



# ADVENT HOUSTON

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

24th Sunday After Pentecost

Proper 29

November 20, 2022

## LAMENT

Lament comes from the latin word "lamenta," which is a plural noun for weeping and wailing. While we now speak of lamenting individually, the church has long seen lament as being a faithful communal activity. So, lament is not merely feeling individually sad about a tragic circumstance, but rather it is the communal crying out together to God. It is meant to be done together, and it is always done before God.

As a church, we lament that things are not the way that they are supposed to be. One of the reasons we're named Advent is because even as we acknowledge and celebrate God's first advent in Jesus's incarnation, we look forward to his second advent, when we will come again. We know that God is coming to make all things right, but in the waiting, we see daily that things have not yet been made right. We lament for death and loss within the community. We lament war and famine, disease and oppression, violence and brokenness in our world. We lament feelings of disconnection from God and from each other. We lament the loss of what cannot be regained.

The psalms are rich prayer language that model for the church how to lament. W. David O. Taylor, a Professor of Theology & Culture at Fuller Seminary, reminds us that the psalms help us to properly lament. He writes,

"What we find in these psalms of lament, it is important to stress, is never mere sadness. We find instead sadness before the face of God. For here there is never mere complaint brought to God, rather than kept from God. Here there is no victim mentality, even if the psalmist is a real victim of violence who requires vindication. Here there is wholly honest reckoning of pain within the community of those who seek to be wholly human, as hard as that may be, wrestling with God, not apart from God."<sup>[1]</sup>

So, we lament together, and we lament before God. When all we want to do is hide from each other, we remember that we are not alone in our pain. When all we want to do is hide from God, we know that He listens, He cares, and He is active.

And so, all lament ends with the reminder of God's promises. Though we may not feel it in the moment, though we may still be struggling, we hear God and those around us proclaiming the truth: that God keeps His promises and abounds in steadfast love.

[1] W. David O. Taylor, *Open and Unafraid: The Psalms as a Guide to Life*

## REFLECTION

"The American church avoids lament. The power of lament is minimized and the underlying narrative of suffering that requires lament is lost. But absence doesn't make the heart grow fonder. Absence makes the heart forget. The absence of lament in the liturgy of the American church results in the loss of memory. We forget the necessity of lamenting over suffering and pain. We forget the reality of suffering and pain." — **Soong-Chan Rah**

"Nothing heals us like letting people know our scariest parts: When people listen to you cry and lament, and look at you with love, it's like they are holding the baby of you." — **Anne Lamott**

Lament is a cry of belief in a good God, a God who has His ear to our hearts, a God who transfigures the ugly into beauty. Complaint is the bitter howl of unbelief in any benevolent God in this moment, a distrust in the love-beat of the Father's heart. — **Ann Voskamp**

### **A Prayer of Lament - Missio Dei Church, Falcon CO**

Oh Lord our God,  
To you we cry out,  
To you we run,  
For where else would we go?  
We feel the weight of our broken world,  
Through wars, famines, and disasters,  
In injustice, hatred, and oppression.  
The nations desperately need your deliverance.  
We weep at our own brokenness  
For the guilt, shame, and pain we feel  
Weighed down by sin, held back by fear  
We mourn our distance from you.  
Be near to us, Oh God  
Remember not our sin or failures  
Reveal your Kingdom to our hearts and our community  
Restore us to an awareness of your presence.  
But, we have experienced your grace  
And we will experience your restoration  
Through your atoning death our sins are forgiven  
And in your return we will be made whole.

# SERVICE OF THE WORD

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## \*Call to Worship (Question From Romans 8:35)

Leader: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

Leader: We meet in the presence of God.

**People: Who knows our needs.**

Leader: Who hears our cries.

**People: Who feels our pain.**

Leader: Who heals our wounds.

## \*Song – Dear Refuge of My Weary Soul

Dear refuge of my weary soul,  
On Thee, when sorrows rise  
On Thee, when waves of trouble roll,  
My fainting hope relies  
To Thee I tell each rising grief,  
For Thou alone canst heal  
Thy Word can bring a sweet relief,  
For every pain I feel

But oh! When gloomy doubts prevail,  
I fear to call Thee mine  
The springs of comfort seem to fail,  
And all my hopes decline  
Yet gracious God, where shall I flee?  
Thou art my only trust  
And still my soul would cleave to Thee  
Though prostrate in the dust

Hast Thou not bid me seek Thy face,  
And shall I seek in vain?  
And can the ear of sovereign grace,  
Be deaf when I complain?

No still the ear of sovereign grace,  
Attends the mourner's prayer  
Oh may I ever find access,  
To breathe my sorrows there

Thy mercy seat is open still,  
Here let my soul retreat  
With humble hope attend Thy will,  
And wait beneath Thy feet,  
Thy mercy seat is open still,  
Here let my soul retreat  
With humble hope attend Thy will,  
And wait beneath Thy feet

## **Prayer of Adoration** **(Bishop of Southwark – Advisory Group for Liturgy)**

Leader: Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation;  
to you be praise and glory for ever.  
Through baptism we become members one of  
another in Christ,  
members of a company of saints, whose mutual  
belonging transcends death.  
As we bring before you our loss, our fears, our  
anxiety,  
strengthen us by your grace,  
renew us in your faith,  
and enfold us in your love.  
So, may we be made ready to see your face  
in the heavenly city where night shall be no more,  
and all hurt and pain are dispelled.  
We pray in the name of Jesus, who lives and reigns  
with you and the Holy Spirit.  
One God, now and forever. Amen.

- [1] Save me, O God!  
For the waters have come up to my neck.
- [2] I sink in deep mire,  
where there is no foothold;  
I have come into deep waters,  
and the flood sweeps over me.
- [3] I am weary with my crying out;  
my throat is parched.  
My eyes grow dim  
with waiting for my God.
- [4] More in number than the hairs of my head  
are those who hate me without cause;  
mighty are those who would destroy me,  
those who attack me with lies.  
What I did not steal  
must I now restore?
- [5] O God, you know my folly;  
the wrongs I have done are not hidden from you.
- [6] Let not those who hope in you be put to shame  
through me,  
O Lord GOD of hosts;  
let not those who seek you be brought to dishonor  
through me,  
O God of Israel.
- [7] For it is for your sake that I have borne reproach,  
that dishonor has covered my face.
- [8] I have become a stranger to my brothers,  
an alien to my mother's sons.
- [9] For zeal for your house has consumed me,  
and the reproaches of those who reproach you  
have fallen on me.
- [10] When I wept and humbled my soul with fasting,  
it became my reproach.
- [11] When I made sackcloth my clothing,  
I became a byword to them.
- [12] I am the talk of those who sit in the gate,  
and the drunkards make songs about me.

[13] But as for me, my prayer is to you, O LORD.  
At an acceptable time, O God,  
in the abundance of your steadfast love answer me  
in your saving faithfulness. (ESV)

*(TIME OF SILENCE)*

## Second Reading

## Lamentations 3:19-24

[19] Remember my affliction and my wanderings,  
the wormwood and the gall!

[20] My soul continually remembers it  
and is bowed down within me.

[21] But this I call to mind,  
and therefore I have hope:

[22] The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases;  
his mercies never come to an end;

[23] they are new every morning;  
great is your faithfulness.

[24] "The LORD is my portion," says my soul,  
"therefore I will hope in him." (ESV)

*(TIME OF SILENCE)*

## \*Song – Psalm 130 (I Will Wait)

### Verse 1

Out of the depths I cry to You  
In darkest places I will call  
Incline your ear to me anew  
And hear my cry for mercy Lord

### Verse 2

Were You to count my sinful ways  
How could I come before your throne?  
Yet full forgiveness meets my gaze  
I stand redeemed by grace alone

### **Chorus 1**

I will wait for You, I will wait for You  
On your Word I will rely  
And I will wait for You, surely wait for You  
'Til my soul is satisfied

### **Verse 3**

So put your hope in God alone  
Take courage in his power to save  
Completely and forever won  
By Christ emerging from the grave  
*Chorus 1*

### **Verse 4**

Now He has come to make a way  
And God Himself has paid the price  
That all who trust in Him today  
Find healing in his sacrifice  
That all who trust in Him today  
Find healing in his sacrifice

### **Chorus 2**

I will wait for You, I will wait for You  
Through the storm and through the night  
I will wait for You, surely wait for You  
For your love is my delight  
*To Chorus 1*

## **\*Affirmation of Faith**

**Psalm 23**

**ALL:           The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.  
                  He makes me lie down in green pastures.  
                  He leads me beside still waters.  
                  He restores my soul.  
                  He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.  
                  Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of  
                  death, I will fear no evil,  
                  for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort  
                  me.  
                  You prepare a table before me in the presence of my  
                  enemies;  
                  you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.**

**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

## **Confession of Sin**

**(Adapted from Christ Central Church, Charlotte NC)**

**ALL: Gracious God, we confess that in our pain and in our plenty, we have sought to hide from you. We have hungered and thirsted for many things in your world in order to avoid coming before you. Rather than cry out to you in our suffering, we have sought comfort in your creation. Rather than weep for tragedies around us, we have numbed ourselves. Rather than mourn with those who mourn, we have hoarded our emotions. We have avoided hard questions and in running from the opportunity to lament we have become hardened.**

**Forgive us for our sins, purify our struggle, and bring us to a place of true lament for our nation, our neighbors, for those who have suffered, and for our own hearts.**

## **\*Assurance of Pardon**

**Isaiah 40:1-2a**

**Leader: Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.  
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her  
that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned,**

**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.**

## **\*Doxology**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow  
Praise Him all creatures here below  
Praise Him above ye heavenly host  
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 chapel after the Passing of the Peace.

## Prayers of the People (edited from Book of Common Prayer)

**ALL: Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake.**

*(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.**

## Sermon Reading

Psalm 28

[1] To you, O LORD, I call;  
my rock, be not deaf to me,  
lest, if you be silent to me,  
I become like those who go down to the pit.

[2] Hear the voice of my pleas for mercy,  
when I cry to you for help,  
when I lift up my hands  
toward your most holy sanctuary.

[3] Do not drag me off with the wicked,  
with the workers of evil,  
who speak peace with their neighbors  
while evil is in their hearts.

[4] Give to them according to their work  
and according to the evil of their deeds;  
give to them according to the work of their hands;  
render them their due reward.

[5] Because they do not regard the works of the LORD  
or the work of his hands,  
he will tear them down and build them up no more.

[6] Blessed be the LORD!  
For he has heard the voice of my pleas for mercy.

[7] The LORD is my strength and my shield;  
in him my heart trusts, and I am helped;  
my heart exults,  
and with my song I give thanks to him.

[8] The LORD is the strength of his people;  
he is the saving refuge of his anointed.

[9] Oh, save your people and bless your heritage!  
Be their shepherd and carry them forever. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## Sermon

Rev. Taylor Leachman

"I Cry to You"

## 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

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## 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 -  
Lord. 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.

### 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 – Drive Out the Darkness

### Refrain

Come, O come  
Be our light  
Drive out the darkness  
Come, Jesus come

### Verse 1

Every year under the thorn  
Every wrong that we have known  
Every valley will be raised  
The ancient ruins will be remade  
*To Refrain*

### Verse 2

Every weapon made for war  
Every gun and every sword  
Will be melted in the flame  
To be used for gardening  
*To refrain*

### Verse 3

In the emptiness of grief  
Through the night of suffering  
Every loss and in the tears  
God of comfort, O be near

### Ending

Come O come, be our light  
Drive out the darkness *(repeat)*  
Come and end all the violence  
Come, do not be silent  
Come, cling to Your promise  
Come, break all injustice  
Come, Jesus come

## \*Closing Song – All Must Be Well

Through the love of God our Savior, all will be well  
Free and changeless is His favor, all is well

Precious is the blood that healed us  
Perfect is the grace that sealed us  
Strong the hand stretched forth to shield us  
All must be well

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

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

## \*Closing Prayer of Thanksgiving and Mission

### \*Benediction

**Numbers 6:24-26**

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 peace, now and forever.

People: **AMEN**

## Announcements



### **WOMEN'S ADVENT DINNER**

*December 3<sup>rd</sup>*

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 8<sup>th</sup>

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 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>

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



## MEMBERSHIP CLASS

January 27<sup>th</sup>

Interested in church membership? Our next membership class will be held at the Leachman's on January 27<sup>th</sup>. 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](http://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: November 27<sup>th</sup>**

### 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](mailto:admin@adventpres.org) to opt out of the media release.

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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.

