

## Return to the Lord

Lenten Observance 2021



In the Book of Joel, the prophet paints a vivid picture of the coming judgment of God, the Day of the Lord. The imagery is bold and terrifying: hordes of locusts swarming over the land and decimating everything. Joel's prophecy has teeth even today as wars rage, natural disasters threaten and destroy, and our culture seems to be unraveling. But right in the middle of this frightening portent, we find a tender invitation from the Lord: "Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and He relents over disaster" (Joel 2:13). God's invitation and promise finds its fullness in Jesus Christ, who personifies and accomplishes all that God declares. During this season of Lent, we will consider the theme "Return to the Lord" and examine how the call to return played out in practical ways for the people who walked alongside Christ as He demonstrated and carried out God's grace and mercy on our behalf, taking God's wrath upon Himself, setting the stage for God to "turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind Him" (Joel 2:14).

Each sermon in this series focuses on a particular event in the Passion, with a special focus on the people involved in the event. Studying the events and people helps to connect the hearers with their own sinful nature, to emphasize how we have turned away from the Lord, and to reinforce and rejoice in God's call for us to return to Him with all our heart.

### **Ash Wednesday – Feb. 17, 2021**

Sermon: A Call to Return – Joel 2:12-19

### **Midweek of Lent 1 – Feb. 24, 2021**

Sermon: Return to Prayer – Matthew 26:36-46

### **Midweek of Lent 2 – Mar. 3, 2021**

Sermon: Return from Betrayal – John 18:1-11

### **Midweek of Lent 3 – Mar. 10, 2021**

Sermon: Return from False Witness – Matthew 26:57-68

### **Midweek of Lent 4 – Mar. 17, 2021**

Sermon: Return from Denial – Luke 22:54-62

### **Midweek of Lent 5 – Mar. 24, 2021**

Sermon: Return to the Kingdom of God – John 18:28-38

### **Holy Thursday – Apr. 1, 2021**

Sermon: Return to the Table – Mark 14:12-26

### **Good Friday – Ap. 2, 2021**

Sermon: Return to Truth – John 19:1-16

### **Easter – Ap. 4, 2021**

Sermon: Return and See – Matthew 28:1-10