
EMBRACE | EMBODY | EXTEND



ADVENT HOUSTON

5th Sunday after Pentecost

Proper 7

JUNE • 23 • 2024

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.

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*

REFLECTIONS

"Pride, anger, naivete, and nostalgia are like Stalin's communists waiting to deliver Poland out of the hands of Hitler's Nazis. What looks like a rescue only recovers and repeats the oppression. When God's people walk out of God's house and respond to the folly they find under the sun by becoming foolish themselves, there is little wonder why it can seem that God is nowhere to be found in the news, our neighborhoods, or our daily toil. We become like firefighters who, upon entering a burning building, disdain the water hoses and instead turn confidently to blowtorches and try helplessly to douse what blazes."

— **Zack Eswine**

"The advent of Christ, then anchors the world into God's purposes. History is not a matrix of random events tumbling out one after the other in aimless fashion but an intricate and grand design to crown Jesus as lord of all creation."

— **George Athas**

"Sin may seem pleasant to us now, but we must not forget how it will appear when we get past it and turn to look back on it; especially must we keep in mind how it will seem from a dying pillow."

— **David Gibson**

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

Psalm 103:1-4, 22

ALL: Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!

Leader: Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,
ALL: who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,

Leader: Bless the LORD, all his works, in all places of his dominion.
ALL: Bless the LORD, O my soul!

*SONG

Good Good Father

Words and Music by Pat Barrett and Anthony Brown
© 2014 Capitol CMG Paragon

Verse 1

I've heard a thousand stories
Of what they think You're like
But I've heard the tender whisper
Of love in the dead of night
You tell me that You're pleased
And that I'm never alone

Chorus

You're a Good Good Father
It's who You are
It's who You are
It's who You are
And I'm loved by You
It's who I am
It's who I am
It's who I am

Verse 2

I've seen many searching for answers
Far and wide
But I know we're all searching for answers
Only You provide
Because You know just what we need
Before we say a word

Bridge

You are perfect in all of Your ways
You are perfect in all of Your ways
You are perfect in all of Your ways to us
Repeat

Verse 3

Love so undeniable I can hardly speak
Peace so unexplainable I can hardly think
As You call me deeper still
As You call me deeper still
As You call me deeper still
Into love love love
Chorus x2

PRAYER OF ADORATION

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Romans 5:6-11

[6] For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. [7] For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die — [8] but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. [9] Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. [10] For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. [11] More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

STORIES OF MISSION & MERCY

*SONG

Psalm 130 (From the Depths of Woe)

Words by Martin Luther and music by Christopher Miner

© 1997 Christopher Miner Music

From the depths of woe I raise to Thee
The voice of lamentation;
Lord, turn a gracious ear to me
And hear my supplication;
If Thou iniquities dost mark,
Our secret sins and misdeeds dark,

O who shall stand before Thee?

Echo: Who shall stand before Thee?

O who shall stand before Thee?

Echo: Who shall stand before Thee?

To wash away the crimson stain,
Grace, grace alone availeth;
Our works, alas! Are all in vain;
In much the best life faileth;
No man can glory in Thy sight,
All must alike confess Thy might,

And live alone by mercy

Echo: Live alone by mercy

And live alone by mercy

Echo: Live alone by mercy

Therefore my trust is in the Lord,
And not in mine own merit;
On Him my soul shall rest, His word
Upholds my fainting spirit;
His promised mercy is my fort,
My comfort and my sweet support;

I wait for it with patience

Echo: Wait for it with patience

I wait for it with patience

Echo: Wait for it with patience

What though I wait the live-long night,
And 'til the dawn appeareth,
My heart still trusteth in His might;
It doubteth not nor feareth;
Do thus, O ye of Israel's seed,
Ye of the Spirit born indeed;

And wait 'til God appeareth

Echo: Wait 'til God appeareth

And wait 'til God appeareth

Echo: Wait 'til God appeareth

Though great our sins and sore our woes
His grace much more aboundeth;
His helping love no limit knows,
Our utmost need it soundeth.
Our Shepherd good and true is He,
Who will at last His Israel free

From all their sin and sorrow

Echo: All their sin and sorrow

From all their sin and sorrow

Echo: All their sin and sorrow

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

Adapted from the *Book of Common Prayer* of the Church of England

Leader: Christian, what is your duty towards God?

ALL: I believe my duty towards God is to believe in him, to fear him and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul and with all my strength; to worship him, to give him thanks; to put my whole trust in him, to call upon him; to honor his holy name and his word; and to serve him truly all the days of my life.

Leader: What is your duty towards your neighbor?
ALL: **I believe My duty towards my neighbor is to love them as myself, and to do to all people as I would have them do to me; to hurt no one by word or deed; to be true and just in all my dealings; to bear no malice nor hatred in my heart, nor to covet or desire the possessions of others and to do my duty in whatever state of life to which it pleases God to call me.**

Leader: How will you accomplish all this?
ALL: **I believe I am able to love God and walk in his commands only through his grace, which is given to me in Christ and which I am to seek through prayer at all times.**

CONFESSON OF SIN

Adapted from The Book of Common Worship of the Anglican Church

Leader: We confess our sin, and the sins of our society, in the misuse of God's creation. God our Father, we are sorry for the times when we have used your gifts carelessly, and acted ungratefully.
Hear our prayer, and in your mercy:
ALL: **Forgive us and help us.**

Leader: We enjoy the fruits of the harvest, but we confess of the times we forget you have given them to us.
Father, in your mercy:
ALL: **Forgive us and help us.**

Leader: We belong to a people who are full and satisfied, but we confess the times we ignore the cry of the hungry.
Father, in your mercy:
ALL: **Forgive us and help us.**

Leader: We confess the times we are thoughtless, and do not care enough for the world you have made.
Father, in your mercy:
ALL: **Forgive us and help us.**

Leader: We store up goods for ourselves alone, and we confess of the times we act as if there were no God and no heaven.
Father, in your mercy:
ALL: Forgive us and help us.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Romans 5:8 (NIV)

Leader: But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us

***GLORIA PATRI**

Anonymous

Glory be to the Father
And to the Son
And to the Holy Ghost
As it was in the beginning
Is now and ever shall be
World without end
Amen, amen

ADVENTURERS

CHILDREN (1ST - 5TH GRADES)

All children, 1st through 5th grades, are invited to go to Adventurers, for a children's lesson and activity time during the sermon. The Adventurers will be escorted back to the Chapel during the Passing of the Peace.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

A Prayer attributed to Erasmus (1536 a.d.)

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ, you are the way, the truth and the life: let us not stray from you who are the way, nor distrust your promises who are the truth, nor rest in anything but you who are the life, for beyond you there is nothing to be desired neither in heaven nor in earth.

*Leader Intercedes for the world, Church,
and the needs of our congregation.*

SERMON READING

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

[1] For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

- [2] a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
- [3] a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
- [4] a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
- [5] a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
- [6] a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away;
- [7] a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
- [8] a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Rev. Taylor Leachman

Wisdom for the Way “The Potentate of Time”



Do you have a question about today's sermon? If so, click on the QR code for discussion at the next Question & Discussion time.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you."
May the peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you!**

RETURN OF ADVENTURERS

During the Passing of the Peace, the teachers will bring the Adventurers back to the Chapel.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are glad to have you worship with us today. Please sign-in on the pad located near the center aisle and record your information there.

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 chapel.



SERVICE OF THE TABLE

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

ALL: We do not presume to come to this your table, merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your abundant and great mercies. We are not worthy to gather up the crumbs under your table. But you are the same Lord, who always delights in showing mercy. Nourish us, therefore, gracious Lord, so that in partaking of this sacrament of your son Jesus Christ, we may walk in newness of life, grow into his likeness, and evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Leader: It is right, our duty and our joy, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Through Jesus Christ our Lord; who on the first day of the week overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

ALL:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,
Hea - ven and earth are full, full of your
Bless - ed is He who comes in the name of the
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Ho -
san - na in the high - est.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Leader: Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of our faith.

People: **Christ has died!**
Christ is risen!
Christ will come again!

Leader: Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and wine, that the bread we break and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ. By your Spirit, make us one with Christ and with your church in all the world.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

Leader: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: **Therefore let us keep the feast.**

Leader: These gifts of God for the people of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

COMMUNION AT ADVENT

Advent welcomes all baptized Christians to participate in the Lord's table. This includes all Christians, whether members at Advent or at another church. Children who have been baptized and admitted to the table by the elders of this church or the leadership of another church are also welcome to the table.

If you're still investigating Christianity, not sure what you believe, or simply choose not to participate, you may either remain in your seat or come forward, cross your arms over your chest, and receive a blessing. Feel free to use the prayers printed in the bulletin below. Non-communing children are encouraged to come forward to receive a blessing while their parents receive communion.

ABOUT THE ELEMENTS

- We serve both wine and grape juice for communion.
- Grape juice is available in the center of the communion trays; wine is available along the edge.
- All communion bread is gluten free.



PRAYER FOR THOSE SEARCHING FOR TRUTH

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me the ability to follow you no matter what it might cost me. Give me an understanding for you that is coherent, convincing, and leads to the life that you promise. Amen. A prayer of belief: A prayer for those struggling against sin: A prayer for covenant children who have not yet made a profession of faith:

PRAYER OF BELIEF

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever believed, but through you, I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead and are now representing me at the Father's right hand in heaven, I turn from my sins and receive you as my savior. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THOSE STRUGGLING AGAINST SIN

Lord Jesus, give me the ability to see in you the fulfillment of all my needs and desires, and help me to turn from every false source of satisfaction to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely to me, and run with perseverance the race that you have set before me, looking only to you, the author and perfecter of my faith. Amen.

A PRAYER FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE NOT YET MADE A PROFESSION OF FAITH

Lord Jesus, thank you for giving me the opportunity to grow up in a Christian family where I am surrounded by the good news of the gospel. Help me to grow in my understanding of who you are and what you have done for me on the cross. Help me learn what it means for me to turn from my sins and trust in you alone for my salvation. Teach me what it means to follow you as one of your disciples. Amen.

COMMUNION SONG

Psalm 19

Words and music by Jess Ray

© 2017 JESS RAY MUSIC

Verse

Purify my heart,
May every word, every thought
Every motive, every intention
Be pleasing in your sight O God

Chorus

For Your voice refreshes my soul,
Brings joy to my heart,
And light to my eyes
Your words more precious than gold,
Sweeter than honey,
Better than life

Repeat all once

Verse

End

Be pleasing in your sight O God

*SONG

The Sands of Time Are Sinking

Words by Anne cousin and music from a traditional folk tune arranged by Phillip Palmertree

© 2001 Phillip Palmertree Music

The sands of time are sinking,
The dawn of heaven breaks;
The summer morn I've sighed for -
The fair, sweet morn awakes:
Dark, dark had been the midnight
But dayspring is at hand,
And glory, glory dwelleth
In Emmanuel's land.

The king there in His beauty,
Without a veil is seen:
It were a well-spent journey,
Though seven deaths lay between:
The Lamb with His fair army,
Doth on Mount Zion stand,
And glory, glory dwelleth
In Emmanuel's land

O Christ, He is the fountain,
The deep, sweet well of love!
The streams on earth I've tasted
More deep I'll drink above:
There to an ocean fullness
His mercy doth expand,
And glory, glory dwelleth
In Emmanuel's land.

The bride eyes not her garment,
But her dear Bridegroom's face;
I will not gaze at glory
But on my King of grace.
Not at the crown He giveth
But on His pierced hand;
The Lamb is all the glory
Of Emmanuel's land.

O I am my Beloved's
And my Beloved is mine!
He brings a poor vile sinner
Into His house of wine
I stand upon His merit -
I know no other stand,
Not e'en where glory dwelleth
In Emmanuel's land.

*CLOSING PRAYER

*BENEDICTION

Hebrews 13:20-21 (NIV)

Leader: Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



QUESTION & DISCUSSION

Next Sunday, June 30, 12:15

Got questions? Let's discuss. Scan the QR code to submit your question. Join us after the worship service for lunch and discussion.

Location: Betsy's | 4400 Bellaire Blvd



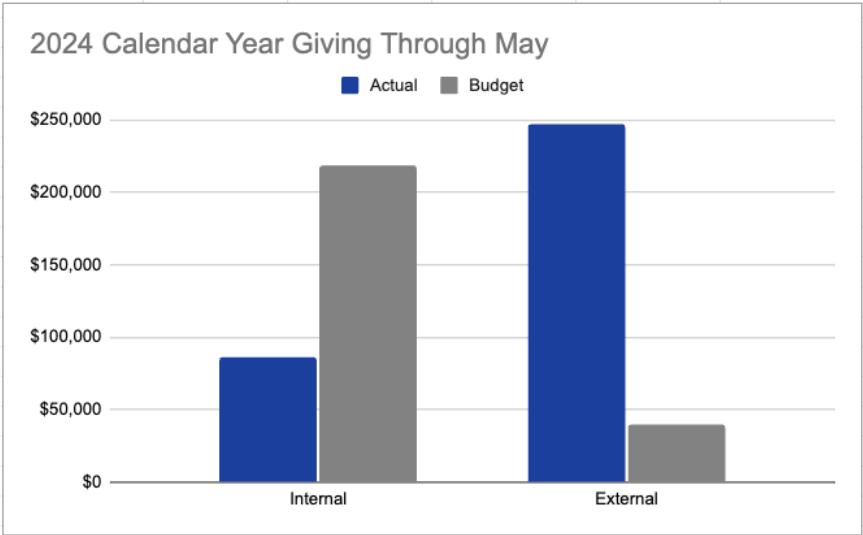
OVERNIGHT PRAYER RETREAT

August 2nd 4:00 P.M. to 3rd 2:00 P.M.

We're going back to the Villa de Matel, this time for an overnight of prayer and quiet reflection. This is a special place to be still or simply wander. Meals are provided. Advent has 12 slots available for you and your friends.

Register at adventpres.org/events

2024 CALENDAR YEAR GIVING



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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