



Opening Prayer: Gracious God, as we gather to reflect on Your Word, quiet our hearts and open our minds. Help us hear Your invitation to return —not in fear, but in trust. Stir what needs stirring in us. Turn what needs turning. May this conversation draw us closer to You and closer to one another. In Christ's name, Amen.

Starter Questions: When you hear the word repentance, what feelings or images come to mind?

Quote *“The only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing.”*

— Henry Ford

Wrestling With the Word:

Read Joel 2:12–13 (NRSV)

1. What stands out to you in Joel's call to "return"?
2. What does it mean to "rend your heart and not your garments"?
3. How does God's character (gracious, merciful, steadfast love) shape the way we understand repentance?
4. Why do you think God invites return rather than demands perfection?

Relevance Questions

1. What might God be inviting you to "flip" or turn toward Him in this season?
2. What distractions or habits might be keeping you spiritually stuck?
3. How could Lent become less about giving something up and more about drawing closer to God?
4. Where have you experienced God's mercy even when you didn't deserve it?

One Actionable Step: This week, choose one intentional "turn" toward God —

- 5 minutes of daily prayer
- Reading one Psalm each morning
- Offering forgiveness
- Giving generously
- Serving someone quietly

Write it down and commit to it for the first week of Lent.

Closing Prayers: Merciful Lord, Thank You for Your patience, Your grace,

and Your steadfast love. As we leave this time together, guide our steps in this season of Lent. Give us courage to turn toward You daily and strength to follow where You lead. May our lives reflect the mercy we have received. Through Jesus Christ, Amen.