

Restore & Renew: Consecrate yourselves

discussion guide

based on **Joshua 3.2-5** (linked to sermon of 13/9/26)

This was a one-off sermon as we enter this significant term in the life of our church community. God-willing, we will have a dedication ceremony for the Community Hall on Sunday 22nd November – 10 weeks' time. What is the Lord calling us to do to prepare ourselves between now and then?

Intro: Share an experience of something exciting you've waited years and years for. How have you prepared for it? How do you feel as the big day approaches?

Read Joshua 3.2-5

If you were on the verge of the Jordan river, about to cross into a land you'd never been to before, and aware that you'd need to fight (never having fought a battle before and knowing that the enemy were big, strong and well-fortified), how would you feel? What would you be doing?

How do you think the people felt when Joshua told them to "consecrate themselves"?

Consecration is a fresh dedication of ourselves to God; a re-setting of our hearts towards the Lord; a recommitment to be set apart for God's purposes and glory.

What things can cause us to drift from the Lord? Why might we need to consecrate ourselves?

Can you think of biblical examples of people consecrating themselves (even if that language isn't used?)

Consecration is often linked to holiness – eg "I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy" (Leviticus 11).

Why is holiness part of consecration?

The people were told to follow the Ark of the covenant – to follow the Lord's leading. Why were they to follow?

As we enter 'new territory' (ie the new opportunities which a refurbished Community Hall will give us), how can we follow the Lord's leading?

Joshua was repeatedly told to be 'strong and courageous' (eg Deuteronomy 31, Joshua 1) as he prepared to enter the promised land. Why was he told that so often?

In what ways might we need to be strong and courageous (individually and as a church) over the coming months?

Andrea shared a story of a bee who preferred to walk along the ground than fly through the air (although it could fly), and who shunned nectar. She said it felt like a picture from the Lord for us – talking about our reluctance to work in the power of the Holy Spirit, and our preference for working in our own strength.

In what ways (if any) did that story and interpretation resonate with you?

Personal reflection:

Head – what have you learned in this session that you need to ponder on more?

Heart – what has spoken to your heart in this session that you need to pray through more?

Hands – what actions do you need to take to put this into practice?

Is there anything from this reflection you want to share with your group (or one or two others in the group) so they can pray for you specifically, and encourage you in the days ahead?

Prayer suggestions:

Pray that we would prepare ourselves as well as the hall, in readiness for its opening.

Pray for any individuals in the group who are facing new challenges or opportunities at the moment.