
EMBRACE | EMBODY | EXTEND



ADVENT HOUSTON

4th Sunday after Pentecost

Proper 9

JULY • 6 • 2025

WELCOME TO ADVENT!

Advent means “arrival” or “coming.” Many of us have a temptation to believe that we can live a good enough life or do the right things to make our way to God. We think that if we do enough of the right types of things, then God will allow us into His home. But the Bible tells us again and again that we are never the first movers in this relationship. God is always the initiator. He spoke all things into being; He created; and He pursues. He is the one who arrives. And we see this in the first advent of God.

John begins his gospel by saying, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (ESV). God the Son came to us in the first advent: what the church calls the incarnation. He didn’t wait for us to try and make our way to his heavenly abode. He didn’t stand above us to lecture us or condemn us. He came to us. In fact, he became one of us, taking on flesh, pain, sorrows, and death.

And God hasn’t stopped there. After Jesus came into this world to inaugurate the reign of God on earth as it is in heaven, after he died on the cross to atone for our sins, and after he was raised from the dead to defeat sin and death, He ascended to heaven to assume the throne. Scripture tells us that he will come again. And when he comes again, he is bringing the new heavens and the new earth with him.

It is in this second advent, that Jesus promises to make all things new. Though he has already dealt with sin and death, it isn’t until he comes again that death will be eradicated.

ADVENT | CHRISTMAS | EPIPHANY | LENT | EASTER | PENTECOST | **ORDINARY**

PENTECOST

“The season after Pentecost Sunday and leading up to Advent is referred to as Ordinary Time. It does not mean the time is boring and mundane, but rather “Ordinary” refers to the “ordinal” way that the church calendar counts the Sundays from Pentecost until the Season of Advent. Historically the church has used this time to more fully flesh out Christ’s work in the lives of her people, in the church as a whole, or in Christ’s Kingdom over all the earth. Robert Webber writes that during Ordinary Time,

Many worship traditions follow lectionaries that highlight the work of the Spirit in the mission of the church in the world. Other churches organize their worship life around a lectio continua, continuous readings from a given section of Scripture. Some worship traditions have also called this season ‘Kingdomtime,’ focusing on the kingdom of God that is present now and the one that will be realized in more profound ways in the future....

[Thus] the various Sundays are not connected by a particular theme. In Advent we await the coming of Christ; during Christmas, we celebrate his arrival; and at Epiphany, we proclaim that Christ is manifested to the world as Savior. During Lent, we prepare for the death; in Holy Week, we reenact his death; then in Easter, we celebrate his resurrection and complete the Easter cycle with the celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit. But in the nonfestive season of the church year, there is no unified theme that ties the Sundays together.

At Advent Houston, we want to use this “nonfestive” season to focus on our particular mission in this particular time and place that God has for particular individuals like us. We want to minister to one another in the distinct ways that we need to hear the good news of what Jesus has done, and we want to practice our faith in light of the truth that Christ has died, Christ is risen, and Christ will come again.

*Robert E. Webber, *Ancient Future Time*

QUESTIONS

Are there ways we put up barriers for others to follow Jesus?

What would it look like for a church to avoid distinctions of “insiders” and “outsiders”?

How do you answer this before the service and after the service today: Who are the true “insiders” in the kingdom of God?

“And in that day, declares the Lord, you will call me ‘My Husband,’... And I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land, and I will make you lie down in safety. And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the Lord... And I will have mercy on No Mercy, and I will say to Not My People, ‘You are my people’ and he shall say, ‘You are my God.’” (ESV) – Hosea 2:16-23

But, as we wait for him to come again, we wait with hope. And as we wait, we live in light of that hope – praying for and acting in the knowledge that God’s Kingdom will come in bits and pieces even now, offering us glimpses of the way that it is supposed to be, the way it will ultimately be.

In the middle of these two advents of Christ, there is a third advent. There is the coming of the Holy Spirit. Jesus has sent the Holy Spirit to be with us, to help us to remember all that he taught and accomplished (John 14:26), and to help us as we follow him by faith. And Jesus tells us to follow him in the same way that he himself came. We are to leave our own comforts and to come into the places that he has called us. And so, in that way, we want to take the example of Christ’s first coming to enter into the lives of our community. We want to bear witness to the coming of the Kingdom of God in its fullness in the future. And, we want to minister as the mouthpiece, the hands, and the feet of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit (John 20:21).

So, Advent Houston is a **coming** of a group of Christians to the Texas Medical Center, to Rice University, and to the surrounding neighborhoods to embrace, embody, and extend the grace of Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit.

We are so glad that you are here with us!

SERVICE OF THE WORD

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Adapted from Psalm 30 and Psalm 66

Leader: Shout for joy to God, all the earth;
sing the glory of his name;
give to him glorious praise!
Say to God,

People: **“How awesome are your deeds!
So great is your power that your enemies come cringing to you.
All the earth worships you
and sings praises to you;
they sing praises to your name.”**

Leader: Sing praises to the Lord, O you his saints,
and give thanks to his holy name.

People: **I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up
and have not let my foes rejoice over me.**

Leader: Come and see what God has done:
he is awesome in his deeds toward the children of man.
He has not only saved us, but invites us warmly to worship Him,
So let us bless our God, O peoples;
let the sound of his praise be heard,

ALL: **You have turned for me my mourning into dancing;
you have loosed my sackcloth
and clothed me with gladness,
that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent.
O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever!**

***SONG**

Come People of the Risen King

Words and music by Keith Getty, Kristyn Getty, and Stuart Townend

© 2007 Thankyou Music

Verse 1

Come people of the Risen King
Who delight to bring Him praise
Come all and tune your hearts to sing
To the Morning Star of grace
From the shifting shadows of the earth
We will lift our eyes to Him
Where steady arms of mercy reach
To gather children in

Chorus

Rejoice rejoice let ev'ry tongue rejoice
One heart one voice
O Church of Christ rejoice

Verse 2

Come those whose joy is morning sun
And those weeping through the night
Come those who tell of battles won
And those struggling in the fight
For His perfect love will never change
And His mercies never cease
But follow us through all our days
With the certain hope of peace

Chorus

Verse 3

Come young and old from ev'ry land
Men and women of the faith
Come those with full or empty hands
Find the riches of His grace
Over all the world His people sing
Shore to shore we hear them call
The truth that cries through ev'ry age
Our God is all in all

Chorus

PRAYER OF ADORATION

Eternal God,
You have called us together,
To be the hands and feet of Jesus,
Along with people in Africa, Afghanistan,
Australia, and all around the world.
All around the world people are gathering together,
And praising you.
Help us to join in the great big wave of praise,
So together we might show
That we are one through the work of the Holy Spirit,
And so bring glory and honor to our Lord
And Savior, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 56:3-8, pg. 577

³ Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD say,
“The LORD will surely separate me from his people”;
and let not the eunuch say,
“Behold, I am a dry tree.”

⁴ For thus says the LORD:
“To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths,
who choose the things that please me
and hold fast my covenant,
⁵ I will give in my house and within my walls
a monument and a name
better than sons and daughters;
I will give them an everlasting name
that shall not be cut off.

⁶ “And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD,
to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD,
and to be his servants,
everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it,
and holds fast my covenant—

⁷ these I will bring to my holy mountain,
and make them joyful in my house of prayer;
their burnt offerings and their sacrifices
will be accepted on my altar;
for my house shall be called a house of prayer
for all peoples.”

⁸The Lord GOD,
who gathers the outcasts of Israel, declares,
“I will gather yet others to him
besides those already gathered.” (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Galatians 3:23-29, pg. 914

²³ Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. ²⁴ So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, ²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. ²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*SONG

10,000 Reasons

Words and music by Jonas Myrin and Matt Redman

© 2011 Atlas Mountain Songs; sixsteps Music; Thankyou Music

Chorus

Bless the Lord O my soul O my soul
Worship His holy name
Sing like never before O my soul
I'll worship Your holy name

Verse 1

The sun comes up it's a new day dawning
It's time to sing Your song again
Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me
Let me be singing when the evening comes

Chorus

Verse 2

You're rich in love and You're slow to anger
Your name is great and Your heart is kind
For all Your goodness I will keep on singing
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find

Chorus

Verse 3

And on that day when my strength is failing
The end draws near and my time has come
Still my soul will sing Your praise unending
Ten thousand years and then forevermore

Chorus

Ending

Sing like never before O my soul
I'll worship Your holy name
I'll worship Your holy name

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

From To Be a Christian: An Anglican Catechism

Leader: What do we believe about the church?

ALL: The Church is the whole community of faithful Christians in heaven and on earth, called and formed by God into one people. The Church on earth gathers to worship God in Word and Sacrament, to serve God and neighbor, and to proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

Leader: In what sense is the church “one”?

ALL: The Church is one because all its members form the one Body of Christ, having “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all” (Ephesians 4:5–6). The Church is called to embody this unity in all relationships between believers.

Leader: What does the word “communion” mean?

ALL: “Communion” means being “one with” someone in union and unity. For Christians, it refers to the unity of the three Persons within the one Being of God, to our union with God through our union with Christ, and to our unity with one another in Christ.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Written by Beth Merrill Neel on her blog, 'Hold Fast to What Is Good'. Used with permission.

ALL: **O God who loves us, hear our prayer. So often we come to you at a loss – at a loss for the right words, the right deeds, the right feelings. We know all is not right, but we cannot say with certainty what is wrong. There are deep divisions between us and others. There are too many who live in poverty and fear. There are too many horrific stories, and not enough hopeful ones. So we pray to you, our Creator and Redeemer, to make things right, and to make us right with you and each other. Turn us around from that which destroys toward that which heals and brings joy. And hear us again, as we offer you our confession in silence.**

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

From Ephesians 2:8-9 (ESV)

Leader: For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

ALL: **Thanks be to God!**

*JESUS LOVES ME

By Anna Bartlett Warner

Words and music: public domain

Jesus loves me, this I know
For the Bible tells me so
Little ones to Him belong
They are weak, but He is strong
Yes, Jesus loves me
Yes, Jesus loves me
Yes, Jesus loves me
The Bible tells me so

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Adapted from *The Book of Common Prayer*

Leader: O God, you have taught us to keep all your commandments by loving you and our neighbor: Grant us the grace of your Holy Spirit, that we may be devoted to you with our whole heart, and united to one another with pure affection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

*People continue praying as God leads them to pray for the needs of individuals and peoples. When upon finishing – the leader will say, “Lord, in your mercy.”
And all will reply, “Hear our prayer.”*

Leader: We pray all of this in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray, saying ...

People: **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be Your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Yours is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

SERMON READING

Acts 15:1-11, pg. 869

¹ But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.” ² And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question. ³ So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the brothers. ⁴ When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all that God had done with them. ⁵ But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up and said, “It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses.”

⁶The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter. ⁷And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. ⁸And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, ⁹and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith. ¹⁰Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? ¹¹But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.” (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Will McKee

“No Distinction”

MAIN POINT:

Because God has saved us through the g_____ of the L____ J_____, we must not m____ d_____.

Looks like...

1. Standing up for i_____ (v.2)
2. J____ (v.3)
3. H_____ cleansed by f_____ (v.9)

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

How do you answer this before the service and after the service today:

- Who are the true “insiders” in the kingdom of God?

What is one thing you can do to include others in the faith?

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: May the peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OFFERTORY & PRIVATE PRAYER

All giving is a response to God's generosity to you in all aspects of life, but particularly through the person and work of Jesus. If you are not sure what you

think about Jesus or Christianity, or if you are a guest, we would invite you to refrain from giving at this time. Online giving is available at adventpres.org/give. You can also scan this QR code or place a gift in the offering basket near the entrance of the worship area.



*SONG

Nothing But the Blood

Words and music by Robert Lowry

© Words and music: public domain

Verse 1

What can wash away my sin?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus
What can make me whole again?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus

Chorus

O precious is the flow
That makes me white as snow
No other fount I know
Nothing but the blood of Jesus

Verse 2

For my pardon this I see
Nothing but the blood of Jesus
For my cleansing this my plea
Nothing but the blood of Jesus

Chorus

Verse 3

Nothing can for sin atone
Nothing but the blood of Jesus
Naught of good that I have done
Nothing but the blood of Jesus

Chorus

Verse 4

This is all my hope and peace
Nothing but the blood of Jesus
This is all my righteousness
Nothing but the blood of Jesus
Chorus x2

*CLOSING PRAYER

*DISMISSAL

Romans 15:5-6 (Edited from ESV)

Leader: May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

ALL: AMEN.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



WOMEN'S EVENT – WOMEN THAT WALK

Wednesday, July 9th, 7:00 P.M.

Ladies, put your walking shoes on and join your gal-pals for dinner at Beck's Prime at Memorial Park. Enjoy a bite to eat, a little walk or a time of catching up around the table.

Location: Beck's Prime | 1001 E Memorial Loop Dr.



CHRISTIAN STUDENT FELLOWSHIP (CSF) DINNER

July 20th, 6:00 PM

Calling all medical students, invite your med student friends to meet your Advent med student friends for dinner.

Sign-up on Church Center

Location: Walton's Home | 531 Wisteria St.



RYM – MIDDLE SCHOOL TEXAS

August 2nd – 6th

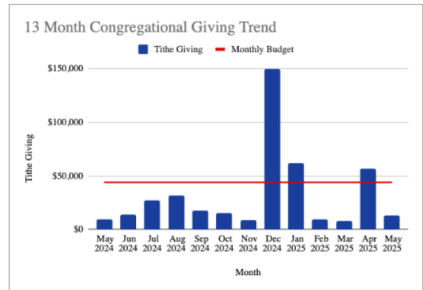
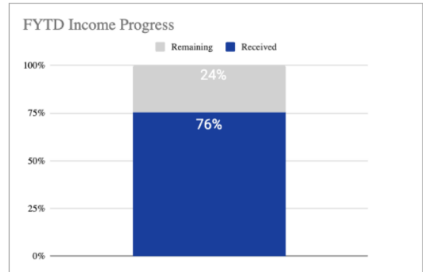
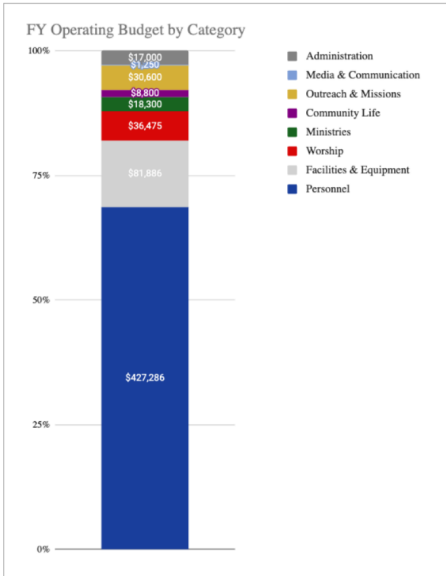
Who wants to go to RYM? Talking to middle schoolers here, sorry adults. It's time to sign up. Reach out to Maggie.

Sign-up on Church Center

Location: Allaso Ranch | Hawkins, TX

FINANCIALS

FISCAL YEAR 2025 (JUNE - JULY) - AS OF MAY



GIVING AT ADVENT

If you are a first-time visitor, we invite you to simply be our guest today! Contributions from our members and regular attenders sustain the work of our church, our staff, and our people. We give sacrificially and graciously because of the joy we have in God's generosity to us! May we be regularly reminded of the Lord's provision and care for us while humbly accepting the invitation to participate in His work.

FOR MORE READING

2 Corinthians 9:6-15, 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8:9-15; Hebrews 7
PCA Foundation: <https://pcafoundation.com/is-tithing-a-christian-obligation/>

HOW TO GIVE

It would be tremendously beneficial to have more regular and automated giving throughout the calendar year. All options are available to you from leaving a donation in the offering basket, to automating online giving, to donating appreciated securities. We welcome your questions and input. With the wonderful help of Auxilio Partners, we strive for transparency. Our budget is available upon request.

AdventPres.org/Give



DAILY LECTIONARY READINGS

These daily readings come from the Revised Common Lectionary and are intended to complement the readings heard in worship. The first three days readings reflect on the prior Sunday's readings, while the last three days lead into the upcoming Sunday's readings.

Date	Psalm	Old Testament	New Testament
7/6	Psalm 30; 66:1-9	2 Kings 5:1-14 Isaiah 66:10-14	Galatians 6:1-16 Luke 10:1-11, 16-20
7/7	Psalm 6; 119:73-80	2 Kings 5:15-19a Jeremiah 6:10-19	Acts 19:21-27
7/8	Psalm 6; 119:73-80	2 Kings 5:19b-27 Jeremiah 8:4-13	Acts 19:28-41
7/9	Psalm 6; 119:73-80	2 Kings 6:1-7 Joshua 23:1-16	Luke 10:13-16
7/10	Psalm 82; 25:1-10	Amos 1:1-2:3 Genesis 41:14-36	James 2:14-26
7/11	Psalm 82; 25:1-10	Amos 2:4-11 Genesis 41:37-49	Acts 7:9-16
7/12	Psalm 82; 25:1-10	Amos 2:12-3:8 Leviticus 19:1-4	John 3:16-21
7/13	Psalm 82; 25:1-10	Amos 7:7-17 Deuteronomy 30:9-14	Colossians 1:1-14 Luke 10:25-37
7/14	Psalm 7; 25:11-20	Amos 3:9-4:5 Job 24:1-8	James 2:1-7
7/15	Psalm 7; 25:11-20	Amos 4:6-13 Proverbs 19:1-17	1 John 3:11-17
7/16	Psalm 7; 25:11-20	Amos 5:1-9 Ecclesiastes 9:13-18	Matthew 25:31-46
7/17	Psalm 52; 15	Amos 5:10-17 Genesis 12:10-20	Hebrews 5:1-6
7/18	Psalm 52; 15	Amos 5:18-27 Genesis 13:1-18	Ephesians 3:14-21
7/19	Psalm 52; 15	Amos 6:1-14 Genesis 14:1-16	Luke 8:4-10
7/20	Psalm 52; 15	Amos 8:1-12 Genesis 18:1-10a	Colossians 1:15-28 Luke 10:38-42



DAILY LECTIONARY READINGS – QR CODE

Use the table above or scan this QR code to access the Revised Common Lectionary daily readings via BibleGateway.com.

Media Release

Advent Houston shares photos taken at our events in our monthly newsletters, on our website, or on social media for the purpose of promoting and highlighting the church's mission. By being present, you consent to being photographed and having these photos shared. For individuals who are not comfortable being visible in a shared photograph, please notify the church at admin@adventpres.org to opt out of the media release.

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ADVENT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOUSTON

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TO THE TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER, RICE
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