

Texts: Isaiah 60:1-6; Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6; Matthew 2:1-12
The Epiphany of the Lord
7 January 2018
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I went into Island Drug this week to pick up my dog's Prozac, and saw the saddest thing: signs everywhere announcing 'Christmas 50% off' - as if Christmas were something you could buy, and then, when you didn't need Christmas anymore, you get rid of it at a half-price sale. 'Oh, Christmas - *that old thing!*' I'll confess: for a moment the businessman in me thought - the church could buy up all this Christmas stuff at half-price now, hold onto it, and sell it at *full* price at our Holiday Bazaar (or our Christmas-in-July Sale). But, the pastor in me was sad, not just because Christmas isn't to be bought and sold, but especially because: *Christmas isn't over until epiphany*. And by *epiphany*, I don't mean a date on the calendar, like - "Don't wear white pants before Memorial Day or after Labor Day." Today is the *Feast of the Epiphany*, when after a two-year journey the Wise Men arrive at the home of Jesus, Mary and Joseph and the Wise Men *come to Jesus* and offer Jesus everything they have. That's the *Feast of the Epiphany*, when the word *Epiphany* meant originally "God revealed"- God is revealed in the Baby Jesus. , But *epiphany also* has come to mean when that light bulb turns on in our minds and we have a sudden realization, a new understanding, when you and I see things in a new light - we *have an epiphany*. Christmas isn't over until you and I *come to Jesus*, and you and I *have an epiphany* that this Jesus is our Friend, our Saving Hope, God with us, our Guide through life, and you and I give Jesus not gold, or frankincense, or myrrh - you and I give Jesus our *hearts*. Christmas wasn't complete for the shepherds out in the fields who heard the angels sing until those shepherds *came to Jesus* in the stable in Bethlehem and then went back praising God for what they had seen and heard. Christmas wasn't complete for the Wise Men until they *came to Jesus* in his house at Bethlehem, and then went home by *another way*, because the Wise Men's lives had been changed forever. Like the shepherds, like the Wise Men, Christmas isn't over for us - Christmas isn't complete, Christmas hasn't served its purpose - until you and I come to Jesus and know that here in Jesus is God our Friend, here is God with whom you and I can have a personal friendship all the days of your life and my life. Christmas isn't over until you and I each have *that epiphany* and, like the Wise Men, we each give Jesus everything we have: our hearts, our lives. And the joy Jesus gives us in return can't be bought at 50% off - because it's

priceless.