

ORDER OF WORSHIP

3rd Sunday of Lent

March 12, 2023

LENT

"Unfortunately some Christians live as though the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ never happened. Our lives become absorbed in the day-to-day experiences of life. We focus on name-brand clothing, the color of our houses, the size of our bank account, the year and make of our automobile, the prestige in which others hold us, and the symbols of our own power. We too easily forget our Maker and Redeemer, replacing God with things and ambition. Lent is the season that does something about this situation. It calls us back to God, back to basics, back to the spiritual realities of life. It calls on us to put to death the sin and the indifference we have in our hearts toward God and our fellow persons. And it beckons us to enter once again into the joy of the LORD - the joy of a new life born out of a death to the old life."

Lent is a forty-day period in the church calendar that dates back to the 4th century. It was originally a time of preparation and spiritual discipline for all who were being baptized at Easter-the normal time of baptism for all new Christians and their families. As early as the 1st century, we see Christians using a time of preparation for their baptism, and with time, this preparation grew to forty days in association with Jesus' forty days of prayer and fasting in the wilderness.

Lent is a time that beckons us to remember our own baptismal vows. Martin Luther encouraged his congregation during Lent to "live into [their] baptism." And so, we too should live into our dying with Christ and rising with Christ. We too are called to live into that pattern of repentance and faith. We are invited to turn away from all distractions and sins and turn toward God.

This lenten practice can take many forms. We can choose to fast from food, reminding ourselves that Christ is our daily bread. As theologians Louis Weil and Charles Price remind us, "The psychosomatic unity of human beings makes it inevitable that a physical glut will cloud mind and spirit." Alternately, we can fast from some of the distracting behaviors that we have slipped into, like scrolling on our phones at bedtime. Or, we can pursue new habits that help us to pattern our lives on the life of Jesus; we may commit to praying every day or to calling a friend to check on them every day.

During this lenten season, make time to consider the condition of your heart and to enter into a season of living out your baptism in repentance and faith.

REFLECTION

"When are we closest to God? When we see ourselves as we really are:" — Fleming Rutledge, American Episcopal Priest

"Hoping for salvation by human resources is no salvation, for mortal means will not rout death. So those who live in a time of anxiety should be anxious to pray to the Lord of heaven, who dispenses sadness or gladness and who alone by his transcendent sway can ensure that troubles are removed and happy times restored.... The power of prayers and the healing efficacy of tears in the presence of God our Father is the lesson we must learn from Nineveh saved by its grief.... So the faith that relies on God should strengthen panicking hearts, and its trust in God should in time of sorrow anticipate untroubled days. For fear of God ensures freedom from fear, whereas the one who does not fear God alone is right to fear everything. Those who have no confidence in Christ as bearer of salvation must put their trust in legions."

Paulinus of Nola, Roman Senator and Latin Poet Converted in 389AD

"The cross is laid on every Christian. The first Christ-suffering which every man must experience is the call to abandon the attachments of this world. It is that dying of the old man which is the result of his encounter with Christ. As we embark upon discipleship we surrender ourselves to Christ in union with his death — we give over our lives to death. Thus it begins; the cross is not the terrible end to an otherwise god-fearing and happy life, but it meets us at the beginning of our communion with Christ. When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die. It may be a death like that of the first disciples who had to leave home and work to follow him, or it may be a death like Luther's, who had to leave the monastery and go out into the world. But it is the same death every time — death in Jesus Christ, the death of the old man at his call."

 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Lutheran Minister and Theologian who opposed German Naziism

SERVICE OF THE WORD

*Call to Worship – From Isaiah 55:6-7

- Leader: Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near.
- People: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.
- Leader: Let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him,
- People: Let him return to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

*Song – Joyful, Joyful

"Joyful Joyful" words by Henry Van dyke and music by Ludwig Van Beethoven and Edward Hodges © Words and Music: Public Domain

Verse 1

Joyful joyful we adore Thee God of glory Lord of love Hearts unfold like flow'rs before Thee Opening to the sun above Melt the clouds of sin and sadness Drive the dark of doubt away Giver of immortal gladness Fill us with the light of day

Verse 2

All Thy works with joy surround Thee Earth and heav'n reflect Thy rays Stars and angels sing around Thee Center of unbroken praise Field and forest vale and mountain Flowery meadow flashing sea Chanting bird and flowing fountain Call us to rejoice in Thee

Verse 3

Thou art giving and forgiving Ever blessing ever blest Wellspring of the joy of living Ocean depth of happy rest Thou our Father Christ our Brother All who live in love are Thine Teach us how to love each other Lift us to the joy divine

Verse 4

Mortals join the mighty chorus Which the morning stars began Father love is reigning o'er us Brother love binds man to man Ever singing march we onward Victors in the midst of strife Joyful music lifts us sunward In the triumph song of life

Prayer of Adoration

Leader: Gracious Lord and Heavenly Father,

We are joyful and adore You for all You have done, all that You are doing, and all that You will do because of the promise that You and your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ made to the world. We thank you for the gifts you give us: for food, friend. We thank you for our church, for learning and fun. Today, we join the happy chorus of your people, praising you this joyful Sunday.

We pray all of this in Jesus name. Amen

First Reading

Psalm 42

[1] As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. [2] My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? [3] My tears have been my food day and night, while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?" [4] These things I remember, as I pour out my soul: how I would go with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God with glad shouts and songs of praise, a multitude keeping festival. [5] Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?

Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,

my salvation [6] and my God.

My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you from the land of Jordan and of Hermon. from Mount Mizar. [7] Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls; all your breakers and your waves have aone over me. [8] By day the LORD commands his steadfast love. and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life. [9] I say to God, my rock: "Why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?" [10] As with a deadly wound in my bones, my adversaries taunt me, while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?" [11] Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD. **People:** Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

John 12:20-26

[20] Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. [21] So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." [22] Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. [23] And Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. [24] Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. [25] Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. [26] If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him. (ESV)

Leader: The Gospel of the LORD. People: Praise be to You, Lord, Christ!

*Song – Jesus Lover of My Soul

"Jesus Lover of My Soul" words by Charles Wesley and music by Greg Thompson © Words: Public Domain | 2000 Greg Thompson

Verse 1

Jesus Lover of my soul Let me to Thy bosom fly While the nearer waters roll While the tempest still is high Hide me O my Saviour hide Till the storm of life is past Safe into the haven guide Oh receive my soul at last

Verse 2

Other refuge have I none Hangs my helpless soul on Thee Leave ah leave me not alone Still support and comfort me All my trust on Thee is stayed All my help from Thee I bring Cover my defenseless head With the shadow of Thy wing

Verse 3

Thou O Christ art all I want More than all in Thee I find Raise the fallen cheer the faint Heal the sick and lead the blind Just and holy is Thy name I am all unrighteousness False and full of sin I am Thou art full of truth and grace

Verse 4

Plenteous grace with Thee is found Grace to cover all my sin Let the healing streams abound Make and keep me pure within Thou of life the Fountain art Freely let me take of Thee Spring Thou up within my heart Rise to all eternity

*Affirmation of Faith

The Apostles Creed & Catechism Questions 69 & 70 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.

"On The Third Day He Rose Again"

- Leader: What does the Creed mean when it affirms that Jesus rose again from the dead?
- People: It means that Jesus was not simply resuscitated; God restored him physically from death to life in his resurrected body, never to die again. His tomb was empty; Jesus had risen bodily from the dead. The risen Jesus was seen by his apostles and hundreds of other witnesses.
- Leader: What kind of earthly life did Jesus have after he rose from the dead?
- People: Following his resurrection, Jesus spent forty days visiting and teaching his followers. He appeared to his disciples, spoke to them, invited them to touch him and see his scars, and ate with them.

Confession of Sin

(from Christ Central Church in Charlotte, NC)

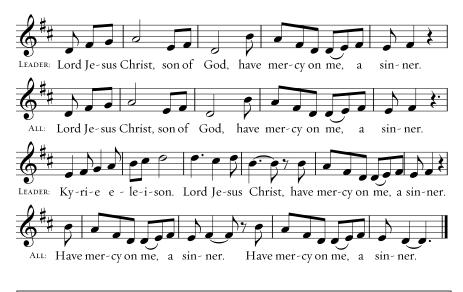
- Leader: Lord, forgive us for not accepting ourselves as You made us. ALL: We are paralyzed by fear and desire to be accepted by others for the way we look. We reject our uniqueness and try to conform to the world. We listen more to the world than we do You. We want to be accepted more by the world than we do You.
- Leader: Lord, forgive us for comparing ourselves to others. ALL: We think that we are not as bad as them. We look down on others. We think we are a better people than other people, better Christians than other Christians. We are arrogant and not patient and gracious with our brothers and sisters.
- Leader: Lord, forgive us for being ashamed and hiding from you when we sin.
- ALL: We try to hide from You or turn to something else that will not make us feel convicted and broken. We turn from one quick fix to the next. We wallow in the muck and dirt of our sins. We do not want to leave or let go of our sin because sometimes it feels better to be pitied than forgiven. We manipulate others to meet our need for compassion. We care more about our own needs than others. We languish in our unrepentance.
- Leader: Lord, forgive us for not believing Your gospel.
- ALL: We focus too much on ourselves and the ugly depth of our sin and lose sight of You. We do not believe that You love and care for us deeply. We believe You are a harsh and critical Father. We do not believe that You desire and long to forgive and love us.

*Assurance of Pardon – From Psalm 103

leader: The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. People: He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. Leader: For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so areat is his steadfast love toward those who fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our People: transaressions from us. leader: As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him. 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.

KYRIE ELEISON

Citation - Words: Ancient Text, Music: Phil Madeira



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

Leader: O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. AMEN.

Leader intercedes on behalf of the community

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

Jonah 1:17 - 2:10

[1:17] And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. (ESV)

[2:1] Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the belly of the fish, [2] saying,

"I called out to the LORD, out of my distress, and he answered me: out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice. [3] For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas. and the flood surrounded me: all your waves and your billows passed over me. [4] Then I said, 'I am driven away from your sight: yet I shall again look upon your holy temple.' [5] The waters closed in over me to take my life; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped about my head [6] at the roots of the mountains. I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God.

[7] When my life was fainting away, I remembered the LORD, and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple.
[8] Those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love.
[9] But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you;

what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation belongs to the LORD!"

[10] And the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Rev. Taylor Leachman

"From Tomb to Womb"

Passing of the Peace

Leader: Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us access to his grace.

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.

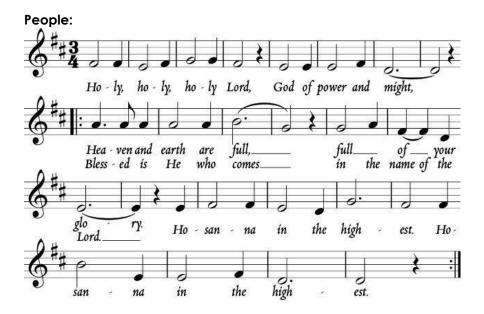
ONLINE GIVING IS AVAILABLE AT ADVENTPRES.ORG/GIVE. YOU CAN ALSO SCAN THIS QR CODE OR PLACE A GIFT IN THE OFFERING BASKET TOWARD THE ENTRANCE OF THE SANCTUARY.



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: It is indeed right and good to give you thanks and praise, almighty God and everlasting Father, through Jesus Christ your Son. For in these forty days you lead us into the desert of repentance that through a pilgrimage of prayer and discipline we may grow in grace and learn to be your people once again. Through fasting, prayer and acts of service you bring us back to your generous heart. Through study of your holy word you open our eyes to your presence in the world and free our hands to welcome others into the radiant splendor of your love. As we prepare to celebrate the Easter feast with joyful hearts and minds we bless you for your mercy and join with saints and angels forever praising you and singing:



Words of Institution

- Leader: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:
- All: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.
- Leader: Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us;
- People: Therefore, let us keep the feast.
- Leader: O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world, **People:** Have mercy upon us.
- Leader: O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world, **People:** Have mercy upon us.
- Leader: O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world, **People:** Grant us your peace.

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.

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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 – He Will Hold Me Fast

"He Will Hold Me Fast" words and music by Ada Habershon and Matthew Merker @ 2013 Getty Music Publishing

Verse 1

When I fear my faith will fail Christ will hold me fast When the tempter would prevail He will hold me fast I could never keep my hold Through life's fearful path For my love is often cold He must hold me fast

Chorus

He will hold me fast He will hold me fast For my Savior loves me so He will hold me fast

Verse 2

Those He saves are His delight Christ will hold me fast Precious in His holy sight He will hold me fast He'll not let my soul be lost His Promises shall last Bought by Him at such a cost He will hold me fast

Verse 3

For my life He bled and died Christ will hold me fast Justice has been satisfied He will hold me fast Raised with Him to endless life He will hold me fast Till our faith is turned to sight When He comes at last

*Closing Song – We Will Feast in the House of Zion

"The Blessing" words and music by Sandra McCracken and Joshua Moore © 2015 Integrity Worship Music

Chorus

We will feast in the house of Zion We will sing with our hearts restored He has done great things we will say together We will feast and weep no more

Verse 1

We will not be burned by the fire He is the Lord our God We are not consumed by the flood Upheld protected gathered up

Verse 2

In the dark of night before the dawn My soul be not afraid For the promised morning oh how long Oh God of Jacob be my strength

Verse 3

Every vow we've broken and betrayed You are the faithful one And from the garden to the grave Bind us together bring shalom

*Closing Prayer of Thanksgiving and Mission

*Benediction - From Numbers 6:24-26

Leader: The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

ALL: Amen.

Announcements



QUESTION & DISCUSSION

Next Q&D is March 26th



Scan the QR code for more info and to submit your questions.



ADVENT HOUSTON WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Sign up to receive our weekly e-newsletter

Stay current on the happenings at Advent. Sign up today to receive the weekly e-newsletter.



SPOTIFY PLAYLIST

"Advent Houston"

Like the worship music? Want to hear more? You can now take it with you! Click on the QR code and add Advent Houston playlist to your Spotify library.



GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

Friday, April 7, 12:00 noon

We can't get to the resurrection of Easter without "The Old Rugged Cross" of Good Friday. Join us as we reflect on Jesus' accomplishments on the cross.

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.

