
EMBRACE | EMBODY | EXTEND



ADVENT HOUSTON

3rd Sunday after Pentecost

Proper 5

JUNE • 9 • 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.

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*

REFLECTIONS

"My soul is impatient with itself, as with a bothersome child; its restlessness keeps growing and is forever the same. Everything interests me, but nothing holds me."

— **Fernando Pessoa**

"Death can radically enable us to enjoy life. By relativizing all that we do in our days under the sun, death can change us from people who want to control life for gain into people who find deep joy in receiving life as a gift. This is the main message of Ecclesiastes in a nutshell: life in God's world is gift, not gain."

— **David Gibson**

"Smoke, nothing but smoke. There's nothing to anything — it's all smoke" (Ecclesiastes 1:2)

— **Eugene Peterson, The Message**

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

Adapted from Psalm 138

Leader: Oh LORD, your name and your word are exalted above all things,

**ALL: We bow to you and give thanks to your name
For your steadfast love and your faithfulness**

Leader: All the kings of the earth shall give you thanks, O Lord,
for they have heard the words of your mouth,

**ALL: And they shall sing of the ways of the Lord,
for great is the glory of the Lord.**

Leader: The LORD preserves life and guards us in the midst of trouble.
He will not forsake us, the work of His hands.

**ALL: The LORD is high, yet regards even us, the lowly.
With our whole hearts, we respond with thanks and sing your
praise!**

*SONG

The Lion and the Lamb

Words and music by Brenton Brown, Brian Johnson, and Leeland Mooring
© 2015 Meaux Mercy; Thankyou Music

Verse 1

He's coming on the clouds
Kings and kingdoms will bow down
And every chain will break
As broken hearts declare His praise
For who can stop the Lord Almighty

Chorus

Our God is the Lion, the Lion of Judah
He's roaring with power and fighting our battles
And every knee will bow before Him
Our God is the Lamb, the Lamb that was slain
For the sins of the world; His blood breaks the chains
And every knee will bow before the Lion and the Lamb
Every knee will bow before Him

Verse 2

So open up the gates
Make way before the King of kings
The God who comes to save
Is here to set the captives free
For who can stop the Lord Almighty

Chorus

Bridge

Who can stop the Lord Almighty
Who can stop the Lord Almighty
Who can stop the Lord Almighty
Who can stop the Lord

Chorus

PRAYER OF ADORATION

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Colossians 2:6-11

[6] Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, [7] rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

[8] See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. [9] For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, [10] and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. [11] In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

STORIES OF MISSION & MERCY

*SONG

Psalm 116

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, then verse

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**

Creed of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines:

Taken from the 1992 Statement of Faith, a collaborative document of the Presbyterian, Disciples of Christ, and United Brethren denominations.

Leader: Christian, what is it that you believe?

People: **We believe in one God Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, who provides order, purpose, meaning, and fulfillment to all creation.**

We believe that in Jesus Christ, who was born of Mary, God became man and is the sovereign Lord of life and history.

We believe that the Holy Spirit is God and is present in the world, empowering and guiding believers to understand and live out their faith in Jesus Christ.

We believe that the church is the one body of Christ, the whole community of persons reconciled to God through Jesus Christ and entrusted with God's ministry.

We believe the resurrection of Jesus Christ has overcome the power of death and gives assurance of life after death.

We believe and we look forward to his coming again in all fullness and glory to make all creation new and to gather all the faithful under God's kingdom.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Adapted from Anonymous Sources

People: God of love, it is your will that we should love you with heart, soul, mind, strength, and our neighbor as ourselves, but we are not sufficient for these things.

We confess that our affections continually turn away from you:

from purity to lust,
from freedom to slavery,
from compassion to indifference,
from fullness to emptiness.

Have mercy on us. According to your love and compassion, forgive us. And by the Holy Spirit, renew us in your grace to follow Jesus each day anew.

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Colossians 1:13-14 (ESV)

Leader: He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

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 (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

Prayer attributed to St. Francis of Assisi

Leader: Almighty God, and Father, grant that all who confess your Name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

Leader: Lord, in your mercy

People: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good.

Leader: Lord, in your mercy

People: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory.

Leader: Lord, in your mercy

People: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation.

Leader: Lord, in your mercy

People: Hear our prayer.

People continue in prayer. After each supplication, the leader and people say

Leader: Lord, in your mercy

People: Hear our prayer.

SERMON READING

Ecclesiastes 1:1-2

[1] The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

[2] Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher,
vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Rev. Taylor Leachman

Wisdom for the Way: "Everything is Meaningless"



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: Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you."
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: 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

Hast Thou Heard Him, Seen Him, Known Him?

Words by Ora Rowan (alt. Kevin Twit) and music by Joel Littlepage
© 2010 Joel Littlepage Music

Verse 1

Hast thou heard Him, seen Him, known Him?
Is not thine a captured heart?
Chief among ten thousand own Him,
Joyful choose the better part.

Chorus

Captivated by His beauty,
Worthy tribute haste to bring.
Let His peerless worth constrain thee,
Crown Him now unrivaled King.

Verse 2

What can strip the seeming beauty,
From the idols of the earth?
Not a sense of right or duty,
But the sight of peerless worth.

Chorus

Verse 3

'Tis that look that melted Peter,
'Tis that face that Stephen saw,
'Tis that heart that wept with Mary,
Can alone from idols draw.

Chorus x2

*SONG

All Must Be Well

Words by Mary Bowley-Peters (alt by Matthew S. Smith) and music by Matthew S. Smith.

© 2007 Detuned Radio Music (ASCAP)

Through the love of God our Savior, All will be well
Free and changeless is His favor, All is well
Precious is the blood that healed us
Perfect is the grace that sealed us
Strong the hand stretched forth to shield us
All must be well

Though we pass through tribulation, All will be well
Ours is such a full salvation, All is well
Happy still in God confiding
Fruitful if in Christ abiding
Steadfast through the Spirit's guiding
All must be well

We expect a bright tomorrow; All will be well
Faith can sing through days of sorrow, All is well
On our Father's love relying
Jesus every need supplying
Yes in living or in dying
All must be well

On our Father's love relying
Jesus every need supplying
Yes in living or in dying
All must be well

*CLOSING PRAYER

*BENEDICTION

Adapted from Psalm 90:17; Romans 15:13 (ESV)

Leader: May the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands!

And, as we go, may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



PRAYER TEAM & PRAYER SLIPS

Advent Houston now has a Prayer Team! You've seen the "How can we pray for you" slips in the bulletins for a while and now we have them at the Welcome Table too. Soon there will be a place on our website to submit prayer requests. All the prayer requests will go to our Prayer Team who will pray for and with you.

Reference: Philippians 4:5b-7



WOMEN'S SUMMER EVENT

THIS Thursday, June 13th 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 | events

Location: Candente | 4306 Yoakum Blvd.



ADVENT MEN'S EVENT

NEXT Tuesday, June 18th at 7:00 P.M.

Calling all Advent men and their friends! Join us for dinner, discussion, and fellowship. Bring a friend to meet your friends!

Discussion podcast: Man to Man: Men and Addiction with Greg Wilson // Lead Courageously

RSVP: adventpres.org | events

Location: The Pit Room | 1201 Richmond Ave.



HEY PARENTS!

Are your kids heading to camp this summer? We would love to send them some mail while they are away! If you would like that, please send their name(s), camp dates and mailing address to Kelley at kelley.ellis@adventpres.org.



OVERNIGHT PRAYER RETREAT

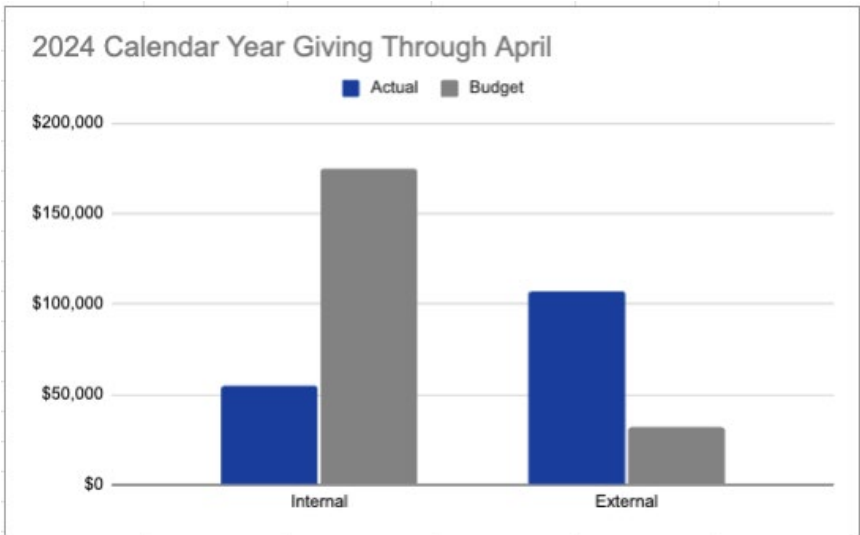
August 2nd 4:00 P.M. to 3rd 2:00 P.M.

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.

Location: Villa de Matel | 6510 Lawndale St.

Register at 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 to opt out of the media release.

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ADVENT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOUSTON

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EMBODY, AND EXTEND THE GRACE OF JESUS
TO THE TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER, RICE
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