

We continue our Advent sermon series, **Home for the Holidays**, as we delve deeper into Dr. Baucom's sermon *Home by Another Way*, concerning the Magi's choice to follow another way home.

1. Do you remember when you left home for the first time? If you can, get in touch with what it felt like to come back home and live with the same house rules and boundaries you had before you left. Was it hard for you to come back home again? Did you discover differences in you after experiencing life on your own terms, compared with the life you had when you came home? What were they and how did it feel?
2. **Read and reflect on Matthew 2:1-12.** Sit and reflect with this rich passage for about 5 minutes. Take several deep breaths and **reread Matthew 2:1-12** again.
 - Who were these Magi? Why had they made this great journey? What brought them to Jerusalem? (vs. 2)
 - How did Herod respond to these guests? (vs. 3)
 - Who did Herod turn to for guidance/information?
 - Imagine you are one of the Magi; what might you be thinking about Herod? How might you feel when he requested to meet you in secret? About what he was asking of you?
 - Why do you think they might have gone home another way? Not returned to Herod?
3. **Reread Matthew 2:9-10.** Sit and reflect with this rich passage for about 5 minutes. Imagine you are one of the Magi. You have **met** with Herod publicly and privately and you are now on your way once again. You see the star back in the sky.
 - Why might *you* rejoice and be filled with great joy?

4. How did worshipping Jesus change the lives of the Magi?
5. **Read Genesis 35:27-29.** Jacob makes his way back home after years of being away. Read the following passages and discover some of the experiences he has that allow him to come home.
 - ❑ **Genesis 31:1-7**
 - ❑ **Genesis 32:1-2, 24-32**
 - ❑ **Genesis 33:1-17**
 - ❑ **Genesis 35:27-29**
 - What did you learn about going home another way from Jacob's story?
6. Another story in scripture of someone coming home a different route than how they left home can be found in the parable of the prodigal son. **Read and reflect on Luke 15:11-32.** As best as possible, imagine you are the son who leaves home.
 - Why are *you* leaving? How are *you* feeling about *yourself*?
 - What causes *you* to think of home? Makes *you* long for being home again?
 - What has changed in *your* life?
 - What is the difference in *your* journey away from and *your* journey back to home?
 - How have *you* changed?
7. How has God touched your life this year? How might your journey be different because of his transforming love?

As we continue to Christmas, allow God's presence to touch you and change your life so that going home is like taking a whole new path.