathered out are able to enter into the kingdom. The general situation is the same as the separation of the wheat and the tares and their judgment, described in 13:41-43.

The fulfillment of the prophetic truth in this parable will occur at the second coming of Jesus Christ, when the world is judged and the kingdom instituted. It is clear from this parable, as those preceding, that the present age does not end in a postmillennial triumph, with the entire world being Christianized; neither does it fulfill the kingdom promises of the Old Testament nor does it describe the period when all nations will serve the Lord. Rather, as in preceding parables, it describes the dual line of good and evil, continuing until the time of the end when both the good and evil are judged according to their true character.

It is significant that the net representing the kingdom of heaven as a sphere of profession included all kinds, both wicked and righteous, and that the separation did not come until the end. This passage serves to distinguish the kingdom of heaven from the kingdom of God which includes only the righteous. Neither the parable of the wheat and the tares nor the parable of the good and bad fish, as related to the kingdom of God, is mentioned in the other gospels.

#### Concluding Statement About the Parables, 13:51-52

At the conclusion of the parables, Jesus asked the disciples, "Have you understood all these things?" Amazingly, they replied, "Yea, Lord." It is rather obvious that they did not understand the parables, except in their general teachings. It would have required much more perspective, the clear revelation of the present age, and, to some extent, perspective of history, for them to have really understood these parables. At this time, they did not understand that there would be an age between the two advents. Christ did not challenge their assurance, however, but rather told them

that if they were truly instructed in these truths, they would be able to bring out of their treasure house of truth things both new and old.

<sup>65</sup> Richard C. Trench, *Notes on the Parables of Our Lord*, pp. 102-10.

<sup>66</sup> R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of Matthew's Gospel* (Minneapolis, 1943), p. 547.

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**(source:** The Association of Religion Data Archives ([ARDA](https://www.thearda.com)) strives to democratize access to the best data on religion. Founded as the American Religion Data Archive in 1997 and going online in 1998, the initial archive was targeted at researchers interested in American religion.)

<https://www.thearda.com/us-religion/history/timelines/entry?etype=3&eid=27>

### **Christian Reconstructionism - Timeline Movement**

#### **Founder**

Rousas John Rushdoony

#### **Time Period**

1965

#### **Description**

Developed from the work of Rousas John Rushdoony (1916-2001), a reformed theologian and political activist, Christian Reconstructionists believe that biblical Law should apply to all aspects of society. Believing that God calls on all Christians to "take dominion" over all spheres of human life, Rushdoony founded the Chalcedon Foundation in 1965, a small Christian think tank disseminating his theocratic vision of a world.

Many of his followers pushed a Reconstructionist agenda in local and national politics. Reconstructionists even played controversial role in the emergence of the [Christian Right](#) during the late 1970s and 1980s. Reconstructionism's commitments to building male-led familial units, supporting home education, and encouraging aggressive political activism have been credited with driving some conservative Christians into the political sphere.

Many [evangelicals](#) and [secularists](#) alike have condemned the movement for its open call for instituting a theocracy in the United States.

=====

**(source:** The Association of Religion Data Archives ([ARDA](#)) strives to democratize access to the best data on religion. Founded as the American Religion Data Archive in 1997 and going online in 1998, the initial archive was targeted at researchers interested in American religion.)

<https://www.thearda.com/us-religion/history/timelines/entry?etype=3&eid=17>

### **Religious Right - Timeline Movement**

#### **Time Period**

1979

#### **Description**

The religious right, or "new Christian right," is a conservative coalition in the United States that has risen in prominence since the late 1970s and has moved many formerly politically marginalized religious conservatives to engage the political process. With concerns over what they perceived as moral decline in 1960s, as well as new Supreme Court laws prohibiting school-sponsored prayer and legalizing abortion, many conservative Protestants and Catholics sought political advocacy as a means to return "Christian" values to the country.

The [Moral Majority](#) became the most prominent organization in the religious right soon after [Jerry Falwell](#) founded it in 1979. Targeting the Republican base, the organization mobilized voters to elect politicians who would defend their values: supporting prayers and creationism in schools, as well as opposing abortion, pornography, obscenity and other perceived threats to the family.

Though the Moral Majority declined by the late 1980s, the religious right remains active fighting against same-sex marriage and abortion.

=====

### **How much blasphemy is allowed in Europe?**

Silja Thoms

12 hours ago12 hours ago

**Freedom of speech is seen as a key pillar of democracy. However, provocations directed against religious communities repeatedly spark debate about the limits of this freedom. To what extent is it acceptable to mock God?**

=====



## + The Prayers of the People

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

**Leader – 3:** The war in Ukraine continues past the 491st day. Tensions and threats of conflict between Russia and the European Union or the West continue to rise. So, we pray that the World Leaders have the ideas and desire to end this conflict; we pray to the Lord.

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

**Leader – 2:** We continue praying for people we know needing healing and support, especially lifting in prayer those fighting Cancer. We continue to pray for the Faulk family as they put their lives back together after the recent fire. We also pray for everyone in our Congregation who has requested our prayers. With all these people in mind, we ask the Holy Spirit to guide the doctors, medical teams, and scientists as we seek healing and wholeness. Finally, we thank God for each day of life we have together. We trust in God's presence today and always; we pray to the Lord.

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

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

**Leader – 2:** As we continue to learn about climate change, we pray for all people, animals, and the Earth itself suffering the effects, and we pray for world leaders to recognize and respond to this environmental emergency with compassion and actual plans of action; we pray to the Lord.

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

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

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

**ALL: Amen**




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

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

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

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



may use the QRCode:  or the [PayPal link](#) in this bulletin, or mail a check to Ray Of Hope Church, 380 W. First St. Elmira, NY 14901. People in the Chapel may use the envelopes and the donation box next to the door before, during, or after this worship event.

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

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

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

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

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

## **SONG: #19 Notebook Glorify Thy Name**

Words and Music by Donna Adkins CCLI Song # 1383 © 1976, 1981 CCCM Music (Admin. by Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Inc.)  
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**Leader -2:** (\* **Improvise a prayer for the offerings received, giving thanks and praise.**\*) (When your prayer is complete, please say:)  
" Please rise as you are able to conclude the Service Of The Word Of God with a doxology."

**(We sing **The Doxology here.**)**

**ALL: Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God all**

**creatures here below. Praise God above ye heavenly hosts.  
Praise God the Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**



**WE CELEBRATE THE SACRED MEAL OF CHRIST**

**Leader:** Please gently hold the communion kit for the following two prayers. Viewers at home pour your wine or grape juice into your cup if you have not already done so. Then add a small amount of water to the cup. With this water, we remember Jesus is human. With this fruit of the vine, we remember He is divine forever.

**Pastor:** Blessed are you, Lord, God of all Creation. Through your goodness, we have this bread, and fruit of the vine, which the Earth has given us and human hands have lovingly made.

Now, through the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit, this bread will become for us the Bread From Heaven (Exodus 16:2, Psalm 78:24, John 6:32, 41,50,58), and this fruit of the vine will become for us the Cup of Our Salvation (Psalm 116:13), the Cup of Everlasting Life (John 6:54-57), and together they will be the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the very Body and Blood Of Christ (John 6:54-56; 1Corinthians 10:16).

**ALL: Blessed be God forever.**

(Other titles include: the Bread of the Angels (Psalm 78:25), the Bread of God (John 6:33), Cup of Our Salvation (Psalm 116:13), the Cup of Everlasting Life (John 6:54- 57), the Cup of the New Covenant (Matthew 26:28, Luke 22:20, 1 Corinthians 11:25)

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

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

**ALL: And also with you!**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Holy, Holy, Lord!

To my friends in Christ  
at Ray Of Hope Church

"Music for Worship"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Remember Me**

Words and Music by Gerrit Gustafson and Martin J. Nystrom

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## **The Reception of Holy Communion**

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

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

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

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

**Pastor:** Some people are watching from a location where they do not have actual Holy Communion Bread and Wine with them. We offer the following prayer for them based upon a prayer from the Episcopal National Cathedral

Prayer book for a Spiritual reception of Holy Communion.  
This prayer assures all the benefits and blessings of a  
physical reception. Together...

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

Spiritual Communion Prayer from the Episcopal National Cathedral Prayer Book.

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

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

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

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

## **+ Final Doxology**

**Pastor:** Together we pray:



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

## Doxology/Amen!

To my friends in Christ  
at Ray Of Hope Church

"Music For Worship"

Music by: Gaude! Liturgical Arts  
October 31, 1993

All hon - or and glo - ry be un - to You. Al - migh - ty  
God world with - out end. A men! Al - le - lu - ia  
A men! Al - le - lu - ia! All hon - or and glo - ry to you! A - men!

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### + Sign Of Peace

**Veronica Floyd:** The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ is with you.

**ALL:** And also with you.

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

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

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

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, by

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

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

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

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

**I Am The Bread Of Life.** Words and Music by Suzanne Toolan, RSM, b.1927

Contributors: Suzanne Toolan

Tune: © 1966, 1970, 1986, 1993, GIA Publications, Inc. Text: Based on John 6 and 11; © 1966, 1970, 1986, 1993, GIA Publications, Inc. Onlicense Song # 00044 Lead Me, Guide Me 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 755 Used with permission. Onlicense # 81048 Used with Print Permission and Streaming License A-741278

**General Offering** for the week of June 25 \$1,068.00 (some people give monthly rather than weekly) Attendance 5

**General Offering** for the week of July 2 \$1,068.00 (some people give monthly rather than weekly) Attendance 6

**General Offering** for the week of July 9 \$108.00 (some people give monthly rather than weekly) Attendance 6

**General Offering** for the week of July 16 \$68.00 (some people give monthly rather than weekly) Attendance 4

**General Offering** for the week of July 23 \$1,968.00 (some people give monthly rather than weekly) Attendance 9

**\*\*Special Gifts recently given.\*\***

**Thank you, Ed Askins, for donating \$115.00 to the liability insurance account.**

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

NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION UPDATED EDITION (NRSVUE)

Publisher: National Council of the Churches of Christ

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**UPCOMING EVENTS ON OUR CALENDAR**

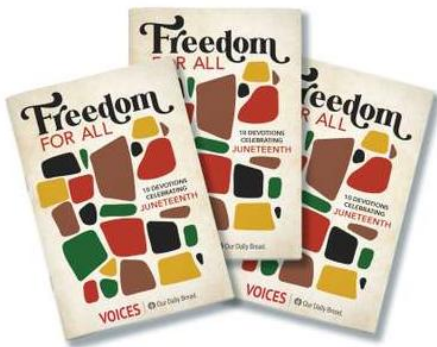
\*\* See the Q.R. Code on last page. \*\*

Tuesday, August 1, 6:30 p.m. Bible Enrichment .

Nominations for the Council are being received August 6 through August 24. Please see a Council Member if you are interested.

Friday, August 25, 2:00 p.m. Council Meeting

Sunday, September 24th Annual Meeting - also Cheryl Allen Birthday.



[https://odb.org/page/freedom-for-all-day-1?utm\\_source=reading-plan&utm\\_medium=unbounce&utm\\_campaign=juneteenth-23](https://odb.org/page/freedom-for-all-day-1?utm_source=reading-plan&utm_medium=unbounce&utm_campaign=juneteenth-23)

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



## **We Are Sent Forth To Serve**

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

**ALL: And also with you!**

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

**ALL: Amen**

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

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

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

**Last Song** **Walking Up The King's Highway Notebook #108** Words and Music Mary E. Gardner | Thomas A. Dorsey © Words: 1940. Renewed 1967 Unichappell Music, Inc. (Admin. by CURB | Word Music Publishing) Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp. (Admin. by CURB | Word Music Publishing) Music: 1940. Renewed 1967 Unichappell Music, Inc. (Admin. by CURB | Word Music Publishing) Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp. (Admin. by CURB | Word Music Publishing) CCLI Song # 78385 Used with permission through our Christian Copyright License Incorporated License Number 706121 and Christian Copyright License Incorporated Streaming Plus License 21787152.

**POSTLUDE:** Organ How Great Thou Art.

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

=====

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

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

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

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



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

The Third Sunday of Pride, 2019

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

**Everyone has access to the Holy Spirit, the gift of God to us.**

Read this on our website. [Right Click Here](#)

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

Everyone may receive Holy Communion, also known as The Eucharist, The Lord's Table, or The Blessed Sacrament at Ray Of Hope Church Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Inc.

You are not required to be a member of this Church or any other church, to receive Holy Communion at / or with Ray Of Hope Church.

This Holy Communion is the Table of Jesus Christ, who is present among us. Jesus invites you to receive Him in this Eucharistic banquet. If this is your first time receiving The Blessed Sacrament, let us know before you receive it or right after, so we might pray a special prayer of thanksgiving with you.

Unfortunately, through the centuries, many institutional churches have established rules, teachings, and practices that exclude people from Holy Communion. There has been an almost endless list of reasons to exclude people from the Blessed Sacrament. Yet, together, during the worship service, we recite the very words of Jesus, the Words of Institution, "This is my body. This is my blood," and we rehear Christ present with us saying: "Take this, all of you and eat; Take this all of you and drink" of this gift.

After extensive consideration, I take these words, "Take this, all of you.." as a command to the Church to give and bring the Eucharistic Gift to everyone who will receive. This approach also requires us to educate people about this gift. I have said **it is uniquely and deliberately the work of Christ in His Church** to offer the necessary education, guidance, and practices that help people live a life centered and purposed on finding and sharing

the Will of God. The Lord's Table is central to that life.

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

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

We welcome and bring the Eucharist to everyone told they cannot receive it by other Denominations. In conclusion, to everyone told "no, you cannot" go to Communion in any other church; hear us, "yes, you can" at Ray Of Hope. All are welcome. Or, as we like to say as one of our mottos when we quote Fr. Bartholomew J. O'Brien, "You are as welcome here as Christ Himself."

Come to the Table of the Lord. There is a place set for you too. (Excerpted from the Pastoral Report given at the Annual Meeting 34 on January 28, 2018, by Pastor Br. Shawn F. Benedict, updated 3-6-21, revised 3-3-2023)

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

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



Ray Of Hope Church Weekly Schedule

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

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

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

**Policy Concerning Minors at Events**

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

NOTE: On June 15, 1996, as a part of the Ordination Ceremony and his profession of Benedictine Vows, Rev. Leo W. McDermott, II retired the use of his secular birth name and was given a new name in religion, Brother Shawn Francis Benedict.

The Chapel is not open to the general public as we try to do our part to stop the spread of COVID-19. Call for an appointment if you want some time to come in and pray. Our regular services will be blended with live participation in the Chapel and live on Skype and Facebook Live. To read the information on how to use Skype to participate with us, [Click Here](#).. Visit our Facebook page [Click Here](#). We will reopen the Chapel as soon as it is reasonably safe and prudent.

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

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

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

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

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

I would like to schedule an appointment with the Pastor.



## Ray Of Hope Church Statement Of Purpose

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

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

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Visit us online:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?"

(Isaiah 43:19 ESV)

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

