



# ADVENT HOUSTON

## **ORDER OF WORSHIP**

6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Epiphany

February 12, 2023

## EPIPHANY

The season of Epiphany is a time of enlightenment. The word Epiphany comes from the a Greek word meaning “to bring of light.” The season is a five to nine week period celebrating and remembering the time that God manifested Jesus as the Son of God as the Savior to and for the world.

During Christmas we joyfully celebrated the coming of [the] light in the birth of Jesus. Now the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6 brings this theme to culmination - the light of Christ made manifest to the whole world as symbolized by the Gentile Magi from the East. Thus the day of Epiphany and the season that follows complete what is sometimes called in the liturgical year the Cycle of Light.

Twenty centuries after the birth and ministry of Jesus, we can take it for granted that Jesus was not just the Anointed One for Israel, but that He was the promised Messiah (meaning anointed one) that would bring salvation to all peoples, all tribes, and all nations. So, the season of Epiphany is a time when we remember that Jesus was made manifest to the Wise Men who came to worship him. It is a time when we remember that manifests his ministry and power to the world around him. And it is a time when we begin to more fully contemplate what it means for us to participate in extending his light to the nations. Allow for this season, to be a time when you think more about how you might be able to make Jesus' story manifest in your own life and to the lives of others.

## REFLECTION

### **Awaken Houston - by the Houston Church Planting Network:**

For the past seven years we have coordinated a season of prayer which we call Awaken Houston. It has been a time to pray in unity for our mission as a Church, revival in our churches, and a spiritual awakening here in Houston. These have been impactful seasons as we've prayed together for a move of God in our city. This year our 30 Days of Prayer will be from January 30-February 28.

This year we are asking people to identify people in their lives that are far from God and pray fervently for them during these 30 days. In addition, we are encouraging individuals to consider fasting in a way that is appropriate for them during these 30 days.

### **Further Reflection**

"Faith grows by the exercise of prayer."

— **Charles Spurgeon**

"As we continue to live faithfully in Christ, we can be sure that whatever happens to us—the decisions we make, the mistakes we regret, and even the sins that shame us—are all links in God's plan not only for our individual lives but for his greater work in history."

— **Karen H. Jobes**

"Prayer and lament in times of crisis are entirely appropriate. But neither "magic prayers" nor some "secret ritual" can force God's hand. The book of Esther teaches that believers frequently must both trust God and take seriously their own role in advocating for those things they are praying about."

— **Douglas Nykolaishen & Andrew Schmutzer**

# SERVICE OF THE WORD

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## \*Call to Worship – From Psalm 116

Leader: I will give thanks to you, O LORD, among the peoples;

**People: I will sing praises to you among the nations.**

Leader: For your steadfast love is great to the heavens,

**People: Your faithfulness to the clouds.**

Leader: Be exalted, O God, above the heavens!

**ALL: Let your glory be over all the earth!**

## \*Song – The Lion and the Lamb

He's coming on the clouds  
Kings and kingdoms will bow down  
And every chain will break  
As broken hearts declare His praise  
Who can stop the Lord Almighty

### **Chorus**

Our God is the Lion, the Lion of Judah  
He's roaring with power and fighting our battles  
And every knee will bow before You  
Our God is the Lamb, the Lamb that was slain  
For the sin of the world  
His blood breaks the chains  
And every knee will bow before the Lion and the Lamb  
Oh, every knee will bow before the Lion and the Lamb

So open up the gates  
Make way before the King of kings  
Our God who calls to save  
Is here to set the captives free  
Who can stop the Lord Almighty

### **Bridge**

Who can stop the Lord Almighty  
Who can stop the Lord Almighty  
Who can stop the Lord Almighty  
Oh, who can stop the Lord Almighty

[6] Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, [7] casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. [8] Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. [9] Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. [10] And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. [11] To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## Missional Skills & Stories

### \*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*

## \*Affirmation of Faith

**The Apostles' Creed & Catechism Questions 53, 54, 55, & 57 from  
"To Be a Christian"**

Leader: Christian, what is it that you believe?

**ALL: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell\*; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic\*\* Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

\* Christ's 'descent into hell' occurred in His death and burial, the Father's wrath toward sin being poured out on him in our place, so we would never have to taste His wrath.

\*\* By 'catholic,' we mean the universal church made up of all Christians who are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

## ***“He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and Born of the Virgin Mary”***

**Leader:** What does it mean that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit?

**People:** **Jesus was conceived not through a human father but by the Holy Spirit coming upon the Virgin Mary in power.**

**Leader:** What happened at Jesus' conception in Mary's womb?

**People:** **The eternal Son, whom God named Jesus, assumed a fully human nature from his mother, the Virgin Mary, at the moment of conception in her womb.**

**Leader:** Why is it important to say that Jesus was born?

**People:** **It is important to affirm that he is one of us: truly human, born to a human mother, and raised in a human family.**

**Leader:** What is the relationship between Jesus' divine and human natures?

**People:** **At the moment of Jesus' conception, the divine nature of the one eternal Person of the Son was united to our human nature. Therefore, Jesus Christ is fully and truly both divine and human, but without sin. His two natures are united without division, separation, mixture, or change.**

## **Confession of Sin**

**ALL:** **LORD God, forgive us.**

**Leader:** Lost in ourselves, we dwell endlessly on yesterday's embarrassment, anger and grief

**ALL:** **LORD God, forgive us.**

**Leader:** Lost in our domain, it is hard to see beyond yesterday's fighting, suspicion and fear.

**ALL:** **LORD God, forgive us.**

**Leader:** Lost in our fantasy, it is tempting to live in yesterday's illusions or tomorrow's fancies.

**ALL:** **LORD God, forgive us.**

**Leader:** Fill us with the security found in Jesus Christ, that we might be lost in the wonder and sanity of your hope.

**ALL:** **LORD God, have mercy on us, according to your loving-kindness**

## \*Assurance of Pardon

1 Peter 2:24

Leader: He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

Leader: May the God of all healing and forgiveness draw us to himself, and cleanse us from all our sins that we may behold the glory of his Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our LORD.

**People: Amen.**

## \*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

(Book of Common Prayer)

Leader: Almighty and everlasting God, you govern all things both in heaven and on earth: Mercifully hear the supplications of your people, and in our time grant us your peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

*(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.**

[1] When Mordecai learned all that had been done, Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and he cried out with a loud and bitter cry.

[2] He went up to the entrance of the king's gate, for no one was allowed to enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth. [3] And in every province, wherever the king's command and his decree reached, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting and weeping and lamenting, and many of them lay in sackcloth and ashes.

[4] When Esther's young women and her eunuchs came and told her, the queen was deeply distressed. She sent garments to clothe Mordecai, so that he might take off his sackcloth, but he would not accept them. [5] Then Esther called for Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs, who had been appointed to attend her, and ordered him to go to Mordecai to learn what this was and why it was. [6] Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate, [7] and Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the exact sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries for the destruction of the Jews. [8] Mordecai also gave him a copy of the written decree issued in Susa for their destruction, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her and command her to go to the king to beg his favor and plead with him on behalf of her people. [9] And Hathach went and told Esther what Mordecai had said. [10] Then Esther spoke to Hathach and commanded him to go to Mordecai and say, [11] "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law—to be put to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter so that he may live. But as for me, I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days."

[12] And they told Mordecai what Esther had said. [13] Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, "Do not think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. [14] For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" [15] Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, [16] "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in

Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish." [17] Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## Sermon

Rev. Taylor Leachman

"Awaken Houston: Relinquish"

## Passing of the Peace

Leader: Christ came and proclaimed the gospel: peace to those who are far off and peace to those who are near.

Leader: May 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:** Father, all-powerful and ever-living God, we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks through Jesus Christ our Lord. By him, your only Son, who restored to us peace through the blood of his cross, you willed to reconcile all creatures. In him you have led us to the knowledge of your truth, that bound together by one faith and one baptism we might become his body. Through him you have given your Holy Spirit to all peoples to work marvels by innumerable gifts and an abundant variety of graces. Gathering us together in unity, your Spirit dwells in the hearts of all your children, filling the whole Church with his presence and guiding it with wisdom from above. And so, with steadfast love, we proclaim your glory and join with hosts of angels in their triumphant hymn of praise:

People:

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The lyrics are: "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 melody is simple and suitable for congregational singing.

### Words of Institution

Leader: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**All:** Christ has died.  
Christ is risen.  
Christ will come again.

Leader: Alleluia, alleluia.  
Our eyes have seen your salvation;  
A light to enlighten the nations  
And the glory of your people Israel.

**People:** Alleluia!

Leader: Come and feed on Him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving!

*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 – 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)



## \*Closing Song – Hymn of Heaven

### Verse 1

How I long to breathe the air of Heaven  
Where pain is gone and mercy fills the streets  
To look upon the one who bled to save me  
And walk with Him for all eternity

### Chorus 1

There will be a day  
When all will bow before Him  
There will be a day  
When death will be no more  
Standing face to face  
With He who died and rose again  
Holy, holy is the Lord

### Verse 2

And every prayer we prayed in desperation  
The songs of faith we sang through doubt and fear  
In the end we'll see that it was worth it  
When He returns to wipe away our tears

*Chorus 1*

### Verse 3

And on that day we join the resurrection  
And stand beside the heroes of the faith  
With one voice a thousand generations  
Sing worthy is the Lamb who was slain  
Forever He shall reign

### Chorus 2

So let it be today  
We shout the hymn of Heaven  
With angels and the Saints  
We raise a mighty roar  
Glory to our God  
Who gave us life beyond the grave  
Holy, holy is the Lord (x2)

### Ending

Holy, holy is the Lord  
Holy, holy is the Lord

## \*Closing Prayer of Thanksgiving and Mission

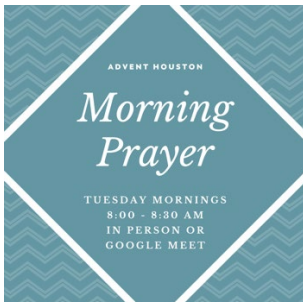
### \*Benediction

Leader: You go nowhere by accident. Wherever you go, God is sending you. Wherever you find yourself, God has a reason for your being there. Christ who lives in you by the power of the Holy Spirit has something he desires to do in you and through you wherever you find yourself. Believe this and go in His grace, His love, and His power.

Leader: And the blessing of God almighty,  
The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
Be among you and remain with you always.

**ALL: Amen**

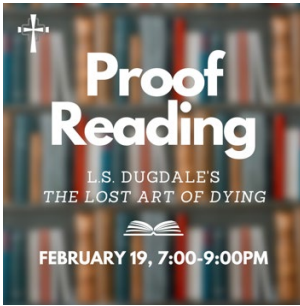
## Announcements



### **MORNING PRAYER**

*Tuesday mornings, 8:00 A.M.*

Join us at the Local Office or via Google Meet on Tuesdays at 8:00 AM where we will go through portions of the Daily Prayer Project together. Contact Beverly for the Google Meet link.



## **PROOF READING**

*February 19<sup>th</sup>*

Come and discuss the book *The Lost Art of Dying* by L.S. Dugdale. Whether you have read the book, or whether you want to just sit and enjoy the conversation, we would love for you to come! Please register on our website if you plan to attend.



## **JOINING SUNDAY**

*February 19<sup>th</sup>*

Join us as we welcome our second group of Advent Houston members!



## **ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE**

*February 22<sup>nd</sup>*

Join us for our Ash Wednesday service at 6 PM at 1700 Bissonnet St. (Hillel). Ash Wednesday starts the 40 days of the Lenten Season that ends with the Easter celebration.



## **ALL ABOUT ADVENT**

*Next Membership Class Coming in May*

Interested in church membership? Our next membership class will be held at a to-be-determined place and time in May. Come and hear "All About Advent". More details to follow.

### 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.

### Advent Presbyterian Church of Houston

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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.

