



ADVENT HOUSTON

ORDER OF WORSHIP

15th Sunday After Pentecost
Proper 20

September 18, 2022

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.

REFLECTION

Because there is only one King, there is only one – his – kingdom; because there is only one head, there is only one church. I don't own a church, I am not the head of the church, neither are you. Christ is the founder and the head of the church and we are just members – bodies. Under his headship, under his lordship we will work together. We, our churches and we as servant leaders, need to continually ask ourselves the painful question: 'How can a sinful and divided church announce to the world the gospel of salvation and reconciliation?' It pleases our Lord that we love each other as brothers and co-servants of his. The problem of the evangelical family is that it is dysfunctional, fragmented, and has too much in-fighting. We must develop a non-sectarian ecclesiology in order to be a witness to our society. - **Peter Kuzmič**

The church becomes "sacred space" and "kingdom space" in your community. No one can read the Bible and not be struck by the land promise. What does that mean for us today? While many criticize the implicit Gnosticism of Christians in their view of heaven or the spiritual life, I see implicit Gnosticism in the way we talk about church. It is for many only a "spiritual" reality, but as Christ became incarnate so also the Body of Christ is incarnate: it is a living, breathing, physical reality. A local fellowship is to be sacred space and kingdom space by taking up real space in this world for the kingdom to breathe out redemption. - **Scot McKnight**

The only thing that makes the Church endurable is that it is somehow the body of Christ and that on this we are fed. It seems to be a fact that you have to suffer as much from the Church as for it but if you believe in the divinity of Christ, you have to cherish the world at the same time that you struggle to endure it. "

- **Flannery O'Connor**

SERVICE OF THE WORD

***Call to Worship – From Psalm 98:1-2**

Leader: Oh sing to the LORD a new song,
for he has done marvelous things!

**People: His right hand and his holy arm
have worked salvation for him.**

Leader: The LORD has made known his salvation;

**People: He has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the
nations.**

***Song – All Creatures of Our God and King**

Verse 1:

All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice and with us sing,
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou burning sun with golden beam,
Thou silver moon with softer gleam,

Refrain:

O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Verse 2:

Thou rushing wind that art so strong
Ye clouds that sail in Heaven along,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Thou rushing morn in praise rejoice,
Ye lights of evening find a voice,
(Refrain)

Verse 3:

Thou flowing water pure and clear
Make music for Thy Lord to hear

Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou fire so masterful and bright
That givest man both warmth and light,
(Refrain)

Verse 4:

All ye men of tender heart
Forgiving others take your part
O sing ye! Alleluia!
Ye who long pain and sorrow bear,
Praise God and on Him cast your care
(Refrain)

Verse 5:

Let all things their Creator bless,
And worship Him in humbleness.
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son
And praise the Spirit, Three in One
(Refrain)

Prayer of Adoration

Old Testament Reading

Genesis 1:1-5; 24-28

[1] In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. [2] The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

[3] And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. [4] And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. [5] God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

....

[24] And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds." And it was so. [25] And God

made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. [26] Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

[27] So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

[28] And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD

People: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 13:31-32

[31] He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. [32] It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches." (ESV)

Leader: The Gospel of the LORD.

People: Praise be to you Lord Christ.

***Song – Good Good Father**

Verse 1:

Oh I've heard a thousand stories
Of what they think you're like
But I've heard the tender whisper
Of love in the dead of night
And you tell me that You're pleased
And that I'm never alone

Chorus:

You're a good, good Father
It's who You are, it's who You are, it's who You are
And I'm loved by You
It's who I am, it's who I am, it's who I am

Verse 2:

Oh and I've seen many searching
For answers far and wide
But I know we're all searching
For answers only You provide
'Cause You know just what we need
Before we say a word
Chorus

Bridge:

'Cause You are perfect in all of Your ways
You are perfect in all of Your ways
You are perfect in all of Your ways to us (x2)

Verse 3:

Oh it's love so undeniable
I, I can hardly speak
Peace so unexplainable
I, I can hardly think
As You call me deeper still
As You call me deeper still
As You call me deeper still
Into love, love, love
Chorus

***Affirmation of Faith**

Middle East Reformed Fellowship

*(MERF is a family of churches throughout the Middle East;
it began in Beirut, Lebanon in 1971)*

Leader: The Bible reveals the true and living God, Sovereign Creator and Ruler of the universe.

People: This one and only God is revealed as three distinct persons:

Leader: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the same in substance, equal in power and glory, working all things after the counsel of His will.

People: Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, who for us and for our salvation became fully man.

Leader: Being conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary, he was born of her without sin. He, by His perfect obedience and atoning death, provided full satisfaction to God for the sins of His elect people.

People: He was raised bodily from the dead and ascended to heaven where He sits at the right hand of God

Leader: From there, He reigns over His universal Church and Kingdom. At the last day, a day known only to the Father, He will return in glory to judge the living and the dead: the saved to enjoy His eternal glory and mercy, and the lost to suffer eternal conscious punishment.

People: The Holy Spirit is the one who inspired the prophets and apostles to write the Scriptures.

Leader: He authenticated their writings and ministry by means of supernatural gifts. He takes the things of Christ and sovereignly applies them to His people by calling, regenerating, sanctifying and glorifying them for Christ's eternal Kingdom.

People: The Church is the instrument ordained by God to bring the message of the Gospel to a lost and condemned human race and to carry out His purposes in the world.

Leader: The mission of the Church is, therefore, the preaching of the Gospel and the discipling of all nations, this mission being accompanied by "doing good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

ALL: AMEN

Confession of Sin

**Adapted from the African Methodist
Episcopal liturgy and Exodus 20**

Leader: I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt,
out of the land of bondage. You shall have no other
Gods before me.

People: **Lord, have mercy on us. We have failed to love you.**

Leader: You shall not make for yourself an idol and bow down to
them or worship them.

People: **Lord, have mercy on us. We have failed to love you.**

Leader: You shall not misuse the name of the Lord God.

People: **Lord, have mercy on us. We have failed to love you.**

Leader: Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.

People: **Lord, have mercy on us. We have failed to love you.**

Leader: Honor your father and mother.

People: **Lord, have mercy on us. We have failed to love others.**

Leader: You shall not murder

People: **Lord, have mercy on us. We have failed to love others.**

Leader: You shall not commit adultery

People: **Lord, have mercy on us. We have failed to love others.**

Leader: You shall not steal.

People: **Lord, have mercy on us. We have failed to love others.**

Leader: You shall not give false witness.

People: **Lord, have mercy on us. We have failed to love others.**

Leader: You shall not covet.

People: **Lord, have mercy on us. We have failed to love others.**

***Assurance of Pardon**

2 Corinthians 5:17-18; 21

Leader: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation;

People: **The old has gone, the new has come!**

Leader: All this is from God

People: **Who reconciled us to himself through Christ and
gave us the ministry of reconciliation:**

Leader: God made him who had no sin to be sin for us

People: **So that in him we might become the righteousness
of God.**

***Gloria Patri**

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 (K - 3RD GRADE)

All kids from Kindergarten through 3rd Grade are invited to go to Adventurers, a children's lesson and activity time during the sermon. They will be escorted back to the chapel after the Passing of the Peace.

Prayers of the People

Collect

ALL: Grant us, Lord, not to be anxious about earthly things, but to love things heavenly; and even now, while we are placed among things that are passing away, to hold fast to those that shall endure; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Leader continues to intercede on behalf 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.

***New Testament Reading 1 Corinthians 12:12–13; 31; 13-1-7**

[12] For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. [13] For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

....

[31b] And I will show you a still more excellent way. [13:1] If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. [2] And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. [3] If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

[4] Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant [5] or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; [6] it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. [7] Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Rev. Taylor Leachman

“Advent’s Mission and Values: Embody”

Passing of the Peace

Leader: The Peace of the LORD be always with you.

People: And also with you!

RETURN OF CHILDREN

During the Offertory, "ADVENTURERS" teachers will bring the children back to the Sanctuary. Feel free to pick up younger children at this time as well. You may also wait to retrieve them, as childcare is provided for the duration of the service.

Announcements

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

OPTION 1: TAKE THE BLUE SIGN-IN PAD FROM UNDER THE SEAT AT THE END OF THE ROW AND RECORD YOUR INFORMATION THERE.



OPTION 2: SCAN THE QR CODE WITH YOUR PHONE'S CAMERA AND FILL OUT THE FORM THERE. YOU MAY ALSO DO THIS AFTER THE SERVICE.

Offertory & Private Prayer

ALL GIVING IS A RESPONSE TO GOD'S GENEROSITY TO YOU IN ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE, BUT PARTICULARLY THROUGH THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS. IF YOU ARE NOT SURE WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT JESUS OR CHRISTIANITY, OR IF YOU ARE A GUEST, WE WOULD INVITE YOU TO REFRAIN FROM GIVING AT THIS TIME.

ONLINE GIVING IS AVAILABLE AT [ADVENTPRES.ORG/GIVE](https://adventpres.org/give). YOU CAN ALSO SCAN THIS QR CODE OR PLACE A GIFT IN THE OFFERING BASKET TOWARD THE ENTRANCE OF THE SANCTUARY.



SERVICE OF THE TABLE

Celebration of Holy Communion

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

Leader: The LORD be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up unto the LORD.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the LORD, our God.

People: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Leader: It is very good and right, our duty and privilege, to at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God. Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify your glorious Name; evermore praising you, and singing...

People:

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: Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed for us.

People: Therefore, let us keep the feast.

Leader: The gifts of God are for the people of God.

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

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

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

**PRAYER FOR THOSE
SEARCHING FOR TRUTH:**

LORD JESUS, YOU CLAIM TO BE THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE. IF WHAT YOU CLAIM IS TRUE, PLEASE GUIDE ME, TEACH ME, AND OPEN TO ME THE REALITY OF WHO YOU ARE. GIVE ME THE ABILITY TO FOLLOW YOU NO MATTER WHAT IT MIGHT COST ME. GIVE ME AN UNDERSTANDING FOR YOU THAT IS COHERENT, CONVINCING, AND LEADS TO THE LIFE THAT YOU PROMISE. AMEN.

**PRAYER FOR THOSE
STRUGGLING AGAINST SIN**

LORD JESUS, GIVE ME THE ABILITY TO SEE IN YOU THE FULFILLMENT OF ALL MY NEEDS AND DESIRES, AND HELP ME TO TURN FROM EVERY FALSE SOURCE OF SATISFACTION TO FEED ON YOU, THE TRUE AND LIVING BREAD. ENABLE ME TO LAY ASIDE THE SIN THAT CLINGS SO CLOSELY TO ME, AND RUN WITH PERSEVERANCE THE RACE THAT YOU HAVE SET BEFORE ME, LOOKING ONLY TO YOU, THE AUTHOR AND PERFECTER OF MY FAITH. AMEN.

PRAYER FOR BELIEF:

LORD JESUS, I ADMIT THAT I AM WEAKER AND MORE SINFUL THAN I EVER BELIEVED, BUT THROUGH YOU, I AM MORE LOVED AND ACCEPTED THAN I EVER DARED HOPE. I THANK YOU FOR PAYING MY DEBT, BEARING MY PUNISHMENT ON THE CROSS AND OFFERING FORGIVENESS AND NEW LIFE. KNOWING THAT YOU HAVE BEEN RAISED FROM THE DEAD AND ARE NOW REPRESENTING ME AT THE FATHER'S RIGHT HAND IN HEAVEN, I TURN FROM MY SINS AND RECEIVE YOU AS MY SAVIOR. AMEN.

Communion Song – How Deep the Father’s Love

How deep the Father's love for us
How vast beyond all measure
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure
How great the pain of searing loss
The Father turns His face away
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory

Behold the man upon a cross
My sin upon His shoulders
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers
It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished
His dying breath has brought me life
I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything
No gifts, no power, no wisdom
But I will boast in Jesus Christ
His death and resurrection
Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom

***Song – Blessed Assurance**

Verse 1:

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.

Chorus:

This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.

Verse 2:

Perfect submission, perfect delight,
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels descending bring from above,
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

Chorus

Verse 3:

Perfect submission, all is at rest;
I in my Savior am happy and blessed,
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with his goodness, lost in his love.

Chorus

Closing Prayer of Thanksgiving and Mission**Benediction – Romans 15:5-6; 13**

[5] May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, [6] that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. ...[13] 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



WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP DINNERS

Next dinner: October 1

Come enjoy a home cooked meal while getting to know other Advent women in a casual home setting. RSVP to juliannaleachman@gmail.com or 704.941.7208



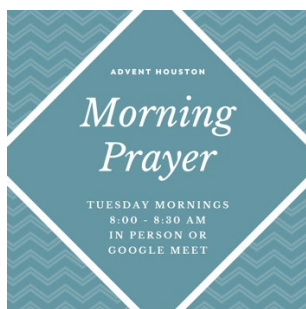
UPCOMING SUNDAYS SCHEDULE

Please take note of the irregular times for the next few Sundays. After today, the 18th, we have two Sundays (September 25th and October 9th) where we will meet here in the morning at 10 a.m. instead of in the afternoon. As of October 16th, in a few weeks, we will resume our regular 4 p.m. service times.



PROOF READING – THE LAST BATTLE

Join us for dinner, drinks (an alcoholic beverage inspired by our book), and a fun discussion on C.S. Lewis' *The Last Battle*. Any and all are welcome, so feel free to invite friends. Please RSVP to Taylor Leachman, taylor.leachman@adventpres.org



MORNING PRAYER

We are resuming our morning prayer meetings. Join us at the Local Office or via Google Meet on Tuesdays at 8:00 a.m. where we will go through portions of the Daily Prayer Project together.

Please check out our other events by visiting adventpres.org/events or scanning the listed QR code.



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

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adventpres.org

ADVENT'S HOUSTON EXISTS TO **EMBRACE, EMBODY, AND
EXTEND** THE GRACE OF JESUS TO THE TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER,
RICE UNIVERSITY, AND THE GREATER WEST UNIVERSITY AREA.

