

ADVENT HOUSTON

ORDER OF WORSHIP

7th Sunday of Epiphany

February 19, 2023

EPIPHANY

The season of Epiphany is a time of enlightenment. The word Epiphany comes from the a Greek word meaning “to bring of light.” The season is a five to nine week period celebrating and remembering the time that God manifested Jesus as the Son of God as the Savior to and for the world.

During Christmas we joyfully celebrated the coming of [the] light in the birth of Jesus. Now the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6 brings this theme to culmination - the light of Christ made manifest to the whole world as symbolized by the Gentile Magi from the East. Thus the day of Epiphany and the season that follows complete what is sometimes called in the liturgical year the Cycle of Light.

Twenty centuries after the birth and ministry of Jesus, we can take it for granted that Jesus was not just the Anointed One for Israel, but that He was the promised Messiah (meaning anointed one) that would bring salvation to all peoples, all tribes, and all nations. So, the season of Epiphany is a time when we remember that Jesus was made manifest to the Wise Men who came to worship him. It is a time when we remember that manifests his ministry and power to the world around him. And it is a time when we begin to more fully contemplate what it means for us to participate in extending his light to the nations. Allow for this season, to be a time when you think more about how you might be able to make Jesus' story manifest in your own life and to the lives of others.

REFLECTION

Awaken Houston - by the Houston Church Planting Network:

For the past seven years we have coordinated a season of prayer which we call Awaken Houston. It has been a time to pray in unity for our mission as a Church, revival in our churches, and a spiritual awakening here in Houston. These have been impactful seasons as we've prayed together for a move of God in our city. This year our 30 Days of Prayer will be from January 30-February 28.

This year we are asking people to identify people in their lives that are far from God and pray fervently for them during these 30 days. In addition, we are encouraging individuals to consider fasting in a way that is appropriate for them during these 30 days.

Further Reflection

It is atheism to pray and not wait on hope.

— **Richard Sibbes**

“We tend to use prayer as a last resort, but God wants it to be our first line of defense. We pray when there's nothing else we can do, but God wants us to pray before we do anything at all.... Most of us would prefer, however, to spend our time doing something that will get immediate results. We don't want to wait for God to resolve matters in His good time because His idea of 'good time' is seldom in sync with ours.”

— **Oswald Chambers**

“We never know how God will answer our prayers, but we can expect that He will get us involved in His plan for the answer. If we are true intercessors, we must be ready to take part in God's work on behalf of the people for whom we pray.”

— **Corrie ten Boom**

“In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart. ”

— **John Bunyan**

SERVICE OF THE WORD

*Call to Worship – From Psalm 99

Leader: The LORD reigns; let the peoples tremble!
People: He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!
Leader: The LORD is great in Zion; he is exalted over all the peoples.
People: Let them praise your great and awesome name! Holy is he!
Leader: Exalt the LORD our God; worship at his footstool!
ALL: Holy is he!

*Song – Who You Say I Am

Verse 1

Who am I that the highest King
Would welcome me
I was lost but He brought me in
Oh His love for me, oh His love for me

Chorus 1

Who the Son sets free oh is free indeed
I'm a child of God, yes I am

Verse 2

Free at last, He has ransomed me
His grace runs deep
While I was a slave to sin
Jesus died for me, yes He died for me

Chorus 2

Who the Son sets free oh is free indeed
I'm a child of God, yes I am
In my Father's house there's a place for me
I'm a child of God, yes I am

Bridge

I am chosen not forsaken
I am who You say I am
You are for me not against me
I am who You say I am x2

Chorus 2

Ending

In my Father's house
There's a place for me
I'm a child of God
Yes I am

New Testament Reading

Luke 18:1-8

[1] And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. [2] He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. [3] And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.' [4] For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor respect man, [5] yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.'" [6] And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge says. [7] And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? [8] I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" (ESV)

Leader: The Gospel of the LORD.

People: **Praise be to You, Lord Christ.**

Missional Skills & Stories

*Song – The Church's One Foundation (Verses 1-3)

The church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ her Lord,
She is His new creation
By water and the Word.
From heaven He came and sought her
To be His holy bride;
With His own blood He bought her,
And for her life He died.

Elect from every nation,
Yet one over all the earth;
Her charter of salvation,
One Lord, one faith, one birth;
One holy Name she blesses,
Partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses,
With every grace endued.

Though with a scornful wonder
Men see her sore oppressed,
By schisms rent asunder,
By heresies distressed,
Yet saints their watch are keeping;
Their cry goes up, "How long?"
And soon the night of weeping
Shall be the morn of song.

***Affirmation of Faith**

**The Apostles' Creed & Catechism Questions 59, 62, & 60 from
"To Be a Christian"**

Leader: Christian, what is it that you believe?

ALL: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell*; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

* Christ's 'descent into hell' occurred in His death and burial, the Father's wrath toward sin being poured out on him in our place, so we would never have to taste His wrath.

** By 'catholic,' we mean the universal church made up of all Christians who are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

He "Suffered under Pontius Pilate"

Leader: Why did Jesus suffer?

People: Jesus suffered as a sacrifice for our sins so that we could have peace with God, as prophesied in the Old Testament: "But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed."

Leader: Why does the Creed say that Jesus suffered under the Roman governor Pontius Pilate?

People: **The Creed thus makes clear that Jesus' life and death were real events that occurred at a particular time and place in Judea in the first century AD.**

Leader: In what ways did Jesus suffer?

People: **On earth, the incarnate Son shared physically, emotionally, and spiritually in the temptations and sufferings common to all people, yet without sin. In his agony and desolation on the Cross, he uniquely suffered in my place for my sins and, in so doing, revealed God's love and compassion for fallen and suffering humanity.**

Confession of Sin (From Christ Central Church in Charlotte, NC)

Leader: Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners - of whom I am the worst.

Leader: Let us confess our sins together against God and our neighbors.

ALL: **We confess that we have grown sinfully comfortable in the futility of this life.
We are cynical and suspicious of the hope of redemption.
We work and see in it little of Your purpose.
We play and see in it little of Your pleasure.
We groan to be changed for the better and see in it little of Your promise.
Startle us we pray, with truth that will shake us and with love that will not let us go.**

***Assurance of Pardon**

Romans 5:8

Leader: God demonstrates his own love for us in this:

People: **While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**

Leader: May the God of all healing and forgiveness draw us to himself, and cleanse us from all our sins that we may behold the glory of his Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our LORD.

People: **Amen.**

Joining Advent Houston

Elder: Do you acknowledge yourself to be sinners in the sight of God, justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope save in His sovereign mercy? Do You?

New Members: We do.

Elder: Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered in the Gospel? Do You?

New Members: We do.

Elder: Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes the followers of Christ? Do You?

New Members: We do.

Elder: Do you promise to support the church in its worship and work to the best of your ability? Do You?

New Members: We do.

Elder: Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of the church, and promise to study its purity and peace? Do You?

New Members: We do.

Pastor: Having confessed the faith and promised to participate in the life of the church, we now welcome you into the family of our congregation and into the ministry of the church. As active followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to spread his Good News. We encourage you to accept that call through your involvement in the church.

New Members: We gladly receive your invitation and commit ourselves to using our time and talents for the good of the congregation and the mission of the church. We will strive to live lives worthy of the calling to which we have been called and will work with you to embrace, embody, and extend the grace of Jesus Christ.

Pastor: Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for new members to this church who have been called to Advent Houston. Bless them in their life's journey; nourish their souls and be a light on their path. We thank you that you have given them this new spiritual home here at Advent. May their lives be enriched through ministry and community, may they be blessed and may they each bring their gifts into your service. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray.

All: Amen

***Song – The Church’s One Foundation (Verses 4 & 6)**

The church shall never perish,
Her dear Lord to defend
To guide, sustain and cherish,
Is with her to the end
Though there be those that hate her,
And false sons in her pale
Against a foe or traitor,
She ever shall prevail

Yet she on earth hath union
With God the Three in One,
And mystic sweet communion
With those whose rest is won.
O happy ones and holy!
Lord, give us grace that we
Like them, the meek and lowly,
On high may dwell with Thee.

ADVENTURERS

CHILDREN (K - 3RD GRADE)

All kids from Kindergarten through 3rd Grade are invited to go to Adventurers, a children's lesson and activity time during the sermon. They will be escorted back to the chapel after the Passing of the Peace.

Prayers of the People

(Book of Common Prayer)

Leader: Ever-living God, whose will it is that all should come to you through your Son Jesus Christ: Inspire our witness to him, that all may know the power of his forgiveness and the hope of his resurrection; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

(Leader intercedes with the concerns of the congregation)

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.**

[15] I gathered them to the river that runs to Ahava, and there we camped three days. As I reviewed the people and the priests, I found there none of the sons of Levi. [16] Then I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, leading men, and for Joiarib and Elnathan, who were men of insight, [17] and sent them to Iddo, the leading man at the place Casiphia, telling them what to say to Iddo and his brothers and the temple servants at the place Casiphia, namely, to send us ministers for the house of our God. [18] And by the good hand of our God on us, they brought us a man of discretion, of the sons of Mahli the son of Levi, son of Israel, namely Sherebiah with his sons and kinsmen, 18; [19] also Hashabiah, and with him Jeshaiiah of the sons of Merari, with his kinsmen and their sons, 20; [20] besides 220 of the temple servants, whom David and his officials had set apart to attend the Levites. These were all mentioned by name.

[21] Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and all our goods. [22] For I was ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers and horsemen to protect us against the enemy on our way, since we had told the king, "The hand of our God is for good on all who seek him, and the power of his wrath is against all who forsake him." [23] So we fasted and implored our God for this, and he listened to our entreaty. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Rev. Taylor Leachman

"Awaken Houston: Request"

Passing of the Peace

Leader: Christ came and proclaimed the gospel: peace to those who are far off and peace to those who are near.

Leader: May the Peace of the Lord be always with you!

People: And also with you!

RETURN OF CHILDREN

During the Offertory, "ADVENTURERS" teachers will bring the children back to the Sanctuary. Feel free to pick up younger children at this time as well. You may also wait to retrieve them, as childcare is provided for the duration of the service.

Announcements

WE'RE SO GLAD TO HAVE YOU WORSHIP WITH US. PLEASE SIGN IN SO WE HAVE A RECORD OF YOUR ATTENDANCE.

OPTION 1: TAKE THE BLUE SIGN-IN PAD FROM UNDER THE SEAT AT THE END OF THE ROW AND RECORD YOUR INFORMATION THERE.

OPTION 2: SCAN THE QR CODE WITH YOUR PHONE'S CAMERA AND FILL OUT THE FORM THERE. YOU MAY ALSO DO THIS AFTER THE SERVICE.



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](https://adventpres.org/give). YOU CAN ALSO SCAN THIS QR CODE OR PLACE A GIFT IN THE OFFERING BASKET TOWARD THE ENTRANCE OF THE SANCTUARY.



SERVICE OF THE TABLE

Celebration of Holy Communion

People: 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 up unto the LORD.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the LORD, our God.

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

Leader: Father, all-powerful and ever-living God, we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks through Jesus Christ our Lord. By him, your only Son, who restored to us peace through the blood of his cross, you willed to reconcile all creatures. In him you have led us to the knowledge of your truth, that bound together by one faith and one baptism we might become his body. Through him you have given your Holy Spirit to all peoples to work marvels by innumerable gifts and an abundant variety of graces. Gathering us together in unity, your Spirit dwells in the hearts of all your children, filling the whole Church with his presence and guiding it with wisdom from above. And so, with steadfast love, we proclaim your glory and join with hosts of angels in their triumphant hymn of praise:

People:

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 -
Lord. san - na in the high - est.

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Words of Institution

Leader: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

All: **Christ has died.**
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Leader: Alleluia, alleluia.
Our eyes have seen your salvation;
A light to enlighten the nations
And the glory of your people Israel.

People: **Alleluia!**

Leader: Come and feed on Him in your hearts by faith with
thanksgiving!

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.

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.

**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.

PRAYER FOR 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.

Communion Song – Psalm 116 (I Love You Lord)

Chorus

I love You Lord
For You have delivered me
I love You Lord
For You have delivered
My soul from death
My feet from stumbling
I will walk in the land of the living
My soul from death
My feet from stumbling
I will walk in the land of the living
Repeat

Verse

I will bless You Lord
For You heard my cry
I reached out my hand
And You saved my life
I will bless You Lord
For You heard my plea
And the God of Heaven
Turned His ear to me
I will bless You Lord
For unending love
For Your grace and mercy
Raining down from above
And I will bless You Lord
To the very end
I will call on You
As long as I may live
Chorus

*Closing Song – Just As I Am

Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee Whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need in Thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

***Closing Prayer of Thanksgiving and Mission**

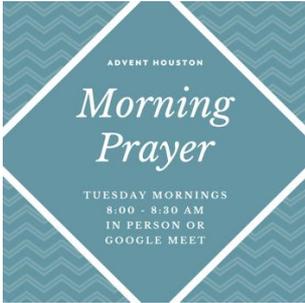
***Benediction**

Leader: You go nowhere by accident. Wherever you go, God is sending you. Wherever you find yourself, God has a reason for your being there. Christ who lives in you by the power of the Holy Spirit has something he desires to do in you and through you wherever you find yourself. Believe this and go in His grace, His love, and His power.

Leader: And the blessing of God almighty,
The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
Be among you and remain with you always.

ALL: Amen

Announcements



MORNING PRAYER

Tuesday mornings, 8:00 A.M.

Join us at the Local Office or via Google Meet on Tuesdays at 8:00 AM where we will go through portions of the Daily Prayer Project together.



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

February 22nd

Join us for our Ash Wednesday service at 6 PM at 1700 Bissonnet St. (Hillel). Ash Wednesday starts the 40 days of the Lenten Season that ends with the Easter celebration.



DONUTS AT THE PARK

March 5th

Come join us for our next donuts in the park event! Sunday, March 5th, at 10:30 A.M. at Colonial Park in the West U area.

ALL ABOUT ADVENT

Membership Class



ALL ABOUT ADVENT

Next Membership Class Coming in May

Interested in church membership? Our next membership class will be held at a to-be-determined place and time in May. Come and hear "All About Advent". More details to follow.



**QUESTION
& DISCUSSION**

SCAN HERE TO
SUBMIT A QUESTION
FOR Q&D



Are we allowed to pray
for things even if it
isn't in God's plan?

answer in the comment below...



**NEXT QUESTION & DISCUSSION:
FEBRUARY 26**

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.

Advent Presbyterian Church of Houston

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ADVENT'S HOUSTON EXISTS TO **EMBRACE, EMBODY, AND EXTEND** THE GRACE OF JESUS TO THE TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER, RICE UNIVERSITY, AND THE GREATER WEST UNIVERSITY AREA.

