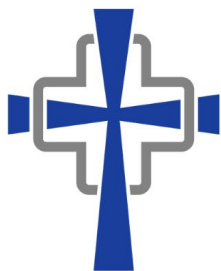

EMBRACE | EMBODY | EXTEND



ADVENT
HOUSTON

2nd Sunday after Pentecost

JUNE • 2 • 2024

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.

PENTECOST

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.

*Robert E. Webber, *Ancient Future Time*

REFLECTIONS

"May a merciful God preserve me from a Christian Church in which everyone is a saint! I want to be and remain in the church and little flock of the fainthearted, the feeble and the ailing, who feel and recognize the wretchedness of their sins, who sigh and cry to God incessantly for comfort and help, who believe in the forgiveness of sins."

— **Martin Luther**

"It was your great American wit, Mark Twain, who once said, "Man is the only animal that blushes, and the only animal that needs to." We are ashamed, are we not, of things we've done in the past. Nobody is free who is unforgiven. Instead of being able to look God in the face or to look one another in the face, we want to run away and hide when our conscience troubles us."

— **John Stott**

"The point that really struck me about Jesus' response to the woman (in Luke 9:36-50) was its complete departure from what was socially acceptable. I'm not sure if one can really begin to grasp how shocking it was unless one has spent enough time in the Middle East for its attitudes to start melding with his own. The worst sin a woman can commit here is to lose, or appear to have lost, her virginity outside of marriage. The most important asset she has as a woman is her reputation. The whole honor of the family hangs on the reputation of its women. If a woman has nothing but her reputation as a chaste woman, she always has a chance to succeed; if she has everything but her reputation she is lost before she begins. And in some parts of the Arab world, all it takes for a woman to lose her reputation is to be seen speaking to a man who is not a relative. If a man, particularly a religious man, is known to have even spoken with such a "lost" woman, his reputation will follow hers down the drain. It is a hard system and it crosses religious lines. Now consider that same system but take it back 2000 years to a less forgiving time. Then think about Jesus' encounter with the sinful woman. Shocking, isn't it?"

— **Letter from Nancy Khalil**

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

Psalm 66

Leader: Shout for joy to God, all the earth;
sing the glory of his name;
give to him glorious praise!

People: **Come and see what God has done:
he is awesome in his deeds toward the children of man.**

Leader: Bless our God, O peoples;
let the sound of his praise be heard,

People: **who has kept our soul among the living
and has not let our feet slip.**

ALL: **Blessed be God,
because he has not rejected my prayer
or removed his steadfast love from me!**

*SONG

Oh You Bring

Words and music by Matt Crocker
© 2008 Hillsong Music Publishing Australia

Verse 1

Oh You bring hope to the hopeless
And light to those in the darkness
And death to life now I'm alive
Oh You give peace to the restless
And joy to homes that are broken
I see You now in You I'm found

Chorus 1

And You opened the door for me
And You laid down Your life to set me free
All that I am will serve You Lord

Verse 2

Oh You fill those who are empty
And rescue those in the valley
And through it all You calm my soul
Oh You find me in my weakness
And heal the wounds of my heartache
I worship You in Spirit and truth

Chorus 2

And You opened the door for me
And You laid down Your life to set me free
All that I am will serve You Lord
And You opened my eyes to see
All the wonder and awe of Christ in me
Jesus You're everything I need

Bridge

All honor
All glory
All praise to You
Repeat
Chorus 2

PRAYER OF ADORATION**FIRST SCRIPTURE READING****Micah 7:18-20**

[18] Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity
and passing over transgression
for the remnant of his inheritance?
He does not retain his anger forever,
because he delights in steadfast love.
[19] He will again have compassion on us;
he will tread our iniquities underfoot.
You will cast all our sins
into the depths of the sea.
[20] You will show faithfulness to Jacob
and steadfast love to Abraham,
as you have sworn to our fathers
from the days of old. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

1 John 4:19-21

[19] We love because he first loved us. [20] If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. [21] And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*SONG

Psalm 126

Words and music by Isaac Wardell
© 2012 Bifrost Arts Music

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

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

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

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

The Nicene Creed

Leader: Church, what is it that you believe?

**ALL: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven:

by the power of the Holy Spirit

**he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made
man.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the
Scriptures;**

he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.**

Amen.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Adapted from Psalm 51

Leader: Have mercy on us, O God, according to your unfailing love;
according to your great compassion blot out our
transgressions.

ALL: **Wash away all our iniquity and cleanse us from our sin. For
we know our transgressions, and our sin is always before us.**

Leader: Against you, you only, have we sinned and done what is evil in
your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and
justified when you judge.

ALL: **Surely we were sinful at birth, sinful from the time our
mothers conceived us. Surely you desire truth in the inner
parts; you teach us wisdom in the inmost place.**

Leader: Cleanse us with hyssop, and we will be clean; wash us, and we
will be whiter than snow.

ALL: **Let us hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed
rejoice.**

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Adapted from Psalm 81

Leader: Sing aloud to God our strength, shout for joy to the God of Jacob. I hear a voice saying, "I relieved your shoulder of the burden; your hands were freed from the basket. In distress you called, and I rescued you."

ALL: Thanks be to God!

*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

Prayer attributed to St. Francis of Assisi

Leader: Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

*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

Luke 7:36-50

[36] One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. [37] And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, [38] and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. [39] Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." [40] And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher."

[41] "A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. [42] When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" [43] Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly." [44] Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. [45] You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. [46] You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. [47] Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he

who is forgiven little, loves little.” [48] And he said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” [49] Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, “Who is this, who even forgives sins?” [50] And he said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.” (ESV)

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

SERMON

Rev. Brooks Harwood

“Approaching God”



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: Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.”
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: It is right, our duty and our joy, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Through Jesus Christ our Lord; who on the first day of the week overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

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

Leader: Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of our faith.

People: **Christ has died!**
Christ is risen!
Christ will come again!

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: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

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

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

Jesus I Come

Words by William True Sleeper and music by Greg Thompson

© 2000 Greg Thompson Music

Out of my bondage, sorrow and night,
Jesus, I come; Jesus I come.
Into Thy freedom, gladness and light,
Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of my sickness into Thy health,
Out of my wanting and into Thy wealth,
Out of my sin and into Thyself,
Jesus, I come to Thee.

Out of my shameful failure and loss,
Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come.
Into the glorious gain of Thy cross,
Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of earth's sorrows into Thy balm,
Out of life's storms and into Thy calm,
Out of distress into jubilant psalm,
Jesus, I come to Thee.

Out of unrest and arrogant pride,
Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come.
Into Thy blessed will to abide,
Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of myself to dwell in Thy love,
Out of despair into raptures above,
Upward forever on wings like a dove,
Jesus, I come to Thee.

Out of the fear and dread of the tomb,
Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come.
Into the joy and light of Thy home,
Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of the depths of ruin untold,
Into the peace of Thy sheltering fold,
Ever Thy glorious face to behold,
Jesus, I come to Thee.

*SONG

Thy Mercy My God

Words by John Stocker and music by Sandra McCracken
© 2001 Same Old Dress Music

Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart. and the boast of my tongue;
Thy free grace alone, from the first to the last,
Hath won my affections, and bound my soul fast.

Without Thy sweet mercy I could not live here;
Sin would reduce me to utter despair;
But, through Thy free goodness, my spirits revive,
And He that first made me still keeps me alive.

Thy mercy is more than a match for my heart,
Which wonders to feel its own hardness depart;
Dissolved by Thy goodness, I fall to the ground,
And weep to the praise of the mercy I've found.

Great Father of mercies, Thy goodness I own,
And the covenant love of Thy crucified Son;
All praise to the Spirit, Whose whisper divine
Seals mercy, and pardon, and righteousness mine.
All praise to the Spirit, Whose whisper divine
Seals mercy, and pardon, and righteousness mine.

*CLOSING PRAYER

*BENEDICTION

Hebrews 13:20-21 (ESV)

Leader: Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY DIRECTOR - *Job Opportunity*

Do you or someone you know have a heart for Children's Ministry? Want to make a life-long difference in a child's life? Join Team Advent! Enjoy flexible work schedule while creating & promoting program and relational pathways for children's discipleship. Applicant need not be an Advent Member or even regular attender to apply.

Job Description at adventpres.org/jobopportunities
Submit resume to Admin@AdventPres.org



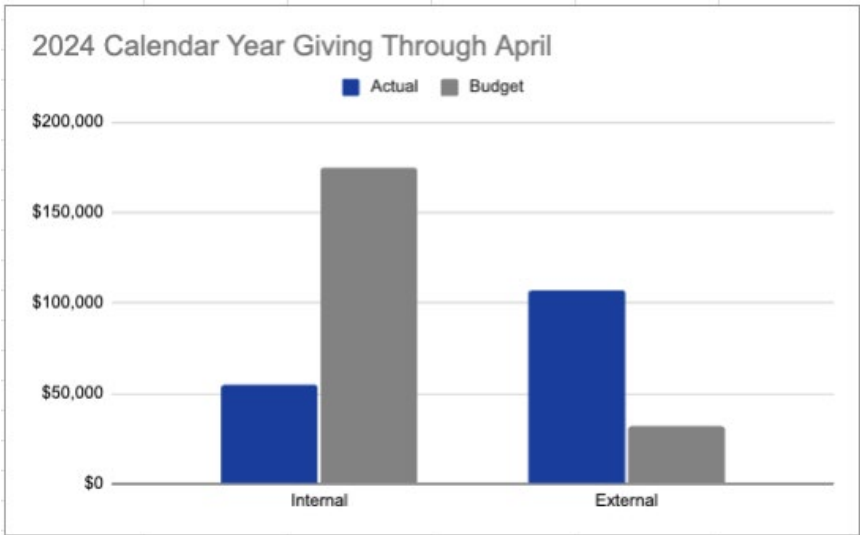
KINGDOM PRAYER

Wednesday, May 29th, 5:30 – 6:30 P.M.

We invite you to come for an evening of prayer where we ask the Lord for his kingdom to come: where we pray for Him to heal sickness, for people to come to know Jesus, for Him to comfort us and one day end all our sorrows, and anything else we hope for in his coming kingdom.

Location: West U Scout House | 6108 Edloe St.

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.

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ADVENT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOUSTON

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

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