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EMBRACE | EMBODY | EXTEND



**ADVENT**  
HOUSTON

**10th Sunday after Pentecost**

Proper 12

JULY • 28 • 2024

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Advent means “arrival” or “coming.” Many of us have a temptation to believe that we can live a good enough life or do the right things to make our way to God. We think that if we do enough of the right types of things, then God will allow us into His home. But the Bible tells us again and again that we are never the first movers in this relationship. God is always the initiator. He spoke all things into being; He created; and He pursues. He is the one who arrives. And we see this in the first advent of God.

John begins his gospel by saying, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (ESV). God the Son came to us in the first advent: what the church calls the incarnation. He didn’t wait for us to try and make our way to his heavenly abode. He didn’t stand above us to lecture us or condemn us. He came to us. In fact, he became one of us, taking on flesh, pain, sorrows, and death.

And God hasn’t stopped there. After Jesus came into this world to inaugurate the reign of God on earth as it is in heaven, after he died on the cross to atone for our sins, and after he was raised from the dead to defeat sin and death, He ascended to heaven to assume the throne. Scripture tells us that he will come again. And when he comes again, he is bringing the new heavens and the new earth with him.

It is in this second advent, that Jesus promises to make all things new. Though he has already dealt with sin and death, it isn’t until he comes again that death will be eradicated.

## PENTECOST

“The season after Pentecost Sunday and leading up to Advent is referred to as Ordinary Time. It does not mean the time is boring and mundane, but rather “Ordinary” refers to the “ordinal” way that the church calendar counts the Sundays from Pentecost until the Season of Advent. Historically the church has used this time to more fully flesh out Christ’s work in the lives of her people, in the church as a whole, or in Christ’s Kingdom over all the earth. Robert Webber writes that during Ordinary Time,

Many worship traditions follow lectionaries that highlight the work of the Spirit in the mission of the church in the world. Other churches organize their worship life around a lectio continua, continuous readings from a given section of Scripture. Some worship traditions have also called this season ‘Kingdomtime,’ focusing on the kingdom of God that is present now and the one that will be realized in more profound ways in the future....

[Thus] the various Sundays are not connected by a particular theme. In Advent we await the coming of Christ; during Christmas, we celebrate his arrival; and at Epiphany, we proclaim that Christ is manifested to the world as Savior. During Lent, we prepare for the death; in Holy Week, we reenact his death; then in Easter, we celebrate his resurrection and complete the Easter cycle with the celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit. But in the nonfestive season of the church year, there is no unified theme that ties the Sundays together.

At Advent Houston, we want to use this “nonfestive” season to focus on our particular mission in this particular time and place that God has for particular individuals like us. We want to minister to one another in the distinct ways that we need to hear the good news of what Jesus has done, and we want to practice our faith in light of the truth that Christ has died, Christ is risen, and Christ will come again.

\*Robert E. Webber, *Ancient Future Time*

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## REFLECTIONS

"Here is the essence of what Christianity gives us. Only God is the final judge of who we are and what we have done. If—and only if—he is, then God can overrule our heart's guilt and self-condemnation. If he says we are forgiven, then we are, and we can tell our hearts to quiet themselves. The secular framework, however, has nothing to give the wounded conscience to heal it. It has nothing to say to the self who feels it is unworthy of love and forgiveness. Anyone who has seen the depths of their sin and what they are capable of will never be mollified by the bromide of 'Be nice to yourself—you deserve it.'"

- **Tim Keller**

"(concerning divine providence) But so, as the almighty and everywhere present power of God, it makes us grateful when things go well and patient when things go against us, prompts us to rest with childlike submission in the guidance of the Lord and at the same time arouses us from our inertia to the highest levels of activity. In all circumstances of life, it gives us good confidence in our faithful God and Father that he will provide whatever we need for body and soul and that he will turn to our good whatever adversity he sends us in this sad world, since he is able to do this as almighty God and desires to do this as a faithful Father."

- **Herman Bavinck**

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 145:10-13 (ESV)

**Leader:** All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD, and all your saints shall bless you!

**People:** **They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power,**

**Leader:** to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds,

**People:** **and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.**

**Leader:** Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,

**People:** **and your dominion endures throughout all generations.**

## \*SONG

## In Christ Alone

Words and music by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend  
© 2001 Thankyou Music

In Christ alone my hope is found  
He is my light my strength my song  
This Cornerstone this solid Ground  
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm  
What heights of love what depths of peace  
When fears are stilled when strivings cease  
My Comforter my All in All  
Here in the love of Christ I stand

In Christ alone who took on flesh  
Fullness of God in helpless babe  
This gift of love and righteousness  
Scorned by the ones He came to save  
Till on that cross as Jesus died  
The wrath of God was satisfied  
For every sin on Him was laid  
Here in the death of Christ I live

There in the ground His body lay  
Light of the world by darkness slain  
Then bursting forth in glorious Day  
Up from the grave He rose again  
And as He stands in victory  
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me  
For I am His and He is mine  
Bought with the precious blood of Christ

No guilt in life no fear in death  
This is the power of Christ in me  
From life's first cry to final breath  
Jesus commands my destiny  
No power of hell no scheme of man  
Can ever pluck me from His hand  
Till He returns or calls me home  
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand

## PRAYER OF ADORATION

### NEW TESTAMENT READING

Romans 8:18-21

[18] For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. [19] For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. [20] For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope [21] that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

## STORIES OF MISSION & MERCY

## **\*SONG**

## **I Will Wait For You (Psalm 130)**

Words and music by Jordan Kauflin, Keith Getty, Matthew Merker, and Stuart Townend  
© 2018 Getty Music Publishing

### **Verse 1**

Out of the depths I cry to You  
In darkest places I will call  
Incline Your ear to me anew  
And hear my cry for mercy Lord

### **Verse 2**

Were You to count my sinful ways  
How could I come before Your throne  
Yet full forgiveness meets my gaze  
I stand redeemed by grace alone

### **Chorus 1**

I will wait for You, I will wait for You  
On Your word I will rely  
I will wait for You, surely wait for You  
Till my soul is satisfied

### **Verse 3**

So put Your hope in God alone  
Take courage in His power to save  
Completely and forever won  
By Christ emerging from the grave

*Chorus 1*

### **Verse 4**

His steadfast love has made a way  
And God Himself has paid the price  
That all who trust in Him today  
Find healing in His sacrifice  
That all who trust in Him today  
Find healing in His sacrifice

## **Chorus 2**

I will wait for You, I will wait for You  
Through the storm and through the night  
I will wait for You, surely wait for You  
For Your love is my delight  
I will wait for You, I will wait for You  
On Your word I will rely  
I will wait for You, surely wait for You  
Till my soul is satisfied

## **\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

*Tertullian's Third Form; Tertullian was an elder from Northern Africa and wrote this c. 220 A.D.*

**Leader:** There is but one God, and no other besides the Maker of the world;

**People:** **He produced the universe out of nothing, by his Word sent forth first of all; that this Word, called his Son.**

**Leader:** [The Son] was seen in the name of God in various ways by the people of old;

**People:** **He was always heard in the prophets, at last was sent down, from the Spirit and God the Father, into the Virgin Mary.**

**Leader:** He was made flesh in her womb, and born of her, lived as Jesus Christ;

**People:** **He preached the new law and the new promise of the kingdom of heaven; He wrought miracles; was nailed to the cross; rose again on the third day; was caught up to the heavens; and sat down at the right hand of God.**

**Leader:** [The Son] sent in his place the power of the Holy Ghost, to guide the believers;

**People:** **He will come again with glory to take the saints into the enjoyment of eternal life and the heavenly promises, and to judge the wicked with eternal fire, after the resurrection of both, with the restoration of the body.**

## CONFESSION OF SIN

Adapted from *Valley of Vision: A compilation of prayers from Puritans in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century*

**People:** O my Savior, help me.

I am slow to learn, prone to forget, and weak to climb;  
I am in the foothills when I should be on the heights;  
I am pained by my graceless heart,  
my prayerless days,  
my poverty of love,  
my sloth in the heavenly race,  
my sullied conscience,  
my wasted hours,  
my unspent opportunities.  
I am blind while the light shines around me:  
take the scales from my eyes,  
grind to dust my heart of unbelief.  
Make it my highest joy to study you,  
meditate on you,  
gaze on you,  
sit like Mary at your feet,  
lean like John on your breast,  
appeal like Peter to your love,  
count like Paul all things but dung.  
I believe, help my unbelief. Amen

## \*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Galatians 4:4-7 (NIV)

**Leader:** But when the time had fully come,

**People:** God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

**Leader:** And because you are sons,

**People:** God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts crying, "Abba! Father!" So through God you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son an heir.



Leader: 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.**

## **\*GLORIA PATRI**

Anonymous

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

### **ADVENTURERS**

### **CHILDREN (1<sup>ST</sup> - 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADES)**

All children, 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> 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**

Collect for "Proper 12" Sunday from *The Book of Common Prayer*

Leader: O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: Increase and multiply upon us your mercy; that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

*(Leader intercedes for needs of the community, the Church, and the World)*

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**

**Ecclesiastes 11:1 - 12:8**

**11** [1] Cast your bread upon the waters,  
for you will find it after many days.

[2] Give a portion to seven, or even to eight,  
for you know not what disaster may happen on earth.

[3] If the clouds are full of rain,  
they empty themselves on the earth,  
and if a tree falls to the south or to the north,  
in the place where the tree falls, there it will lie.

[4] He who observes the wind will not sow,  
and he who regards the clouds will not reap.

[5] As you do not know the way the spirit comes to the bones in the  
womb of a woman with child, so you do not know the work of God who  
makes everything.

[6] In the morning sow your seed, and at evening withhold not your hand,  
for you do not know which will prosper, this or that, or whether both alike  
will be good.

[7] Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun.

[8] So if a person lives many years, let him rejoice in them all; but let him  
remember that the days of darkness will be many. All that comes is vanity.

[9] Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the  
days of your youth. Walk in the ways of your heart and the sight of your  
eyes. But know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment.

[10] Remove vexation from your heart, and put away pain from your body,  
for youth and the dawn of life are vanity.

**12** [1] Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near of which you will say, “I have no pleasure in them”; [2] before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars are darkened and the clouds return after the rain, [3] in the day when the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men are bent, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those who look through the windows are dimmed, [4] and the doors on the street are shut—when the sound of the grinding is low, and one rises up at the sound of a bird, and all the daughters of song are brought low— [5] they are afraid also of what is high, and terrors are in the way; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags itself along, and desire fails, because man is going to his eternal home, and the mourners go about the streets— [6] before the silver cord is snapped, or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher is shattered at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern, [7] and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. [8] Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher; all is vanity.

**Leader:** The Word of the Lord.

**People:** **Thanks be to God.**

## SERMON

Jacky Yeung

Wisdom for the Way “Uncertainty and the Vanity of Life”



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](https://adventpres.org/give). You can also scan this QR code or place a gift in the offering basket near the entrance of the chapel.



# SERVICE OF THE TABLE

## CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

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

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**People:** And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

**People:** We lift them to the Lord.

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

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

Leader: It is right, our duty and our joy, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord; who on the first day of the week overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

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

ALL:

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

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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

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

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

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

People: **Amen.**

Leader: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

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

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

## COMMUNION AT ADVENT

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

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

### ABOUT THE ELEMENTS

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



### PRAYER FOR THOSE SEARCHING FOR TRUTH

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

### PRAYER OF BELIEF

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

### PRAYER FOR THOSE STRUGGLING AGAINST SIN

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

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

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

## COMMUNION SONG

## Your Labor Is Not In Vain

Words and music by Isaac Wardell, Paul Zach, and Wendell Kimbrough

© 2017 Wendell K Songs

### Verse 1

Your labor is not in vain  
Though the ground underneath you  
Is cursed and stained  
Your planting and reaping are never the same  
Your labor is not in vain

### Verse 2

Your labor is not unknown  
Though the rocks they cry out  
And the sea it may groan  
The place of your toil may not seem like a home  
But your labor is not unknown

### Chorus

I am with you, I am with you  
I am with you, I am with you  
For I have called you  
Called you by name  
Your labor is not in vain

### Verse 3

The vineyards you plant will bear fruit  
The fields will sing out and rejoice with the truth  
For all that is old will at last be made new  
The vineyards you plant will bear fruit

*Chorus*

### Verse 4

The houses you labored to build  
Will finally with laughter and joy be filled  
The serpent that hurts and destroys will be killed  
And all that is broken be healed

*Chorus x2*



## \*SONG

## All Who Are Thirsty

Words and music by Brenton Brown and Glenn Roberts

© 1998 Vineyard Songs

### Verse

All who are thirsty  
All who are weak  
Come to the fountain  
Dip your heart in the stream of life  
Let the pain and the sorrow  
Be washed away  
In the waves of His mercy  
As deep cries out to deep  
We sing

### Chorus

Come Lord Jesus come  
Come Lord Jesus come  
Come Lord Jesus come  
Come Lord Jesus come  
*Repeat verse & chorus*

### Interlude

As deep cries out to deep  
As deep cries out to deep  
As deep cries out to deep we sing  
*Chorus*

## \*CLOSING PRAYER

### \*BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24-26 (NIV)

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.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS



## QUESTION & DISCUSSION TODAY, July 28, 12:00 P.M.

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

Location: YMCA Multi-Purpose Room



## WOMEN'S SUMMER EVENT Thursday, August 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 P.M.

Calling all Advent women and their friends! Join us for dinner and a time to just sit back and chat. This is a great opportunity to invite your family, co-workers, neighbors, and gal-pals.

RSVP: [adventpres.org](http://adventpres.org) | events

Location: Istanbul Grill | 5613 Morningside Dr.

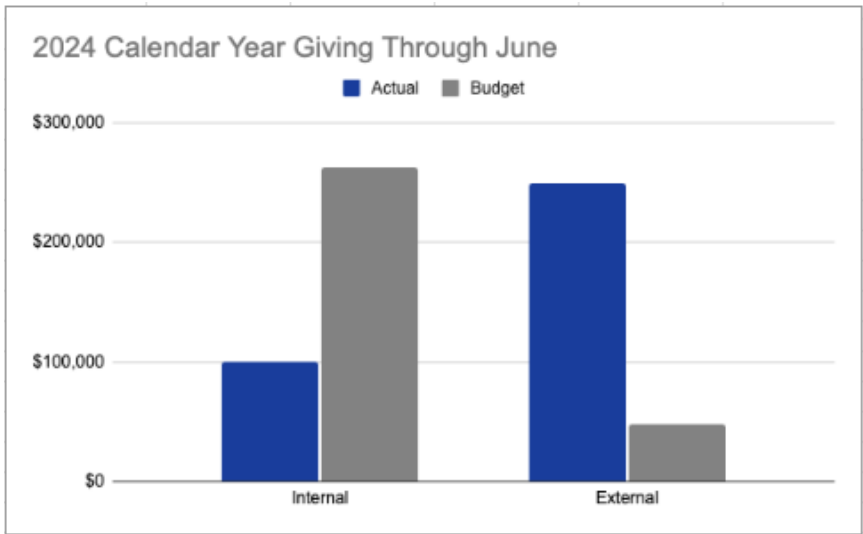


## OVERNIGHT PRAYER RETREAT August 2<sup>nd</sup> 4:00 P.M. to 3<sup>rd</sup> 2:00 P.M.

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

Register at [adventpres.org/events](http://adventpres.org/events)

## 2024 CALENDAR YEAR GIVING



### Media Release

Advent Houston shares photos taken at our events in our monthly newsletters, on our website, or on social media for the purpose of promoting and highlighting the church's mission. By being present, you consent to being photographed and having these photos shared. For individuals who are not comfortable being visible in a shared photograph, please notify the church at [admin@adventpres.org](mailto:admin@adventpres.org) to opt out of the media release.

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## ADVENT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOUSTON

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