



# RENOVATE: BUILDING A LIFE WITH GOD

“Crying and Building”

Life Group Study

Week of September 19, 2021

## Opening Prayer for Group Meeting

Creator God,

We come together, O Holy One, to encounter you in a story of renovation. As spiritual houses, we know we are in need of rebuilding our broken places so we can respond to your call.

Guide us as we seek to open ourselves more fully to you.

In the name of Jesus Christ, the foundation of all life, we pray.

Amen.

### Connect

Welcome everyone and check in.

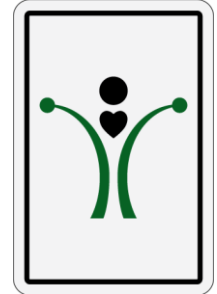
### Opening

Show Video

Video Discussion

Pastor Armstrong tells the story of the time he purchased a log-cabin house that had all kinds of problems and needed massive renovation.

What is a time in your life in which you were brought to tears, but lead to great transformation?



### Dwelling in the Word

Read Nehemiah 1:1-11

What do you hear in this passage?

Read Nehemiah 2:1-8

What do you hear in this passage?

*When I heard these words I sat down and wept, and mourned for days, fasting and praying before the God of heaven.*

*Nehemiah 1:4*

### Exploring Nehemiah's Tears

Nehemiah's name means “comforted by the Lord”. How does Nehemiah's story embody this name?

Jerusalem and the Temple were symbols of God's might and protection to the people. Now the walls of the city literally and metaphorically were in disarray. What symbols do we cling onto?

Nehemiah cries for days and prays before the Lord when he hears the news of the plight of his people. In what ways does this exhibit his faithfulness?

### Saying No and Saying Yes

Nehemiah needed to say no to the comfort of his own life far away from the suffering of his people in Jerusalem.

What do you need to say no to in order that you might say yes to God's call?

What does our church need to say no to so that it might say yes to God's call?



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## How to Use This Study Guide to lead a Group Discussion

Read through all the questions and choose the ones most relevant to your group. We include more than enough ideas for the times suggested. Please do not feel the need to “cover every question.” It works better to focus your time on the items that best fit your group’s needs.



## Confession as Preparation for Renovation

Nehemiah does not begin the renovation project by assigning blame on anyone else. He begins with himself and his own people, and he asks for God’s forgiveness.

How might confession prepare us for spiritual renovation?

Do you find yourself wanting to start by blaming someone else?  
Is that how leaders act today?

## Reflection

- Who puts the tears in your eyes?
- What do you need to say no to in order that you might say yes?
- What do you need to be honest about?
- What promises do you need to remind God so that you can be reminded of God’s promises?

## PROFESSION OF FAITH

*From Evangelical Lutheran Worship Baptismal Liturgy*

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

**I renounce them.**

Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

**I renounce them.**

Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

**I renounce them.**

You belong to Christ in whom you have been baptized.

## Closing Blessing

Sustain name with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.