

Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”

¹⁴ So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, ¹⁵ where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

¹⁹ After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt ²⁰ and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead.”

²¹ So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, ²³ and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: “He will be called a Nazarene.”

Sermon Hymn: 41 Let All Together Praise Our God

Sermon: Divine Protection Plan

Offering: *(Please remember to sign the Friendship Register.)*

Hymn: 38 From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

Benediction

Closing Hymn: 28 Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord

Ushers: This Week – Paul Milbrath & Lucas Zuehlke
New Year’s Eve – Please Volunteer to Help
Next Week – Jim Lichtenberg & Jeremy Wagie

Greeters: This Week – Frank & Sue Kramer
New Year’s Eve – Please Volunteer to Help
Next Week – Paul & Vicki Milbrath

Cleaning: This Coming Week – Please Volunteer to Help
The Following Week – Please Volunteer to Help
(There is a sign-up sheet in the back of church.)

The new greeter and usher schedules are done. They are on the back table in the church narthex.

Christmas 1 – Dec. 29

P.O. Box 86, Helenville, Wisconsin

Pastor: Mark Swanson Church Tel: 920-674-3307

Principal: Craig Winkler School Tel: 262-582-3010

Organist: Ken Neipert

We Welcome You!

Order of Worship: Pg. 15

Opening Hymn: 203 Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word

Prayer of the Day:

M: Almighty God, in mercy you sent your one and only Son to take upon himself our human nature. By his gracious coming deliver us from the corruption of our sin and transform us into the likeness of his glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

First Lesson - Isaiah 63:7-9

Isaiah extols the kindness of the LORD by reminding God's people of all that he has done for us. The LORD stood by his covenant even though his son, Israel, turned away from him. The LORD showed compassion and mercy to a people who did not deserve it. What but the kindness of God could look at Israel and us and still say, "Surely they are my people, sons who will not be false to me"? That can only be said because of the work of God's only true and faithful Son, Jesus. God cared for his sons so much that in the fullness of time, the LORD became our Savior to redeem us. See how much God cares for his sons: when they are distressed, he is distressed; when they are in danger, he lifts them up and carries them. So now the sons of God join Isaiah saying, "I will tell of the kindness of the LORD."

⁷ I will tell of the kindnesses of the LORD, the deeds for which he is to be praised, according to all the LORD has done for us— yes, the many good things he has done for the house of Israel, according to his compassion and many kindnesses. ⁸ He said, "Surely they are my people, sons who will not be false to me"; and so he became their Savior. ⁹ In all their distress he too was distressed, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and mercy he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

Psalm of the Day - Psalm 2, p. 65

Second Lesson - Galatians 4:4-7

God's care for his sons meant preparing the world for the coming of Christ. The common language of Greek, the peace of the Roman Empire, the ability to travel, the dispersion of the Jews throughout the world—all these served to help the message of Jesus spread. But even more, the time was right for God to fulfill every prophetic promise to care for his children. He commissioned his own Son to become the God-man who subjected himself to law so that everyone under sin's curse might be bought back. The Incarnation of God meant that children of wrath could become the sons of God, and Pentecost proves our adoption as sons. The Spirit that cries, "Abba, Father," also testifies to our freedom from sin and our new status as heirs of God's kingdom.

⁴ But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. ⁶ Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

Verse of the Day: *Alleluia. Alleluia. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. Alleluia. (Colossians 3:15a)*

Gospel - Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

At the birth of Christ, the angels announced good news and great joy meant for all people, but not everyone saw it that way: Herod reacted to the birth of Jesus with fear, opposition, and violence. The malice of Herod, however, could not rob the world of the peace God intended to bring through his Son. God cared for his Son and all the sons of God by using Joseph to keep him safe in the land of Egypt. The words of Hosea found their fulfillment at his return from Egypt—Jesus was Israel reduced to one. God cared for his sons by having his Son serve as their substitute. The closing words, "He will be called a Nazarene," are problematic since they are not found in the Old Testament prophets. Matthew might have intended a play on words between Nazareth and נצר, branch," fulfilling Isaiah 11:1. Perhaps, though, he meant that Jesus' new hometown of Nazareth would contribute to the contempt that he would receive as a man (see John 1:45-46), thus fulfilling the word of the prophets that the Messiah would be a suffering servant.

¹³ When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to