
EMBRACE | EMBODY | EXTEND



ADVENT HOUSTON

Third Sunday of Easter

APRIL • 14 • 2024

WELCOME TO ADVENT!

Advent means “arrival” or “coming.” Many of us have a temptation to believe that we can live a good enough life or do the right things to make our way to God. We think that if we do enough of the right types of things, then God will allow us into His home. But the Bible tells us again and again that we are never the first movers in this relationship. God is always the initiator. He spoke all things into being; He created; and He pursues. He is the one who arrives. And we see this in the first advent of God.

John begins his gospel by saying, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (ESV). God the Son came to us in the first advent: what the church calls the incarnation. He didn’t wait for us to try and make our way to his heavenly abode. He didn’t stand above us to lecture us or condemn us. He came to us. In fact, he became one of us, taking on flesh, pain, sorrows, and death.

And God hasn’t stopped there. After Jesus came into this world to inaugurate the reign of God on earth as it is in heaven, after he died on the cross to atone for our sins, and after he was raised from the dead to defeat sin and death, He ascended to heaven to assume the throne. Scripture tells us that he will come again. And when he comes again, he is bringing the new heavens and the new earth with him.

It is in this second advent, that Jesus promises to make all things new. Though he has already dealt with sin and death, it isn’t until he comes again that death will be eradicated.

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

EASTER

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

...The message of Easter is that the way of being in Jesus, the way of living the new resurrected life is through participation. This message is very different than the message I all too frequently hear about Easter day. I hear that knowing God is accomplished through the way of intellectual evidence: Believe the facts and that will transform your life. I also hear that knowing God is accomplished through the way of emotion: Feel God. Feel forgiveness. ... But the emphasis of the early church fathers and the ancient church is knowing God through the way of participation. We participate in Christ by living the life of our baptism into his death and resurrection. This is a daily, existential, moment-by-moment experience as we choose in this or that situation to die to the sins for which Christ died and choose the life of the Spirit for which Christ was raised to new life.”⁵

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

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

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

⁵ Robert E. Webber, *Ancient Future Time*

REFLECTIONS

“The Church is the Church only when it exists for others...not dominating, but helping and serving. It must tell men of every calling what it means to live for Christ, to exist for others.”

— **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

“God does not merely send the church in mission. God already is in mission, and the church must join him. This also means, then, that the church does not simply have a missions department; it should wholly exist to be a mission.”

— **Tim Keller**

“Those who dream of this idolized community demand that it be fulfilled by God, by others and by themselves. They enter the community of Christians with their demands set up by their own law, and judge one another and God accordingly.”

— **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

But, as we wait for him to come again, we wait with hope. And as we wait, we live in light of that hope – praying for and acting in the knowledge that God's Kingdom will come in bits and pieces even now, offering us glimpses of the way that it is supposed to be, the way it will ultimately be.

In the middle of these two advents of Christ, there is a third advent. There is the coming of the Holy Spirit. Jesus has sent the Holy Spirit to be with us, to help us to remember all that he taught and accomplished (John 14:26), and to help us as we follow him by faith. And Jesus tells us to follow him in the same way that he himself came. We are to leave our own comforts and to come into the places that he has called us. And so, in that way, we want to take the example of Christ's first coming to enter into the lives of our community. We want to bear witness to the coming of the Kingdom of God in its fullness in the future. And, we want to minister as the mouthpiece, the hands, and the feet of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit (John 20:21).

So, Advent Houston is a **coming** of a group of Christians to the Texas Medical Center, to Rice University, and to the surrounding neighborhoods to embrace, embody, and extend the grace of Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit.

We are so glad that you are here with us!

SERVICE OF THE WORD

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Adapted from Psalm 4

Leader: The LORD has set apart the godly for himself.
The LORD hears when I call to him.

**ALL: Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness!
You have given me relief when I was in distress.
Be gracious to me and hear my prayer!**

Leader: Offer right sacrifices,
And put your trust in the LORD.

**ALL: Lift up the light of your face upon us, O LORD!
We will worship in peace.
For you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.**

*SONG

Arise My Soul Arise

Words by Charles Wesley and music by Kevin Twit
© 1996 Kevin Twit Music

Verse 1

Arise, my soul, arise,
Shake off your guilty fears;
The bleeding sacrifice,
In my behalf appears;
Before the throne my Surety stands,
Before the throne my Surety stands,
My name is written on His hands.

Chorus

Arise (arise), arise (arise), arise
Arise, my soul, arise.
Arise (arise), arise (arise), arise
Arise, my soul, arise.
Shake off your guilty fears and rise

Verse 2

He ever lives above,
For me to intercede;
His all redeeming love,
His precious blood, to plead;

His blood atoned for every race,
His blood atoned for every race,
And sprinkles now the throne of grace.

Chorus

Verse 3

Five bleeding wounds He bears;
Received on Calvary;
They pour effectual prayers;
They strongly plead for me:
"Forgive him, O forgive," they cry,
"Forgive him, O forgive," they cry,
"Nor let that ransomed sinner die!"

Chorus

Verse 4

The Father hears Him pray,
His dear anointed One;
He cannot turn away
The presence of His Son;
The Spirit answers to the blood,
The Spirit answers to the blood
And tells me I am born of God.

Chorus

Verse 5

My God is reconciled;
His pardoning voice I hear;
He owns me for His child;
I can no longer fear
With confidence I now draw nigh,
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And "Father, Abba, Father," cry.

Chorus

PRAYER OF ADORATION

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

1 John 3:1-7

[1] See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not

know us is that it did not know him. [2] Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. [3] And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

[4] Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. [5] You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. [6] No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. [7] Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 24:36b-48

[36b] ... Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, “Peace to you!” [37] But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. [38] And he said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? [39] See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” [40] And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. [41] And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” [42] They gave him a piece of broiled fish, [43] and he took it and ate before them.

[44] Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” [45] Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, [46] and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, [47] and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. [48] You are witnesses of these things. (ESV)

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise be to you, Lord Christ.**

*SONG

Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me

Words and music by Jonny Robinson, Rich Thompson, and Michael Farren

© 2018 CityAlight Music

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!

When the race is complete, still my lips shall repeat:
Yet not I, but through Christ in me!
Yet not I, but through Christ in me!
Yet not I, but through Christ in me!

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Selected questions from Westminster Larger Catechism, modernized by City Reformed Presbyterian Church, Pittsburg.

Leader: What is the visible church?

ALL: The visible church is a society made up of all people in all ages and places of the world who profess the true religion, and their children.

Leader: What are the special privileges of the visible church?

ALL: The visible church has the privileges of being under God's special care and government; of being protected and preserved in all ages, despite the opposition of all enemies; and of enjoying the communion of saints, the ordinary means of salvation, and the offers of grace by Christ to all the members of the visible church in the ministry of the Gospel, testifying that whoever believes in him will be saved, and excluding none who are willing to come to him.

Leader: What is the invisible church?

ALL: The invisible church is the whole number of the chosen ones who have been, are, or will be gathered into one body under Christ the head.

Leader: What special benefits do the members of the invisible church enjoy by Christ?

ALL: By Christ, the members of the invisible church enjoy union and communion with him in grace and glory.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Anonymous Source

Leader: Heavenly Father, you love us with a consuming love and are jealous for our affection.

ALL: But we have rejected your advances. We have believed a lie that says that you don't love us, that you won't keep your

vows to us, and that you won't care for us. We have run from you, and not to you.

Leader: Lord Jesus, you have made a marriage covenant with your Church.

ALL: But we have broken our vows to you. Full of distrust, we have run to other lovers. Control and prestige entice us and we give in. Greed and ambition seduce us and we turn to them. Sexual perversion and rage allure us and we give ourselves over to them.

Leader: Holy Spirit, overwhelm us with your love.

ALL: Draw us back in your strength. Convince our doubting minds of your promises to us and love for us. Cleanse our adulterous hearts from the filth of unfaithfulness. Change our wandering ways towards paths of faithfulness and integrity.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

1 John 3:1 (ESV)

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

Almighty God have mercy upon 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.

People: Amen

JOINING ADVENT HOUSTON

Elder: Do you acknowledge yourself to be sinners in the sight of God, justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope save in His sovereign mercy? Do You?

New Members: We do.

Elder: Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered in the Gospel? Do You?

New Members: We do.

Elder: Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes the followers of Christ? Do You?

New Members: We do.

Elder: Do you promise to support the church in its worship and work to the best of your ability? Do You?

New Members: We do.

Elder: Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of the church, and promise to study its purity and peace? Do You?

New Members: We do.

Pastor: Having confessed the faith and promised to participate in the life of the church, we now welcome you into the family of our congregation and into the ministry of the church. As active followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to spread his Good News. We encourage you to accept that call through your involvement in the church.

New Members: We gladly receive your invitation and commit ourselves to using our time and talents for the good of the congregation and the mission of the church. We will strive to live lives worthy of the calling to which we have been called and will work with you to embrace, embody, and extend the grace of Jesus Christ.

Pastor: Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for new members to this church who have been called to Advent Houston. Bless them in their life's journey; nourish their souls and be a light on their path. We thank you that you have given them this new spiritual home here at Advent. May their lives be enriched through ministry and community, may they be blessed and may they each bring their gifts into your service. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray.

All: Amen

*DOXOLOGY

Words by Thomas Ken and music by Louis Bourgeois

© Words and Music: Public Domain

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

ADVENTURERS

CHILDREN (1ST - 5TH GRADES)

All children, 1st through 5th grades, are invited to go to Adventurers, for a children's lesson and activity time during the sermon. The Adventurers will be escorted back to the Chapel during the Passing of the Peace.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Edited Collect for Mission of the Church from *Book of Common Prayer*.

Leader: Everliving God, whose will it is that all should come to you through your Son Jesus Christ: Inspire our witness to him, that all may know the power of his forgiveness and the hope of his resurrection; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

*Leader Intercedes for the world, Church,
and the needs of our 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

Acts 3:12-19

[12] And when Peter saw it he addressed the people: “Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk? [13] The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him. [14] But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, [15] and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. [16] And his name—by faith in his name—has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all.

[17] “And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. [18] But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled. [19] Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Rev. Taylor Leachman

An Easter State of Mind: “Peter’s Sermon”



Do you have a question about today’s sermon? If so, click on the QR code for discussion at the next Question & Discussion time.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: May the peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you!**

RETURN OF ADVENTURERS

During the Passing of the Peace, the teachers will bring the Adventurers back to the Chapel.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are glad to have you worship with us today. Please sign-in on the pad located near the center aisle and record your information there.

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 near the entrance of the chapel.



SERVICE OF THE TABLE

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

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

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

Leader: And now we give you thanks because in his victory over the grave a new age has dawned, the long reign of sin is ended, a broken world is being renewed and humanity is once again made whole.

And therefore, we join our voices with angels and archangels and the rest of your creation, forever praising you and singing

ALL:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,
Hea - ven and earth are full, full of your
Bless - ed is He who comes in the name of the
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Ho -
san - na in the high - est.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

ALL: **Your death, O Christ, we proclaim.
Your resurrection we affirm with joy.
Your coming we await with hope.
Glory be to you, Lord Jesus. Alleluia!**

Leader: Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and wine, that the bread we break and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ. By your Spirit, make us one with Christ and with your church in all the world.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

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

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

Leader: These gifts of God for the people of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

COMMUNION AT ADVENT

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

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

ABOUT THE ELEMENTS

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



PRAYER FOR THOSE SEARCHING FOR TRUTH

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me the ability to follow you no matter what it might cost me. Give me an understanding for you that is coherent, convincing, and leads to the life that you promise. Amen. A prayer of belief: A prayer for those struggling against sin: A prayer for covenant children who have not yet made a profession of faith:

PRAYER OF BELIEF

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever believed, but through you, I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead and are now representing me at the Father's right hand in heaven, I turn from my sins and receive you as my savior. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THOSE STRUGGLING AGAINST SIN

Lord Jesus, give me the ability to see in you the fulfillment of all my needs and desires, and help me to turn from every false source of satisfaction 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.

A PRAYER FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE NOT YET MADE A PROFESSION OF FAITH

Lord Jesus, thank you for giving me the opportunity to grow up in a Christian family where I am surrounded by the good news of the gospel. Help me to grow in my understanding of who you are and what you have done for me on the cross. Help me learn what it means for me to turn from my sins and trust in you alone for my salvation. Teach me what it means to follow you as one of your disciples. Amen.

COMMUNION SONG

The Power of the Cross

Words by Eleanor Henrietta Hull and music from a traditional Irish tune

© 2005 Thankyou Music

Verse 1

Oh to see the dawn of the darkest day
Christ on the road to Calvary
Tried by sinful men torn and beaten then
Nailed to a cross of wood

Chorus 1

This the pow'r of the cross
Christ became sin for us
Took the blame bore the wrath
We stand forgiven at the cross

Verse 2

Oh to see the pain written on Your face
Bearing the awesome weight of sin
Ev'ry bitter thought ev'ry evil deed
Crowning Your bloodstained brow

Chorus 1

Verse 3

Now the daylight flees now the ground beneath
Quakes as its Maker bows His head
Curtain torn in two dead are raised to life
Finished the vict'ry cry

Chorus 1

Verse 4

Oh to see my name written in the wounds
For through Your suff'ring I am free
Death is crushed to death life is mine to live
Won through Your selfless love

Chorus 2

This the pow'r of the cross
Son of God slain for us
What a love what a cost
We stand forgiven at the cross

*CLOSING PRAYER

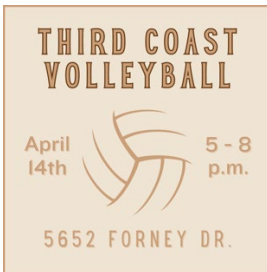
*SONG

Benediction

May the Lord, Mighty God
Bless and keep you forever
Grant you grace, sovereign grace
Joy in every endeavor

Lift your eyes and see his face
And his love forever
May the Lord, Mighty God
Bless and keep you forever

ANNOUNCEMENTS



THIRD COAST VOLLEYBALL

April. 14th 5:00 – 8:00 P.M.

Inviting Young Adults and the Young at Heart for an evening of beach volleyball. Whether you're a beach volleyball club level player, backyard enthusiast, or novice, come, kick off your shoes, and have some fun. Friends of friends welcome!

Register at AdventPres.org/Events.

Location: 5652 Fornev Dr.



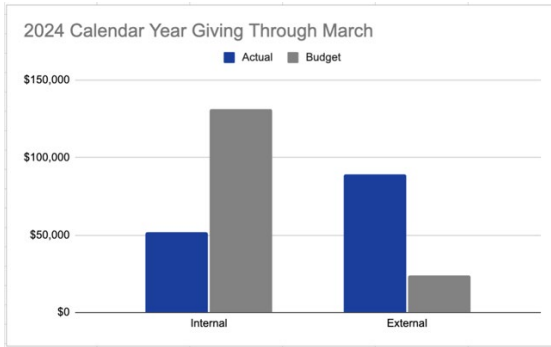
QUESTION & DISCUSSION

April. 28th 12:15 – 1:15 P.M.

Got questions? Let's discuss. Scan the QR code to submit your question. Join us after the worship service for the discussion. A light lunch will be available.

Location: Weekley Family YMCA Multi-purpose Room

2024 CALENDAR YEAR GIVING



Media Release

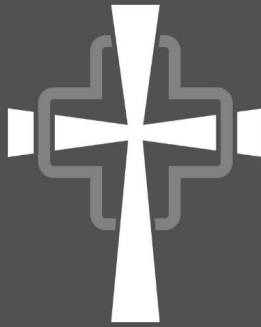
Advent Houston shares photos taken at our events in our monthly newsletters, on our website, or on social media for the purpose of promoting and highlighting the church’s mission. By being present, you consent to being photographed and having these photos shared. For individuals who are not comfortable being visible in a shared photograph, please notify the church at admin@adventpres.org to opt out of the media release.

CCLI License Info

All songs used by permission. CCLI License #21309482

ADVENT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOUSTON

2617 BISSONNET ST. SUITE 200, #208
HOUSTON, TX 77005



ADVENT HOUSTON EXISTS TO EMBRACE,
EMBODY, AND EXTEND THE GRACE OF JESUS
TO THE TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER, RICE
UNIVERSITY, AND THE SURROUNDING
NEIGHBORHOODS.

ALL SONGS USED BY PERMISSION.
CCLI LICENSE #21309482

ADVENTPRES.ORG

713-364-6748