

ADVENT HOUSTON

ORDER OF WORSHIP

1st Week of Advent

November 27, 2022

ADVENT

The season of Advent is the four-week period of preparation for and anticipation of the arrival of the Light of the World, which the Church celebrates at Christmas. The word "advent" literally means arrival. And during the season of Advent we focus on three different arrivals of Jesus Christ. First, we pay attention to Jesus's arrival as a baby born in Bethlehem—as the God-man himself in our world. Second, we focus on his return at the end of time when he promises to wipe away every tear from our eyes. Finally, we focus on his "intermediate entrance into our own lives."^[1]

Bobby Gross, an author of the book entitled *Living The Christian Year*, has this to say about Advent:

Advent is a season for waiting; we wait for the coming of God. We need him to come. Our world is messed up and we are messed up. We lament our condition and long for God to set things right, to make us better. So we pray and watch for signs of his presence.... In the midst of hardship and disappointment, we continue to wait. We wait in hope. We believe that something is happening in our world, something is taking shape in our lives, something large, light-filled and life giving. Even in December's lengthening darkness, this seed of joyful hope grows within us. ^[2]

In the season of Advent, we acknowledge the tension that pervades our lives throughout the whole of the year. During these four weeks, we celebrate the arrival two thousand years ago of our savior, Jesus Christ and his second, promised arrival that is still to come. We, like our brothers and sisters before us, cannot do anything to hasten Jesus' coming, as much as we long for that day. All we can do is prepare for it and live patiently knowing that he has come already and he will come again. During Advent, we practice the patience of the prophets who longed for the LORD to make his people holy. We celebrate what God is already doing in the world, and we wait with expectancy for His work to be made complete!

Thus, the season of Advent is a time for us to eschew the busyness of our day-to-day lives and to remind ourselves of the truth that we so frequently forget: we are dependent people who worship a faithful God. He is a God who has promised redemption of all things. He has promised that though there is darkness now, one day, someday, we will no longer need the sun itself because the radiance of his glory is all the light that we will need. So, in Advent, we wait, but we do so with expectancy. We practice patience. We look forward to our God's coming in hope.

^[1] Gross, Bobby, *Living the Christian Year*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009. 38.

^[2] *Ibid*, 37.

REFLECTION

“Our lives are eschatologically stretched between the sneak preview of the new world being born among us in the church, and the old world where the principalities and powers are reluctant to give way. In the meantime, which is the only time the church has ever known, we live as those who know something about the fate of the world that the world does not yet know. And that makes us different. - **William Willimon**

“In the church, this is the season of Advent. It's superficially understood as a time to get ready for Christmas, but in truth it's the season for contemplating the judgment of God. Advent is the season that, when properly understood, does not flinch from the darkness that stalks us all in this world. Advent begins in the dark and moves toward the light—but the season should not move too quickly or too glibly, lest we fail to acknowledge the depth of the darkness. As our Lord Jesus tells us, unless we see the light of God clearly, what we call light is actually darkness: “how great is that darkness!” (Matt. 6:23). Advent bids us take a fearless inventory of the darkness: the darkness without and the darkness within.”

- **Fleming Rutledge**

The whole of the Christian life is centered on Jesus Christ. Like Paul the contemporary Christian can say: “To me to live is Christ.” But often, in Christian experience, we are tempted to look elsewhere for direction, example, counsel and guidance. We lose sight of the fact that everything we need to live the Christian life is to be found exclusively in Christ. For this reason when we begin thinking about spiritual growth we must think first of all about Christ. - **Sinclair**

Ferguson

SERVICE OF THE WORD

*Call to Worship

Leader: Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

Leader: Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;

People: Let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

Leader: For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

People: In his hand are the depths of the earth;

Leader: Oh come, let us worship and bow down;

People: Let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!

*Song – God So Loved

Verse 1

Come all you weary, come all you thirsty
Come to the well that never runs dry
Drink of the water, come and thirst no more

Verse 2

Come all you sinners, come find His mercy
Come to the table He will satisfy
Taste of His goodness, find what you're looking for

Chorus 1

For God so loved the world that He gave us
His one and only Son to save us
Whoever believes in Him will live forever

Verse 3

Bring all your failures, bring your addictions
Come lay them down at the foot of the cross
Jesus is waiting there with open arms

Chorus 2

For God so loved the world that He gave us
His one and only Son to save us

Whoever believes in Him will live forever
The power of hell forever defeated
Now it is well I'm walking in freedom
For God so loved, God so loved the world

Bridge

Praise God, praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Him, praise Him for the wonders of His love (x2)
Chorus 2

Ending

Bring all your failures, bring your addictions
Come lay them down at the foot of the cross
Jesus is waiting; God so loved the world

Prayer of Adoration

First Reading

Exodus 17:1-7

[1] All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. [2] Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?" [3] But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" [4] So Moses cried to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." [5] And the LORD said to Moses, "Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. [6] Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink." And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. [7] And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the LORD by saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?" (ESV)

Leader: The word of the Lord.

People: Praise be to God.

Second Reading

Romans 5:1-11

[1] Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. [2] Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. [3] Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, [4] and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, [5] and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

[6] For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. [7] For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— [8] but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. [9] Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. [10] For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. [11] More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. (ESV)

Leader: The word of the Lord.

People: Praise be to God.

*Song – Psalm 126

Verse 1

Our mouths they were filled, filled with laughter
Our tongues they were loosed, loosed with joy
Restore us, O Lord Restore us, O Lord

Chorus

Although we are weeping
Lord, help us keep sowing
The seeds of Your Kingdom
For the day You will reap them
Your sheaves we will carry

Lord, please do not tarry
All those who sow weeping will go out with songs of joy

Verse 2

The nations will say, "He has done great things!"

The nations will sing songs of joy

Restore us, O Lord Restore us, O Lord

Chorus

Ending

All those who sow weeping will go out with songs of joy (x3)

*Affirmation of Faith The Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar

(Derived from the 1958 Statement of Faith approved in Madagascar in 1968)

Leader: The Church is deeply aware that its central emphasis throughout must be:

People: Jesus Christ, The Son, of God, is Lord and Savior.

Leader: It confesses this faith in communion with the Christian Church throughout the world.

People: In this faith the Church worships the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; one God in Trinity.

Leader: Its faith is in Almighty God, Father of Jesus Christ, and Father of all men in Jesus Christ.

People: He is the Creator and Ruler of the universe, who sustains and provides for our lives in His everlasting love. He is the holy God.

Leader: Its faith is in Jesus Christ, the Lord, the only-begotten Son of God.

People: There is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all. Jesus alone is our hope and through him we await the final victory.

Leader: It is a faith in the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of the Father and the Son.

People: He brings about faith unto the new birth through which salvation is received. He is the teacher, who explains God's word to us and he enable us to bring forth good works to the glory of God.

Leader: And God's people said:

People: **Amen!**

Confession of Sin

(Calvin Institute of Worship)

ALL: Lord God, our lives are filled with sin.
We forget our neighbor's needs
and do not love you above all else.
We need a Savior.
Help us to be ready for Jesus in our own hearts.
O come, O come, Savior of the world. Amen.

*Assurance of Pardon

Romans 5:1-2

Leader: Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Leader: Almighty God have mercy on 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.

*O Come O Come Emmanuel (Verse 1)

O come, O come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

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 (edited from Book of Common Prayer)

Leader: Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

(Leader intercedes with the concerns of the congregation)

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.**

[3] He left Judea and departed again for Galilee. [4] And he had to pass through Samaria. [5] So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. [6] Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

[7] A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." [8] (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) [9] The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) [10] Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." [11] The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? [12] Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock." [13] Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, [14] but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." [15] The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."

[16] Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." [17] The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; [18] for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true." [19] The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. [20] Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship." [21] Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. [22] You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. [23] But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. [24] God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." [25] The woman

said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things." [26] Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

[27] Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you seek?" or, "Why are you talking with her?" [28] So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, [29] "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" [30] They went out of the town and were coming to him. (ESV)

Leader: The Gospel of the LORD.

People: Praise be to You, Lord Christ.

Sermon

Rev. John Trapp

"Who Jesus Pursues"

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.

The musical score is written on four staves in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/4 time signature. The melody is simple and repetitive, with lyrics written below the notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

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 – Heal Us

Chorus

Heal us, Emmanuel, here we are; we long to feel Thy touch
Deep wounded souls to Thee we fly; O Savior hear our cry

Verse 1

Our faith is feeble, we confess
We faintly trust Thy word
But will You pity us the less?
Be that far from You Lord!

Chorus

Verse 2

Remember him who once applied
With trembling for relief
“Lord, I believe,” with tears he cried
“O help my unbelief!”

Chorus

Verse 3

She, too, who touched you in the press
And healing virtue stole
Was answered, “Daughter, go in peace
Thy faith has made thee whole.”

Chorus

Verse 4

Like her, with hopes and fears we come
To touch You if we may
O send us not despairing home
Send none unhealed away

Chorus x2

*Closing Song – He Will Hold Me Fast

Verse 1

When I fear my faith will fail
Christ will hold me fast
When the tempter would prevail
He will hold me fast

I could never keep my hold
Through life's fearful path
For my love is often cold
He must hold me fast

Chorus

He will hold me fast, He will hold me fast
For my Savior loves me so, He will hold me fast

Verse 2

Those He saves are His delight
Christ will hold me fast
Precious in His holy sight
He will hold me fast
He'll not let my soul be lost
His promises shall last
Bought by Him at such a cost
He will hold me fast

Chorus

Verse 3

For my life He bled and died
Christ will hold me fast
Justice has been satisfied
He will hold me fast
Raised with Him to endless life
He will hold me fast
Till our faith is turned to sight
When he comes at last

Chorus x3

***Closing Prayer of Thanksgiving and Mission**

***Benediction**

Zephaniah 3:17

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

People: AMEN

Announcements



WOMEN'S ADVENT DINNER

December 3rd

Join the women of Advent Houston for a dinner kicking off the season of Advent. We want for you to connect with other women and hear from Marcy Leachman as she teaches "Waiting For What Is To Come".



PRAYER & HEALING SERVICE

December 8th

The good news of Jesus Christ is a wholistic proclamation that His Kingdom, which has begun, is a Kingdom of forgiveness, reconciliation, restoration, and healing. Christ's work of reconciliation takes into account our spiritual, emotional, social, and physical infirmities. Thus, healing throughout the New Testament is a proclamation of the gospel – it is the Holy Spirit's outworking in the life of the Church and the world. Join us, Thursday, December 8 from 6:00 – 7:00pm for our service of prayer and healing. Whether you are afflicted with illness, addiction, broken relationships, or the struggle of life – we invite you to join us for scripture readings, singing, and an extended time of prayer. During the time of prayer you will have an opportunity to go before the elders to be prayed over and anointed with oil, to pray with someone, or to pray quietly by yourself. This Advent season of longing, join us as we ask for God's Kingdom to come on earth, in our lives, and in our city as it is in Heaven.



CHRISTMAS EVE & CHRISTMAS DAY

December 24th & 25th

Mark your calendars for our Christmas Eve service on Saturday, December 24th at 5:00 p.m. and our Christmas Day service on Sunday, December 25th at 4:00 p.m.

ALL ABOUT ADVENT

Membership Class



MEMBERSHIP CLASS

January 27th

Interested in church membership? Our next membership class will be held at the Leachman's on January 27th. Come and hear "All About Advent". More details to follow.

MORE EVENTS



Please check out our other events by visiting our website at www.adventpres.org/events or by scanning the QR code here.

QUESTION & DISCUSSION

SCAN HERE TO
SUBMIT A QUESTION
FOR Q&D



Are we allowed to pray for things even if it isn't in God's plan?

answer in the comment below...



NEXT DISCUSSION: January 29th

INTERNAL GIVING - 2022 CY

2022 Budgeted

Goal:

\$146,666

Budgeted to Date:

\$113,332

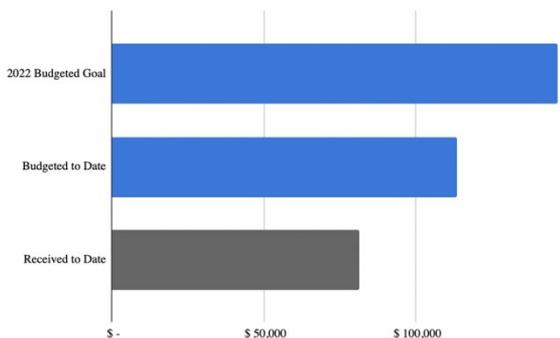
Received to Date:

\$81,221

2022/23 Expense

Budget:

\$427,000



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.

