

# WELCOME Christmas

Welcome Christmas

South Sub Church

December 21, 2025

## Love That Protects

### Matthew 2:13-23 (NLT)

After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother," the angel said. "Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him." <sup>14</sup>That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, his mother, <sup>15</sup>and they stayed there until Herod's death. This fulfilled what the Lord had spoken through the prophet: "I called my Son out of Egypt." <sup>16</sup>Herod was furious when he realized that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, based on the wise men's report of the star's first appearance. <sup>17</sup>Herod's brutal action fulfilled what God had spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

<sup>18</sup>"A cry was heard in Ramah—  
weeping and great mourning.  
Rachel weeps for her children,  
refusing to be comforted,  
for they are dead."

<sup>19</sup>When Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. <sup>20</sup>"Get up!" the angel said. "Take the child and his mother back to the land of Israel, because those who were trying to kill the child are dead." <sup>21</sup>So Joseph got up and returned to the land of Israel with Jesus and his mother. <sup>22</sup>But when he learned that the new ruler of Judea was Herod's son Archelaus, he was afraid to go there. Then, after being warned in a dream, he left for the region of Galilee. <sup>23</sup>So the family went and lived in a town called Nazareth. This fulfilled what the prophets had said: "He will be called a Nazarene."

### Sermon Summary:

**Welcome Christmas** is a five-week Advent journey through Matthew's telling of Christ's birth, inviting you to encounter Jesus who fulfills every promise God ever made. Each week opens a new doorway into the wonder of His coming. From a genealogy filled with longing, to a frightened carpenter learning to trust, to outsiders led by a star, to a family protected by God's unshakeable love, Matthew shows us that Christmas is far more than a story. It's the arrival of God's faithfulness in human flesh. Let this season awaken your heart to *welcome Christmas* like never before.

### Ice Breaker Questions:

1. Describe an experience you've had that didn't go as planned—but you learned something important from it?
2. When you're facing uncertainty, are you more likely to want all the details or just the next step? Why?
3. What is one small act of love that has made a big difference in your life?

### Scripture Study Questions:

1. What event takes place immediately after the wise men depart?
2. To whom does the angel of the Lord appear, and how does the angel appear?
3. What three specific commands does the angel give to Joseph in verse 13?
4. What reason does the angel give for the urgency of fleeing to Egypt?

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5. How long are Joseph, Mary, and Jesus instructed to remain in Egypt?
6. Which Old Testament prophecy is said to be fulfilled by Jesus' stay in Egypt, and who originally spoke it?
7. How does Matthew describe Herod's emotional response when he realizes he has been outwitted by the wise men?
8. What specific age group does Herod target in his order, and what determines that age range?
9. In which geographic area does Herod carry out the killing of the children?
10. Which prophet is quoted in Matthew 2:17–18, and what emotion is emphasized in the quotation?

## **Interpretive Questions:**

1. Why do you think God chose to warn Joseph through a dream rather than removing Herod's threat altogether?
2. What does Joseph's immediate obedience reveal about his trust in God and his role in God's plan?
3. Why does Matthew include the account of the massacre of the infants, even though Jesus is already safe?
4. What does Herod's reaction reveal about the nature of power and fear in contrast to God's kingdom?
5. How does the fulfillment of prophecy in this passage shape our understanding of God's sovereignty amid human evil?

## **Application Questions:**

1. Where in your life do you sense God calling you to obey before you fully understand the outcome?
2. How do you typically respond when God's direction leads you into uncertainty?
3. What losses—visible or unseen—might God be inviting you to trust Him with in this season?
4. When you encounter suffering or tragedy that you cannot explain, how do you tend to respond to God?
5. How does knowing that God works within a broken world, rather than avoiding it, shape your faith today?
6. What practical step can you take this week to walk by faith, trusting that God's presence is enough for the next step?