
EMBRACE | EMBODY | EXTEND



ADVENT HOUSTON

Sixth Sunday Of Lent

MARCH • 24 • 2024

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.

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.

REFLECTIONS

There is no aspect of Christian faith more difficult for us to believe. It is the nature of the human being to think that Christ's work could not possibly be finished, that we have to do more, we have to add to it, we have to earn it.

— **Fleming Rutledge**

This is, moreover, as Pilate insisted, the King of the Jews. That kingship is not delayed by crucifixion; rather, crucifixion is the way this king rules. Crucifixion is Kingdom come. This is the great long-awaited apocalyptic moment. Here the powers of this world are forever subverted. Time is now redeemed through the raising up of Jesus on this cross. A new age has begun.

— **Stanley Hauerwas**

There is no tribunal so magnificent, no throne so stately, no show of triumph so distinguished, no chariot so elevated, as is the gibbet on which Christ hath subdued death and the devil.

— **John Calvin**

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 118:1-2, 8-9 ESV

Leader: Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;

People: **for his steadfast love endures forever!**

Leader: Let Israel say,

People: **“His steadfast love endures forever.”**

Leader: It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man.

People: **It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.**

*SONG

Hail to the Lord's Anointed

Words by James Montgomery and music by Sandra McCracken

© 2012 Drink Your Tea Music

Chorus

Hail to the Lord's anointed, great David's greater Son!

Hail in the time appointed, His reign on earth begun!

Verse 1

He comes to break oppression, to set the captive free,

To take away transgression, and rule in equity.

Chorus

Verse 2

He comes in succor speedy to those who suffer wrong,

To help the poor and needy, and bid the weak be strong.

Chorus

Verse 3

To give them songs for sighing, their darkness turn to light,

Whose souls, condemned and dying, are precious in His sight.

Chorus

Verse 4

He shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth,
Love, joy, and hope, like flowers, spring in His path to birth.

Chorus

Verse 5

The tide of time shall never His covenant remove.
His Name shall stand forever, That Name to us is Love.

Chorus

PRAYER OF ADORATION

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

John 12:27-33

[27] “Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. [28] Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.” [29] The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” [30] Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not mine. [31] Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. [32] And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” [33] He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

Hebrews 10:1-10

[1] For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. [2] Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? [3] But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. [4] For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

[5] Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,

“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
but a body have you prepared for me;

[6] in burnt offerings and sin offerings
you have taken no pleasure.

[7] Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come to do your will, O God,
as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.’”

[8] When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), [9] then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He does away with the first in order to establish the second. [10] And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

***SONG**

Psalm 116 – I Love You Lord

Words and music by Jessica Ray Langdon

© 2020 Integrity's Praise! Music

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

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Adapted from the Lausanne Covenant (1974)

Leader: Christian, what is it that you believe?

ALL: We affirm that there is only one Savior and only one gospel. Jesus Christ, being himself the only God-man, who gave himself as the only ransom for sinners, is the only mediator between God and people. There is no other name by which we must be saved.

We affirm that God is both the Creator and the Judge of all men. We therefore share his concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men and women from every kind of oppression. The salvation we claim should be transforming us in the totality of our personal and social responsibilities. Faith without works is dead.

We believe in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Father sent his Spirit to bear witness to his Son; without his witness ours is futile. He alone accomplishes the ultimate reconciliation and restoration for which we long.

We believe that Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly, in power and glory, to consummate his salvation and his judgment. We believe that God will perfect his kingdom, and we look forward with eager anticipation to that day, and to the new heaven and earth in which righteousness will dwell and God will reign forever.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Adapted from Anonymous Source

Leader: Father, you have called us not just to believe in you, but to follow you. You have called us to follow you in the spreading of your Kingdom. Yet our lives are so out of step with you.

Leader: In your kingdom, power is used to serve others.

ALL: In our kingdoms, we use power to serve ourselves.

Leader: In your kingdom, money is generously shared.

ALL: In our kingdoms, we anxiously hoard it.

Leader: In your kingdom, the broken and downhearted are pursued.

ALL: In our kingdoms, we push them away.

Leader: In your kingdom, we are to take our pain to you.

ALL: In our kingdoms, we numb our pain through things like food and drink, work, exercise, or leisure.

Leader: In your kingdom, forgiveness is given as a gift.

ALL: In our kingdoms, we desperately try to earn it.

Forgive us we pray. Forgive us and cleanse us, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Hebrews 10:10b (ESV)

Leader: We have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Almighty God have mercy upon 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.

People: Amen

*KYRIE ELEISON (Lord Have Mercy)

Words: Ancient Text, Music: Phil Madeira



LEADER: Lord Je-sus Christ, son of God, have mer-cy on me, a sin-ner.



ALL: Lord Je-sus Christ, son of God, have mer-cy on me, a sin-ner.



LEADER: Ky-ri-e e - le-i-son. Lord Je-sus Christ, have mer-cy on me, a sin-ner.



ALL: Have mer-cy on me, a sin-ner. Have mer-cy on me, a sin-ner.

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

Adapted from *Book of Common Prayer*

Leader: Almighty and ever living God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, granting us forgiveness of sin and guaranteeing the coming of your humble and victorious Kingdom. Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Congregants may pray for concerns from our congregation, city, and world. After each petition, the following is recited:

Leader: Lord, in your mercy.

People: **Hear our prayer.**

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

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

[23] When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, [24] so they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be." This was to fulfill the Scripture which says,

"They divided my garments among them,
and for my clothing they cast lots."

So the soldiers did these things, [25] but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. [26] When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" [27] Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

[28] After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst." [29] A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. [30] When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. (ESV)

Leader: The gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise be to you Lord Christ.**

SERMON

Rev. Taylor Leachman

The Seven Last Words of Jesus - "It Is Finished"



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: 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: And now we give you thanks because, for our salvation, he was obedient even to death on the cross. The tree of shame was made the tree of glory; and where life was lost, there life has been restored.

He is the victim who dies no more, the Lamb once slain, who lives forever, our advocate in heaven to plead our cause, exalting us there to join with angels and archangels, forever praising you and singing:

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: 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, unite us with Christ and with your church in all the world.

All glory and honor are yours, Almighty God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

Leader: Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;

People: **Have mercy on us.**

Leader: Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;

People: **Have mercy on us.**

Leader: Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;

People: **Grant us your peace.**

Leader: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

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

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

Upon a Life I Did Not Live

Words by Horatius Bonar and music by Kevin Twit

© 2012 Kevin Twit Music

Verse 1

Upon a Life I have not lived,
Upon a Death I did not die,
Another's Life; Another's Death,
I stake my whole eternity.

Verse 2

Not on the tears which I have shed,
Not on the sorrows I have known,
Another's tears; Another's griefs,
On these I rest, on these alone.

Chorus

O Jesus, Son of God, I build on what Thy cross has done for me;
There both my death and life I read, my guilt, and pardon there I see.

Verse 3

Lord, I believe; O deal with me,
As one who has Thy Word believed!
I take the gift, Lord, look on me,
As one who has Thy gift received.

Chorus

*SONG

Crown Him With Many Crowns

Words by Matthew Bridges and Godfrey Thring and music by George Job Elvey

© Words and Music: Public Domain

Verse 1

Crown Him with many crowns
The Lamb upon His throne
Hark how the heavenly anthem drowns
All music but its own
Awake, my soul, and sing
Of Him who died for thee
And hail Him as thy matchless King
Through all eternity

Verse 2

Crown Him the Lord of love
Behold his hands and side
Rich wounds yet visible above
In beauty glorified
No angel in the sky
Can fully bear that sight
But downward bends His wandering eye
At mysteries so bright

Verse 3

Crown Him the Lord of life
Who triumphed o'er the grave
And rose victorious in the strife
For those He came to save
His glories now we sing
Who died and rose on high
Who died eternal life to bring
And lives that death may die

Verse 4

Crown Him the Lord of years
The Potentate of time
Creator of the rolling spheres
Ineffably sublime
All hail Redeemer, hail
For Thou hast died for me
Thy praise shall never never fail
Throughout eternity

***CLOSING PRAYER**

***BENEDICTION**

Zephaniah 3:17 (ESV)

Leader: The LORD your God is in your midst,
 a mighty one who will save;
 He will rejoice over you with gladness;
 He will quiet you by his love;
 He will exult over you with loud singing.

ALL: AMEN.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



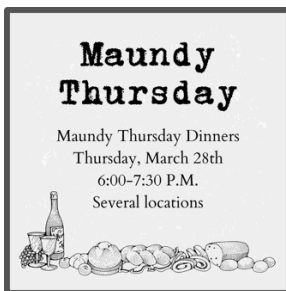
QUESTION & DISCUSSION

TODAY, Mar. 24th 12:00 – 1:00 P.M.

Got questions? Let's discuss. Scan the QR code to submit your question. Join us after the worship service today for the discussion. A light lunch will be available.

Location: Weekley Family YMCA Multi-purpose Room

Holy Week Services

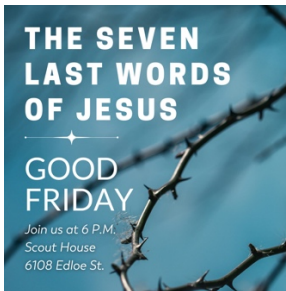


MAUNDY THURSDAY DINNERS

Thursday, March 28th, 6-7:30 P.M.

Several locations. Join one of the existing groups or host your own Maundy Thursday Dinner. Childcare will be provided.

RSVP at AdventPres.org/Events.



GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

Friday, March 29th, 6-7 P.M.

The Season of Lent draws to a close and so does our sermon series, "The Seven Last Words of Jesus." Join us as we mark this special time together at our Good Friday service.

Location: Scout House, 6108 Edloe Street



EASTER SUNDAY SERVICE

Sunday, March 31st, 10 A.M.

Celebrate the Risen Lord with your Advent family. Invite your friends and family to join you.

Location: Weekley Family YMCA, Gymnasium



Sunday April 7 We Are At Houston Hillel!

1700 Bissonnet St.

WORSHIP AT HILLEL ON APRIL 7TH

Sunday, April 7st, 10 A.M.

The Weekley Family YMCA has an event on the 7th and they need their entire facility. Hillel has once again allowed us to use their building for our Sunday morning services. Join your Advent family as we worship at Hillel.

Location: Houston Hillel, 1700 Bissonnet St.



Starting April 14, our new worship time will be at 10:30 in the gym, and Sunday school will begin at 9:30 with childcare provided!



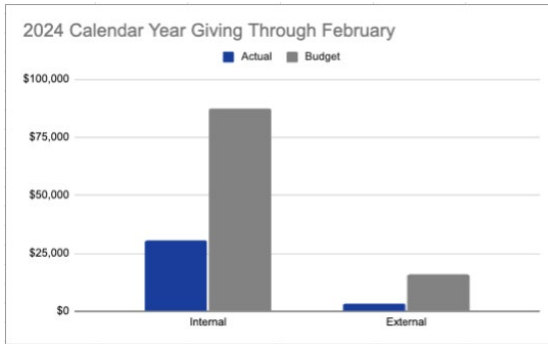
STARTING APRIL 14TH ...

9:30 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL

10:30 AM WORSHIP

Advent will start a 6-week Sunday school course, led by Will McKee. Join us at 9:30 am for Sunday school followed by Worship at 10:30 am. Childcare will be provided during Sunday school.

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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HOUSTON, TX 77005



ADVENT HOUSTON EXISTS TO EMBRACE,
EMBODY, AND EXTEND THE GRACE OF JESUS
TO THE TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER, RICE
UNIVERSITY, AND THE SURROUNDING
NEIGHBORHOODS.

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