

We conclude our Advent sermon series, ***Home for the Holidays***, as we delve deeper into Rev. Greg Loewer's sermon *Homeward Bound*, concerning the route Mary, Joseph and Jesus took back home, by way of Egypt.

1. Have you ever felt like you "had" to move? Where did you go? What provision was made for you? How did you decide where to go? Was it a straight trip or did you have many different stops until you felt you were home again?
2. **Read and reflect on Matthew 2:13-23.** Sit and reflect on this story of escape for several minutes.
 - No fear, no questions; why might Joseph have been so very obedient after his second angelic message?
 - How does Herod use his encounter with the Magi for his own purpose?
 - How does Herod work into God's plan of salvation for Israel?
3. **Reread Matthew 2:19-23.** Sit and reflect with this rich passage for several minutes. Imagine you are Joseph. You have heard a message from God in your dreams several times.
 - Through this encounter, how might you understand Joseph to be an insightful & wise man?
 - How does God show Himself as Emmanuel to Joseph and Mary?
 - Where did the holy family find *home*?
4. Take a deep look at each of the 6 P's Pastor Loewer spoke of; prophecy, provision, protection, providence, perseverance and promise.
 - Prophecy – Matthew's focus on the fulfilling of prophecy.
Read: Jeremiah 31:15; Micah 5:2,4; Isaiah 9:2-7; 11:1-9
 - Why would this be important?
 - Who was Matthew's first audience?

- How does prophecy point to Jesus being the Son of God?
- Provision - God will supply my needs, vs. our desire/tendency to hoard, have more.
Read: Philippians 4:6-7; 10-13
 - How does God supply your needs?
- Protection – God provided physical protection of family.
Read: 2 Thessalonians 3:3; Psalm 41:1,2
 - What does this say to you about God's sense of protection toward you?
 - Reflect on personal experiences of protection. If you are comfortable, share them with your group.
- Providence - God intervening shows His plan for us.
Read: Exodus 3:10-12; 1 Samuel 1:10-20; Jeremiah 29:11.
 - How does God make his ways known in these passages?
 - How does God make his plan known to you?
- Perseverance – Through the difficult times such as Joseph, Mary and Jesus were experiencing, God makes a way if we are obedient and rely on Him.
Read: Romans 5:3-5, James 1:2-4; 2 Thessalonians 1:3-4
 - Are there difficult times you have/or are experiencing when perseverance is what you believe God wants for you? Share any insight with which you are comfortable with your IG family.
- Promise – God's promise is Emmanuel. God fulfills His promise to Mary and Joseph over and over again.
Read: Matthew 28:20; John 12:14-18; Matthew 1:23.
 - How has God shown Himself to be with you on your journey?

As we prepare for the New Year, keep your eyes open to the promise and provision God has for you this year. May you find *home* here at Columbia among our family of faith.