

Sunday, January 6, 2019
Isaiah 60:1-6; Matthew 2:1-12
Theme: "PREPARE THE WAY: FIND"

Today we will conclude the sermon series, Prepare The Way. And we will be talking about "FIND..."

(EPIPHANY)

As we do so, the church celebrates what is called: Epiphany of the Lord...
Epiphany is the sudden revelation and presentation of Christ to the Gentiles...

(LIGHT OF CHRIST)

In both scripture readings this morning, emphasis was placed on The Light of Christ...
The book of Isaiah is considered to be divided into two parts...
First Isaiah (chapters 1-39 - is more about judgment and Second Isaiah (chapters 40-66 is more about comfort and restoration...)
In second Isaiah transformation took place because the Great Light came to show the way...
Chapter 60 shows that Israel is brought back from exile to be transformed into an imperfect yet beautiful symbol of God's goodness...
God is a transforming God who turns evil into good...
He turns weakness into strength...
God promised Israel this transformation so that through her, other nations would find God...

(REIGN OF PROSPERITY)

But the reign of prosperity never came, even though Israel returned from Exile...
The reason is, Israel sought to bring this transformation through resistance and so her prosperity was short-lived...
Israel was conquered and continued to live under foreign oppression...

(GLORIOUS TRANSFORMATION)

So, where was the glorious transformation that God promised...
For sure we can look to Jesus Christ...
Through His death and resurrection, He began to search for and gather God's people from every corner of the earth, both Jews and Gentiles...

And this is what we are called to do:

*To search for the lost...

*To find them...

*To offer them the saving grace of Jesus Christ...

*And as a result offer them the glorious transformation of God's grace that leads to salvation...

(WHAT DID YOU FIND)

Last week we encouraged you to look amount the things you were searching for and determine the most valuable thing you found...

Bible study participants suggested that they found Joy, Sustenance, Guidance, and a Sense of Awe...

They believed that they are called to give their Presence, Dedication to God, and exercise Obedience...

If this is true, then [1] Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you to enable you to perform this work..

Let your light so shine so that others may be drawn into you...

It may be dark for some, but if your light is shining it could show that person the way...

Remember, the light, the star, led the wise men to where Jesus was...

In both scriptures, we are invited to give honor, glory, and praise to God...

The wise men encountered Jesus, but they had to make a decision to serve Him or reject Him and report to Herod...

They chose to serve God and honor the dream not to return to Harod...

Friends, we have a choice to either accept Jesus and obey Him as an act of worship or reject Him through disobedience and remove His influence from our life...

(EPIPHANY)

Epiphany offers us some real opportunities and possibilities for ministry...

We are on a journey and the star, the Light of God, is available to show us, to lead us, and stop over the places where ministry could take place as a sign of God's leading...

The Star has taken its rest over FUMC and it is here to stay...

FUMC, where are the places where Jesus might be and that we might stop...

The Light of the Lord is here...

The glory of the Lord is here...

Are we going to follow God's lead...

Are we going to worship with our gifts

What did you find...

Are we going to utilize what we found.

As we transition to the Lord's Table, I encourage us to prayerfully consider who and what we might find at the meeting and feast with the Lord...

Amen!