

ADVENT HOUSTON

ORDER OF WORSHIP

8th Sunday After Pentecost

Proper 13

July 31, 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

“One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious. The latter procedure, however, is disagreeable and therefore not popular.”- **Carl Jung**

“Never think that you need to protect God. Because anytime you think you need to protect God, you can be sure that you are worshipping an idol.” – **Stanley Hauerwas**

“We blunt our own conscience, darken our own judgment by self-interest, and rebuke in others the very vices for which we are famous. Each of us carries around a “deep and calm source of delusion, which undermines the whole principle of good.” – **Cornelius Plantinga Jr.**

SERVICE OF THE WORD

*Call to Worship – From Psalm 138

Leader: Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the clouds.

**People: Your righteousness is like the mountains of God;
your judgments are like the great deep;**

Leader: How precious is your steadfast love, O God!

**People: The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of
your wings.**

Leader: For with you is the fountain of life;

People: in your light do we see light.

*Song – Great Are You Lord

You give life, You are love
You bring light to the darkness
You give hope, You restore
Every heart that is broken
And great are You, Lord

Chorus:

It's Your breath in our lungs
So we pour out our praise
We pour out our praise
It's Your breath in our lungs
So we pour out our praise to You only

You give life, You are love
You bring light to the darkness
You give hope, You restore
Every heart that is broken
And great are You, Lord

Chorus (2x)

And all the earth will shout Your praise
Our hearts will cry, these bones will sing
Great are You, Lord
(Repeat 3x)

Chorus (2x)

Prayer of Adoration

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 42:5-9

[5] Thus says God, the LORD,
 who created the heavens and stretched them out,
 who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people on it
 and spirit to those who walk in it:

[6] "I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;
 I will take you by the hand and keep you;
I will give you as a covenant for the people,
 a light for the nations,

[7] to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
 from the prison those who sit in darkness.

[8] I am the LORD; that is my name;
 my glory I give to no other,
 nor my praise to carved idols.

[9] Behold, the former things have come to pass,
 and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth
 I tell you of them." (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD

People: **Thanks be to God.**

New Testament Reading

Revelation 21:1-4; 22-26

[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."

...

[22] And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. [23] And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. [24] By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, [25] and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. [26] They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

People: Thanks be to God.

***Song – Before The Throne**

Before the throne of God above
I have a strong, a perfect plea
A great High Priest whose name is Love
Who ever lives and pleads for me
My name is graven on his hands
My name is written on his heart
I know that while in heaven He stands
No tongue can bid me thence depart
No tongue can bid me thence depart

When Satan tempts me to despair
And tells me of the guilt within
Upward I look and see Him there
Who made an end to all my sin

Because the sinless Savior died
My sinful soul is counted free
For God the Just is satisfied
To look on Him and pardon me
To look on Him and pardon me

Behold Him there, the risen Lamb!
My perfect, spotless righteousness
The great unchangeable I AM
The King of glory and of grace
One with Himself, I cannot die
My soul is purchased by his blood
My life is hid with Christ on high
With Christ my Savior and my God
With Christ my Savior and my God

Prayers of the People

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

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.

***Gospel Reading**

John 8:12-20

[12] Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." [13] So the Pharisees said to him, "You are bearing witness about yourself; your testimony is not true." [14] Jesus answered, "Even if I do bear witness about myself, my testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. [15] You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. [16] Yet even if I do judge, my judgment is true, for it is not I alone who judge, but I and the Father who sent me. [17] In your Law it is written that the testimony of two people is true. [18] I am the one who bears witness about myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness about me." [19] They said to him therefore, "Where is your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also." [20] These words he spoke in the treasury, as he taught in the temple; but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come. (ESV)

Leader: The Gospel of the LORD

People: Praise be to you, LORD Christ.

Sermon

"The Darkness Will Not Overcome"

Rev. Taylor Leachman

Passing of the Peace

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

People: And also with you!

Announcements

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.

SERVICE OF THE TABLE

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 TOWARD THE ENTRANCE OF THE SANCTUARY.



***Affirmation of Faith**

Ethiopian Orthodox Church

(This creed has been adapted from the original)

ALL: We believe in one God, maker of all creation, Father of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ, because His nature is unfathomable. As we have before declared, He is without beginning and without end; rather He is ever living, and He has light which is never extinguished, and it can never be approached. He is not two or three, and no addition can be made to Him; but He is unique, living for ever. We know Him perfectly through the law and the prophets, that He is almighty and has authority over all creation.

Who in the last days was pleased to become man, and took flesh from our Lady Mary, the holy Virgin, without the seed of man, and grew like men yet without sin or evil, neither was guile found in his mouth. Then he suffered, died in the flesh, rose from the dead on the third day, ascended into heaven, to the Father Who sent him, and sat down at the right hand of Power.

Who sent to us the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, and saved all the world, and Who is coeternal with the Father and the Son.

Confession of Sin

Leader: Dearest Savior, help us. We are slow to learn, prone to forget, and quick to rebel.

**People: We are pained by our graceless hearts:
Our prayer-less days,
Our poverty of love,
Our sloth in the heavenly race,
Our sullied conscience,
Our wasted hours, and
Our unspent opportunities.**

Leader: We are blind even as Your light shines all around us:

**People: Take the scales from our eyes,
Grind to dust our hearts of unbelief.
Grant us trust in you and your Word.**

Leader: Make it our highest joy to learn from You,

**People: Meditate on You,
Gaze on You,
Sit like Mary at your feet,
Lean like John on your breast,
Appeal like Peter to your love,**

Leader: We believe, Lord:

People: But please help our unbelief.

Leader: Father in heaven, forgive our sins.

People: Forgive us for the sins that we remember.

Leader: Forgive us for the sins we have forgotten.

People: Forgive us for being weak in face of temptation.

Leader: Forgive us for being stubborn in the face of correction.

People: Forgive us for trying to earn your favor.

Leader: Forgive us for failing to receive your grace.

People: Forgive us for judging others harshly.

Leader: Forgive us for being lenient on ourselves.

People: Forgive us for the lies we have told others.

Leader: Forgive us for the truths we have avoided.

People: Have mercy on us and make us whole. Amen

*Assurance of Pardon

Isaiah 60:1-5

Leader: "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. 2 See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. 3 Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. 4 "Lift up your eyes and look about you: All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the arm. 5 Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come."

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.

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 – Yet Not I But Through Christ

What gift of grace is Jesus my redeemer
There is no more for heaven now to give
He is my joy, my righteousness, and freedom
My steadfast love, my deep and boundless peace
To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus
For my life is wholly bound to His
Oh how strange and divine, I can sing, "All is mine"
Yet not I, but through Christ in me

The night is dark but I am not forsaken
For by my side, the Savior He will stay
I labor on in weakness and rejoicing
For in my need, His power is displayed
To this I hold, my Shepherd will defend me
Through the deepest valley He will lead
Oh the night has been won, and I shall overcome
Yet not I, but through Christ in me

No fate I dread, I know I am forgiven
The future sure, the price it has been paid
For Jesus bled and suffered for my pardon
And He was raised to overthrow the grave
To this I hold, my sin has been defeated
Jesus now and ever is my plea
Oh the chains are released, I can sing, "I am free"
Yet not I, but through Christ in me

With every breath I long to follow Jesus
For He has said that He will bring me home
And day by day I know He will renew me
Until I stand with joy before the throne
To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus
All the glory evermore to Him
When the race is complete, still my lips shall repeat
Yet not I, but through Christ in me

To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus
All the glory evermore to Him
When the race is complete, still my lips shall repeat
Yet not I, but through Christ in me

When the race is complete, still my lips shall repeat
Yet not I, but through Christ in me (3x)

***Song – And Can It Be**

And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Savior's blood?
Died He for me who caused His pain!
For me who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! How can it be That
Thou, my God, should die for me?

Chorus:

Amazing love! How can it be
That Thou, my God, should die for me!
Amazing love! How can it be
That Thou, my God, should die for me!

Chorus

He left His Father's throne above,
So free, so infinite His grace!
Emptied Himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race.
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,
For O my God, it found out me!

Chorus

Long my imprisoned spirit lay,
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray;
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.

Chorus

No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine;
Alive in Him, my living Head,

And clothed in righteousness divine,
Bold I approach the eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.

Chorus

***Closing Prayer of Thanksgiving and Mission**

***Benediction**

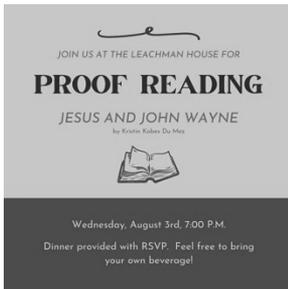
Leader: The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you His peace.

Announcements



SAVE THE DATE!

We will officially launch our regular Sunday Worship on August 21. We will have four weeks of preparatory services beginning July 24—which are open to all but will not be publicly advertised.



PROOF READING

Join us on August 3 at 7:00 pm at the Leachmans' home (4517 Evergreen St, 77401) for a discussion and review of the book *Jesus and John Wayne* by Kristin Kobes Du Mez. We will have dinner, discussion, a cocktail inspired by the book, and dessert.



MORNING PRAYER

Join us every TUESDAY morning from 8:00 – 8:30 am at the Advent Houston Office (4517 Evergreen St, 77401) or on Google Meet with an RSVP to taylor.leachman@adventpres.org for a time of prayer utilizing the Daily Prayer Project's prayer resource.

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

2617 Bissonnet St
Suite 200, #227
Houston, TX 77005

(713) 364-6748

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.

