
EMBRACE | EMBODY | EXTEND



ADVENT
HOUSTON

3rd Sunday of Easter
APRIL • 23 • 2023

WELCOME TO ADVENT!

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.

ADVENT | CHRISTMAS | EPIPHANY | LENT | **EASTER** | PENTECOST | ORDINARY

EASTER

"Christ is the one in whom life and the new creation, the beginning again of our lives and all of creation, is assured. Our Easter calling is to let him live in us, to embrace by faith his new life, to let it take hold of us, to participate in him and his resurrection for the life of the whole world. In this way we are born again (John 3:3); we are made a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17).

...The message of Easter is that the way of being in Jesus, the way of living the new resurrected life is through participation. This message is very different than the message I all too frequently hear about Easter day. I hear that knowing God is accomplished through the way of intellectual evidence: Believe the facts and that will transform your life. I also hear that knowing God is accomplished through the way of emotion: Feel God. Feel forgiveness. ... But the emphasis of the early church fathers and the ancient church is knowing God through the way of participation. We participate in Christ by living the life of our baptism into his death and resurrection. This is a daily, existential, moment-by-moment experience as we choose in this or that situation to die to the sins for which Christ died and choose the life of the Spirit for which Christ was raised to new life.**

Easter is a fifty-day period in the church calendar that lasts from Easter Sunday until Pentecost Sunday (the celebration of God's sending of the Holy Spirit). This fifty day period is not merely meant to be an extended celebration - although it is that. But, as lent was a time of preparation for new Christians to join the church, Easter was a time of continued education of those newly welcomed Christians. This instruction was intended to be a teaching of "mystagogy" - a leading through the mysteries, chiefly the mystery of the sacraments.

Thus, Easter became a time for Christians to learn the pattern of baptism and to learn the expectation and celebration of the Eucharist (what we refer to as Communion). We are to continue in this baptismal pattern - of dying to sin and living to Christ. We too are called to live into that pattern of repentance and faith - to become more and more like Christ in our journey as His disciples.

During this Easter season, may we learn better what it means to PRACTICE our faith by paying attention to our sins, turning from them, and then turning toward our Life and our Lord, Jesus Christ.

*Robert E. Webber, *Ancient Future Time*

REFLECTIONS

““Jesus is handing out God’s party invitations. They read: “You’re invited to my party in the new creation. Come as you are.”

— **Tim Chester**

“As a way of life, an act of love, an expression of faith, our hospitality reflects and anticipates God’s welcome. Simultaneously costly and wonderfully rewarding, hospitality often involves small deaths and little resurrections. By God’s grace we can grow more willing, more eager, to open the door to a needy neighbor, a weary sister or brother, a stranger in distress. Perhaps as we open that door more regularly, we will grow increasingly sensitive to the quiet knock of angels. In the midst of a life-giving practice, we too might catch glimpses of Jesus who asks for our welcome and welcomes us home.”

— **Christine Pohl**

“We live in what one writer has called the “age of sensation.” We think that if we don’t feel something there can be no authenticity in doing it. But the wisdom of God says something different: that we can act ourselves into a new way of feeling much quicker than we can feel ourselves into a new way of acting. Worship is an act that develops feelings for God, not a feeling for God that is expressed in an act of worship. When we obey the command to praise God in worship, our deep, essential need to be in relationship with God is nurtured.”

— **Eugene H. Peterson**

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 105:1-4 (ESV)

Leader: Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name;

People: make known his deeds among the peoples!

Leader: Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works!

ALL: Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!

*SONG

Holy Holy Holy

“Holy Holy Holy” words by Reginald Heber and music by John Bacchus Dykes

© Words and Music: Public Domain

Holy holy holy, Lord God Almighty

Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee

Holy holy holy, merciful and mighty

God in three persons, blessed Trinity

Holy holy holy, all the saints adore Thee

Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea

Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee

Which wert and art and evermore shalt be

Holy holy holy, though the darkness hide Thee

Though the eye of sinful man thy glory may not see

Only Thou art holy there is none beside Thee

Perfect in power, in love and purity

Holy holy holy, Lord God Almighty

All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea

Holy holy holy, merciful and mighty

God in three persons, blessed Trinity

PRAYER OF ADORATION

FIRST READING

Exodus 7:14-25

[14] Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is hardened; he refuses to let the people go. [15] Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to the water. Stand on the bank of the Nile to meet him, and take in your hand the staff that turned into a serpent. [16] And you shall say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you, saying, "Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness." But so far, you have not obeyed. [17] Thus says the LORD, "By this you shall know that I am the LORD: behold, with the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water that is in the Nile, and it shall turn into blood. [18] The fish in the Nile shall die, and the Nile will stink, and the Egyptians will grow weary of drinking water from the Nile.'" [19] And the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, their canals, and their ponds, and all their pools of water, so that they may become blood, and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, even in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.'"

[20] Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded. In the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants he lifted up the staff and struck the water in the Nile, and all the water in the Nile turned into blood. [21] And the fish in the Nile died, and the Nile stank, so that the Egyptians could not drink water from the Nile. There was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. [22] But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts. So Pharaoh's heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said. [23] Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not take even this to heart. [24] And all the Egyptians dug along the Nile for water to drink, for they could not drink the water of the Nile.

[25] Seven full days passed after the LORD had struck the Nile. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

Revelation 21:1-4

[1] Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. [2] And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. [3] And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. [4] He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*SONG

Revelation Song

"Revelation Song" words and music by Jennie Lee Riddle
© 2004 Gateway Create Publishing

Verse 1

Worthy is the Lamb Who was slain
Holy holy is He
Sing a new song to Him Who sits on
Heaven's mercy seat

Chorus

Holy holy holy is the Lord God Almighty
Who was and is and is to come
With all creation I sing praise to the King of kings
You are my everything and I will adore You

Verse 2

Clothed in rainbows of living color
Flashes of lightning rolls of thunder
Blessing and honor strength and glory
And power be to You the only wise King
Chorus

Verse 3

Filled with wonder awe-struck wonder
At the mention of Your name
Jesus Your name is power breath and living water
Such a marvelous mystery

Chorus x2

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

The Apostles Creed & Catechism Questions 79, & 80 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.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.*

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God, the Father
almighty.**

**From there he will come again to judge the living and the
dead.**

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

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.

“He will come to judge the living and the dead”

Leader: How should you understand Jesus’ future judgment?

People: **All people, whether living or dead, will be judged by Jesus Christ. Those apart from Christ will receive eternal rejection and punishment in hell, while those who are in Christ will receive eternal blessing and welcome into the fullness of life with God.**

Leader: Should you be afraid of God’s judgment?

People: **The unrepentant should fear God’s judgment, for “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness” (Romans 1:18). But if I am in Christ, I need not fear God’s judgment, for my Judge is my Savior, Jesus Christ, who loves me, died for my sins, and intercedes for me.**

CONFESSION OF SIN

Adapted from Wayside Presbyterian Church (PCA)
Signal Mountain, TN

ALL: **O Lord, we openly admit that you know us more than we know ourselves. Our deepest secrets are open before you. You know our thoughts before they are conceived in our minds. We cannot hide from you. Therefore, we ask that you discover unto us our sins so that we may humble ourselves again in your presence and seek your forgiveness and grace. We admit we have tolerated sinful thoughts about power, lust, greed, jealousy, malice and other things that grieve your heart. We have committed sins of omission and commission. But we seek your mercy and cleansing from our sins by the blood of Christ. And we thank you for your Spirit who enables us to walk in holiness and obedience. Give us the grace to please you this day and forever. In Jesus’ name, Amen.**

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Adapted from 1 John 3:1 (ESV)

Leader: See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and if you are in Christ, that is what we are.

People: Amen.

*DOXOLOGY

“Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow” words by Thomas Ken and music by Louis Bourgeois

© Words and Music: Public Domain

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise Him all creatures here below.
Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts.
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Amen.

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 sanctuary after the Passing of the Peace.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Modified Prayer of Martin Luther (1483 – 1546)

Found in *A Procession of Prayers*

Leader: O God of mercy and grace, grant us grace
To receive Jesus Christ in every person
And to embody the presence of Jesus Christ to every person.

Leader intercedes on behalf of the community

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**

John 2:1-11

[1] On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. [2] Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. [3] When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." [4] And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." [5] His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

[6] Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. [7] Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. [8] And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. [9] When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom [10] and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now." [11] This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

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

SERMON

Rev. Taylor Leachman

“Dinner With Jesus: The Wedding at Cana”

PASSING OF THE PEACE

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 ARE GLAD TO HAVE YOU WORSHIP WITH US TODAY. PLEASE SIGN IN SO WE HAVE A RECORD OF YOUR ATTENDANCE.

OPTION 1: SIGN-IN ON THE BLUE PAD LOCATED NEAR THE CENTER AISLE AND RECORD YOUR INFORMATION THERE.



OPTION 2: SCAN THE QR CODE AND COMPLETE THE FORM THERE. THIS CAN BE DONE 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 [ADVENTPRE.ORG/GIVE](https://adventpre.org/give). YOU CAN ALSO SCAN THIS QR CODE OR PLACE A GIFT IN THE OFFERING BASKET NEAR THE ENTRANCE TO THE SANCTUARY.



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 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, our duty and our joy, always and everywhere to give you thanks, almighty and eternal Father, and in these days of Easter to celebrate with joyful hearts the memory of your wonderful works. For by the mystery of his passion Jesus Christ, your risen Son, has conquered the powers of death and hell and restored in men and women the image of your glory. He has placed them once more in paradise and opened to them the gate of life eternal. And so, in the joy of this Passover, earth and heaven resound with gladness, while angels and archangels and the powers of all creation sing forever the hymn of your glory.

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: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

All: **Christ has died.**
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Leader: Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

People: **Therefore, let us keep the feast. Alleluia!**

Leader: The 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 and 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

Psalm 34 - Taste and See

"Psalm 34 - Taste and See" words and music by Joe Rigney and Barnard Shane

© 2015 Songs From Wellhouse

Verse 1

I sought the Lord and He answered me
And delivered me from every fear
Those who look on Him are radiant
They'll never be ashamed
They'll never be ashamed

Verse 2

This poor man cried and the Lord heard me
And saved me from my enemies
The Son of God surrounds His saints
He will deliver them
He will deliver them

Chorus

Magnify the Lord with me
Come exalt His name together
Glorify the Lord with me
Come exalt His name forever

Verse 3

O taste and see that the Lord is good
O blessed is he who hides in Him
O fear the Lord O all you saints
He'll give you everything
He'll give you everything

Chorus

Bridge

Let us bless the Lord
Every day and night
Never ending praise
May our incense rise (x3)

Chorus x2

*CLOSING PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING & MISSION

*SONG

The Blessing

“The Blessing” words and music by Chris Brown, Cody Carnes, Kari Jobe, and Steven Furtick

© 2020 Capitol CMG Paragon

Verse

The Lord bless you and keep you
Make his face shine upon you
And be gracious to you
The Lord turn his face toward you
And give you peace

Chorus

Amen, amen, amen (x2)

Bridge

May his favor be upon you
And a thousand generations
And your family, and your children
And their children
And their children

May his presence go before you
And behind you, and beside you
All around you, and within you
He is with you
He is with you

In the morning, in the evening
In your coming, and your going
In your weeping, and rejoicing
He is for you
He is for you

Tag

He is for you (x6)

Chorus

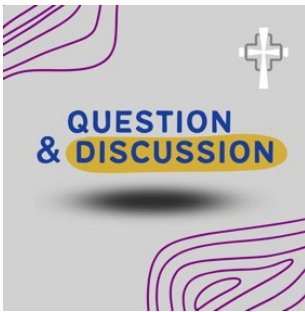
Announcements



ADVENT STUDENT DINNER

TONIGHT - 6:00 P.M.

Undergrad, graduate, and medical students are invited to dinner on Advent at Hillel. We would love to care for you and your friends in this way!



QUESTION & DISCUSSION

April 30th - 5:30 P.M.



Got questions? Let's discuss. Scan the QR code to submit your questions.



DONUTS AT THE PARK

May 7 - 10:30 A.M.

Mark your calendars! Join Miss Josie and gang for our next donuts in the park event! Sunday, May 7th, at 10:30 A.M. at Colonial Park in the West U area.

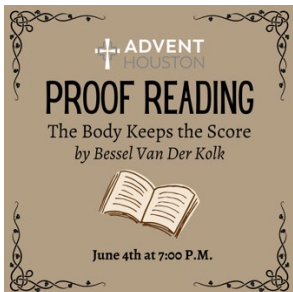


MEMBERSHIP CLASS

May 19 - 5:30 P.M.



Interested in learning more about Advent? Click the QR code and register for the "All About Advent" membership class.



PROOF READING

June 4th - 7:00 P.M.

Come and discuss the book *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma* by Bessel A. van der Kolk. Books are available for purchase at the Welcome Table. Location - TBD



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.

ADVENT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOUSTON

2617 BISSONNET ST. SUITE 200, #227
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.

ALL SONGS USED BY PERMISSION.
CCLI LICENSE #21309482

ADVENTPRES.ORG

713-364-6748