



ADVENT HOUSTON

ORDER OF WORSHIP

2nd Sunday of Epiphany

January 15, 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

"One of the challenges is that very often we are just unaware of the ways in which we are shaped and formed by our particular ghetto that are not only different than others, but we believe that our expression of humanity is the sum total of what it means to be human. The ideas of the true, the good, and the beautiful—we believe that only our group has it and that we need to teach everyone else about it. This is what the Spirit undoes at Pentecost in Acts 2; it is a reversal of Babel."

— **Irwyn Ince, (Mission to North America's Coordinator in the PCA)**

"If God is our father, the church is our mother." The words are those of the Swiss Reformer John Calvin ... it is as impossible, unnecessary, and undesirable to be a Christian all by yourself as it is to be a newborn baby all by yourself."

— **N.T. Wright, (Former Bishop of Durham in the Church of England and Current Theologian)**

"We don't come to church, to be a church. We come to Christ, and then we are built up as a church. If we come to church just to be with one another, one another is all we'll get. And it isn't enough. Inevitably, our hearts will grow empty, and then angry. If we put community first, we will destroy community. But if we come to Christ first and submit ourselves to Him and draw life from Him, community gets traction."

— **C.S. Lewis, (20th Century Professor and Theologian in England)**

"Christ was never in a hurry."

— **Mary Slessor, (19th Century Scottish Missionary to Nigeria)**

"The church is constituted as a new people who have been gathered from the nations to remind the world that we are in fact one people. Gathering, therefore, is an eschatological act as it is the foretaste of the unity of the communion of the saints."

— **Stanley Hauerwas, (Professor Emeritus of Theology & Ethics at Duke Divinity School)**

SERVICE OF THE WORD

*Call to Worship – From Psalm 40

Leader: I waited patiently for the LORD; he inclined to me and heard my cry.

People: He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.

Leader: He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.

People: You have multiplied, O LORD my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us.

*Song – Come People of the Risen King

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 every 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 every 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 every age
Our God is all in all
Chorus

Prayer of Adoration

First Reading

Matthew 5:13-16

[13] “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.

[14] “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. [15] Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. [16] In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.
(ESV)

Leader: The Gospel of the LORD.

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

[9] Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, [10] for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, [11] and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, [12] so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

*Song – For the Beauty of the Earth

For the beauty of the earth
For the glory of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies.

Lord of all, to Thee we raise,
This our hymn of grateful praise.
Lord of all, to Thee we raise,
This our hymn of grateful praise.

The earth is filled with Your glory
The earth is filled with Your glory

For the wonder of each hour,
Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale, and tree and flower,
Sun and moon, and stars of light.

Lord of all, to Thee we raise,
This our hymn of grateful praise.
Lord of all, to Thee we raise,
This our hymn of grateful praise.

The earth is filled with Your glory
The earth is filled with Your glory

For each perfect gift of Thine,
To our world so freely given,
Graces human and divine,
Flowers of earth and buds of Heaven.

Lord of all, to Thee we raise,
This our hymn of grateful praise.
Lord of all, to Thee we raise,
This our hymn of grateful praise.

The earth is filled with Your glory
The earth is filled with Your glory
The earth is filled with Your glory

***Affirmation of Faith**

The Apostles' Creed & Catechism Questions 38, 40, & 41 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.

Leader: Who is God the Father?

People: God the Father is the first Person of the Holy Trinity, from whom the Son is eternally begotten and the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds.

Leader: What do you mean when you call God "Father"?

People: When I call God "Father," I declare that I was created for relationship with him, that I trust in God as my Protector and Provider, and that I put my hope in God as his child and heir in Christ.

Leader: Why do you call God the Father "Almighty"?

People: I call the Father "Almighty" because he has power over everything and accomplishes everything he wills. Together with his Son and Holy Spirit, the Father is all-knowing and ever present in every place.

Confession of Sin

(Edited from Rev. Giorgio Hiatt)

Leader: Holy Father, Your word tells us that Your Church moves forcefully with truth and grace—leading toward justice rolling down into pools of mercy.

People: Yet we gather in huddles of hesitation and apathy. We hide behind tolerance and civility while refusing to take on the problems in our cities, our families, or our own hearts. We let despair conquer hope, and indifference overwhelm justice. Forgive us Lord.

Leader: Beloved Son, You've taught us to pursue your Kingdom on earth as it is in Heaven.

People: But we are too busy with our own kingdoms of pleasure, prestige, and power. We plan and toil for stuff that will not last. We ache over losing things that barely matter. We curse you for not prospering our own glory. Forgive us Lord.

Leader: Holy Spirit, Only You can transform our hearts to turn us from self-protectors to self-sacrificers, from conflict avoiders to peacemakers.

People: Give us the mercy we need to have courage in our homes and vocations. Transform our hearts of defensiveness and passivity into hearts of selfless mission and bold love. Forgive our wayward wills, our rebellious minds, and our distrustful actions.

***Assurance of Pardon**

Ephesians 1:7-8

Leader: In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.

Leader: Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

***Song of Simeon (Nunc Dimittis)**

Verse 1

Lord, bid your servant go in peace,
Your word is now fulfilled.
These eyes have seen salvation's dawn,
This child so long foretold

Verse 2

This is the Savior of the world
The Gentile's promised light
God's glory dwelling in our midst
The joy of Israel

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 (Edited from the Book of Common Prayer)

Leader: O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Savior, the Prince of Peace: Give us grace to lay to heart the dangers that we in your Church are in by our unhappy divisions; take away all division, hatred and prejudice, and whatever else may hinder us from godly union with one another; that, as there is but one Body and one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify You; through Jesus Christ our Lord. 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.**

[42] And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. [43] And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. [44] And all who believed were together and had all things in common. [45] And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. [46] And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, [47] praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Rev. Taylor Leachman

“New Years Rhythms: Meeting ”

Passing of the Peace

Leader: God has made us one in Christ. He has set his seal upon us and, as a pledge of what is to come, has given the Spirit to dwell in our hearts.

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 -
san - na in the high - est.

The musical score is written on four staves in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/4 time signature. 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.
Chris 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 – 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

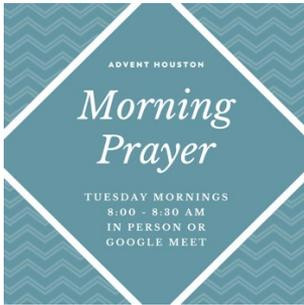
***Closing Prayer of Thanksgiving and Mission**

***Closing Song – Edelweiss Benediction**

May the Lord, Mighty God,
Bless and keep you forever
Grant you grace, sovereign grace
Joy in every endeavor.

Lift your eyes and see His face
And his love forever
May the Lord, Mighty God
Bless and keep you forever.

Announcements



MORNING PRAYER

Tuesday mornings, 8:00 A.M.

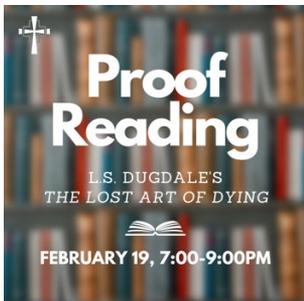
Join us at the Local Office or via Google Meet on Tuesdays at 8:00 AM where we will go through portions of the Daily Prayer Project together. Contact Beverly for the Google Meet link.



MEMBERSHIP CLASS

January 27th 5:30-8:00 P.M.

Interested in church membership? Our next membership class will be held at the Leachman's on January 27th. Come and hear "All About Advent". Click the QR code to register.



PROOF READING

February 19th

Come and discuss the book *The Lost Art of Dying* by L.S. Dugdale. Whether you have read the book, or whether you want to just sit and enjoy the conversation, we would love for you to come!



NEXT DISCUSSION: January 29th



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

January 29th after the worship service
 In addition to our Question & Discussion time, we will hold our first annual Congregational Meeting on the 29th. All are welcome to attend.



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'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.

