

CHURCH RENEWAL JOURNEY

A Process of Awakening, Equipping and Discipling Today's Church.

A Pastor's Guide **for the** ***Lay Renewal Weekend***



What is the Spirit Saying to the Church?

**Church Renewal Journey is a ministry of the North American Mission Board
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This is a draft of the "Pastor's Guide for a Lay Renewal Weekend"
It is taken from sections of the *Lay Renewal Weekend Preparation Manual*

Chapters are numbered as they are in the LRW Preparation Manual to help with locating them.

Many Weekend Resources in the LRW Preparation Manual have been purposely left out of
the *Pastor's Guide* to make it smaller.

If your church decides to schedule a Lay Renewal Weekend, the pastor selects a church member to
serve as the LRW General Chairperson and they will need a complete copy of the
Lay Renewal Weekend Preparation Manual.

A copy of the manual can be downloaded from www.churchrenewaljourney.net

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PASTOR'S GUIDE FOR A LAY RENEWAL WEEKEND

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Chapter 1: Overview of the Journey

Renewal may be defined in many ways. Church renewal has a particular meaning. It has many facets and includes the reaffirmation (assurance) of one's salvation experience; recovering a real relationship with Christ; helping churches find and express a deeper spiritual dynamic; allowing God's Spirit to flow into and through one's inner thoughts; demonstrating and verbalizing the beauty and essence of the Christ-like life. A consistent prayer life should become evident.

Renewal involves discipline in prayer and Bible study, reading renewal-oriented books, learning to understand and love others, discovering the fellowship of church life, understanding our personal mission and ministry, learning to share our faith with unbelievers and learning the discipline of prayer. Of particular emphasis in this renewal process is a lifestyle of evangelism and a lifestyle of ministry (witnessing and ministering as we go).

It is helpful to look at a broad overview of the journey before moving into the details.

1. INVESTIGATING:

Those reading this book have begun the *investigating phase* of the journey. As the term implies, *investigating* is a time of searching and discovery. When a church expresses interest in renewal, a consultant is assigned from the state convention office to assist in beginning and continuing the journey. The consultant meets with the pastor, other church leadership and the congregation to interpret the renewal process. He encourages the pastor to form a Spiritual Growth Group to further explore implications of renewal for their church through prayer, study and sharing. This group continues to meet throughout the entire time a church is involved in the renewal process. This can be for as long as two to three years. Hopefully, the process becomes a lifestyle for the church. The pastor and staff function as members of this on-going group (as appropriate).

The Spiritual Growth Group explores the concepts of renewal during this phase of the journey. It shares its findings through established channels with the entire church. The group may recommend that the church begin involvement in the Church Renewal Journey by having a Lay Renewal Weekend. If the church votes to do so, the next phase of journey begins.

Churches are not the only institutions where renewal has been investigated. Several colleges have explored the possibility of renewal among their students. Student organizations, such as Baptist Student Unions and churches with a large number of students in their congregations, have sponsored renewal activities, some on a campus-wide basis. The renewal journey in this case is initiated by the Campus Minister or Director of Religious Life.

II. INITIATING:

The *initiating* phase of the journey usually is marked by the Lay Renewal Weekend. It takes three to six months to plan and prepare for this church wide experience. A *Lay Renewal Weekend Preparation Manual* is available on the Renewal Resource Website at www.churchrenewaljourney.net and can be printed out as a complete manual or in sections as needed to assist churches in that preparation. The weekend introduces renewal to the entire church in a tangible way. A significant proportion of the church membership is involved in the preparation. A General Chairperson and 13 Preparation Groups, plus two optional groups, plan and implement the weekend.

Here, the Spiritual Growth Group serves a dual role. It functions as one of the groups while continuing to look toward the future, anticipating the needs of the congregation while moving through this experience and beyond. The other groups plan for food, housing, prayer support, promotion and other support. As people work together, a sense of anticipation builds and hope for the weekend possibilities increases. These groups meet several times and are like Cottage Prayer Meetings with 1/3 of their meeting in devotions, 1/3 in prayer, and 1/3 working on their specific group's responsibilities.

Leading the weekend is a lay coordinator recommended by the consultant or the state office. Working with the coordinator is a team of lay persons. They are recommended by their churches to serve on renewal teams. Help in securing them is provided by the coordinator and the state office. The team travels to the church as its own expense. Housing and meals are provided for team members by the local church.

The weekend is a call to personal renewal. It is a time of great activity. The entire church is involved. Sessions include activities for children, youth and adults. Visiting team members model renewal principles by sharing from the experience of their own lives in Christ. They also lead small groups in which the emphasis is on fellowship and sharing. Church members share with and get to know each other beyond a superficial level. The emphasis is on an inward journey with Christ as individuals and as a church.

The outcome of a Lay Renewal Weekend varies from church to church. Some weekends are unapologetically emotional. Others are quiet and thoughtful. Relationships within the body are healed; hunger for a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ is kindled; openness toward each other is enhanced. Some discover new dimensions to their faith; others make commitments and express a desire to experience a more abundant life in Christ. There is excitement and anticipation over the possibilities of renewal; both for church and the individual.

Church after church reports that their Lay Renewal Weekend was a positive experience in the life of its fellowship, one which many look back on as a pivotal event in their Christian pilgrimages. (Go to www.churchrenewaljourney.net to see a list of letters from pastors whose churches have experienced a Lay Renewal Weekend.) While all this may not occur without some tension, invariably a group of individuals desires to continue its renewal experience through on-going small groups. This desire moves the church into the sharing phase of the journey.

III. SHARING:

The Spiritual Growth Group anticipates continuing the journey by organizing small groups after the Lay Renewal Weekend. A plan for dividing members into groups is agreed upon; materials for groups study and training are ordered and are available in advance. Group leaders are selected and trained. A training and group organization session for all church members interested in joining one of small groups is scheduled soon after the weekend.

The adult groups meet for three-to-six months using various study books and group guides. Materials are also available for youth in small groups. The emphasis continues to be on a journey inward. The spiritual aspects of life in Christ are explored and practically tested within the groups. Time is spent in prayer, study and sharing. Relationships with each other are also explored and strengthened.

Many individuals report that sharing within the safety of a group makes sharing with family, friends, co-workers and strangers more natural and less threatening. A lifestyle of evangelism begins to evolve. Others report the most important aspect of this phase of the journey is the deepening relationships that develop within the groups. They report an understanding of the love God has for them through the love of their fellow church members. Almost all report a greater sense of freedom in Christ and a willingness to find practical ways to express this freedom.

Body life reporting is also initiated during this phase. Time is set aside on a regularly scheduled basis, perhaps monthly, for all of the church to share "life" as a congregation. This enables the pastor to respond to opportunities and problems that might arise and ties each small group into the corporate experience of the entire church. It also establishes a lifestyle of corporate sharing for those not involved in the small groups.

Small groups may continue or new ones form up to a year after the Lay Renewal Weekend. This is at the discretion of the pastor, Spiritual Growth Group and individual group member. The consultant is also available to help with this decision. The church moves into the "commissioning phase" once a decision is made to schedule the next event in the renewal journey.

IV. COMMISSIONING:

This phase of the journey is also marked by an event: the Lay Ministry Weekend. It is similar in format to the Lay Renewal Weekend. It also takes three-to-six months of preparation. The Spiritual Growth Group continues to look beyond the weekend toward the future needs of the church. Another visiting team and coordinator from outside the church lead them in this experience. In many ways, this second weekend is similar to the first but there are also some differences.

The coordinator shares responsibilities with a Bible resource leader (BRL). The BRL functions as a Bible teacher in study sessions held during the general sessions and centers on discussion of themes developed by the BRL. This weekend is also a pivotal point in the renewal journey. Up to this point the emphasis has been on an inward journey. The Lay Ministry Weekend stresses preparation toward the *outward journey*. It is a call to personal ministry and evangelism in the world and to personal discipleship.

The learning sessions center on the doctrine that all Christians are *called, gifted, equipped* and *sent* into the world for witness and ministry. The presence of Christ is celebrated. Ways of discovering spiritual gifts are discussed and encouraged. The obvious spiritual gifts of some individuals are identified and affirmed while the identification of spiritual gifts in others is encouraged. There are challenges to think about in personal ministry and practical applications of gifts to evangelism and ministry. Ways of identifying community needs for ministry are also explored.

Results of the weekend differ somewhat from the Lay Renewal Weekend. A Lay Ministry Weekend is more introspective and thoughtful. People are introduced to the idea of spiritual gifts and the concept of a ministering laity. Their community is viewed, perhaps for the first time, as a place where they are commissioned as agents of reconciliation and ministry.

There is also an excitement about possibilities that begin to emerge. Within the Kingdom of God a universe of alternatives is open for exploration.

V. PENETRATING:

The third phase of Church Renewal Journey and is called the “Penetrating or Sending Phase” and is the *Outward Journey*. It uses small groups to focus on the new direction established during the Lay Ministry Weekend or the preparation for the journey outward. Small group life is reviewed and training is offered for leaders and participants who have not been part of a group before. Groups spend three-to-six months studying materials for training and equipping. Suggestions are available from Lay Ministry coordinator or from Lifeway Book Store. There is recognition that all are ministers, not just the pastors, and that ministry takes place out of spiritual gifts.

There are several options for the *Sending or Penetrating Weekend*. After experiencing the *Awakening Weekend* or Lay Renewal Weekend and the *Equipping Weekend* or Lay Ministry Weekend, the Spiritual Growth Group may suggest the next step in the Journey. Some of the options for the third weekend are, the *Discipleship Weekend*, *Experiencing God Weekends*, or one of the newest weekends, the *Made to Count Weekend* or the *Acts 1:8 Challenge Weekend*.

The Journey begins to reflect the unique character of each church. Body life reporting meetings, where the entire church gathers to report on individual and corporate journeys, become increasingly important. Gifts and ministries are confirmed as they are discovered and affirmed as they are used. Body life reporting meetings and special ministry commissioning services give lay ministries legitimacy within the congregation and a place in the church structure.

The Spiritual Growth Group continues to look toward the future. They attempt to remain sensitive as the Holy Spirit reveals the particularity of their church in its place for its time. Needs are identified in the community that could be answered through the gifted people of the church. The group looks for ways to awaken, equip and train people to exercise their gifts. The group makes its recommendations through the church councils, deacons, Baptist Men, WMU and other church organizations. It is not an authoritarian group.

Churches participating in the journey discover that through the renewal process a spiritual foundation is laid for everything a church does. Organizations and programs take on meaning because they are focused on ministry, evangelism and missions. They no longer exist for their own sake.

This part of the journey is not well defined in this book. It is purposely left open. Creativity born through the process of the journey enables the renewed church to chart its own path, meet its unique needs and opportunities, and more effectively be God's instrument of reconciliation to a lost world. The renewed church stands in the midst of the world God so loved and still loves. It stands reaching out with its hands and its heart in mission and ministry, a partner with Him.

CHAPTER 2: WHAT IS A LAY RENEWAL WEEKEND?

Numerous persons have sought to define the Lay Renewal Weekend. That is difficult, for words are inadequate to describe such a personal experience.

Whatever else it may be, the Lay Renewal Weekend is the initiating event for the Church Renewal Journey. Without the follow-up, or the continuation of the journey process, the initial weekend soon loses its thrust. However, the Lay Renewal Weekend does have significant benefits for those who participate and for the entire church.

The Lay Renewal Weekend is an experience of love, and experience of caring and sharing love for each other, an experience of persons giving themselves openly and with vulnerability to others who may or may not accept such openness.

In more concrete terms, it is a weekend experience of renewal for the local church. A group of dedicated men and women who are at various levels of Christian ministry, led by an experienced person called a coordinator, come from other churches and communities to share with your church members what Christ means to them. These are laypersons, not professionals. Neither are they perfect Christians. They are ordinary people searching for spiritual reality and struggling in their relationships to God. Each of them has begun to find an answer, and each is willing to share it with other persons.

This team does not belong to an exclusive group. Each team is comprised of different persons. They do not become a "team" until they arrive at a church for a given weekend. Each of the team members has experienced renewal in his personal life and most have experienced a Lay Renewal Weekend in their own church. They are active, supportive members of their own church, who come at their own expense and are recommended by their pastors.

These men and women are not only willing to talk about their spiritual walk; they are willing to listen! They will listen to church members as they share their doubts and dilemmas, hopes as well as dreams about Christ and His church. Through this sharing with one another in countless instances, miracles of renewal and transformation have taken place by the action of God's Spirit.

In some instances your church members will have an opportunity to minister to some of the team members. While Lay Renewal teams will have a substantial number of trained and dedicated team members, they also may have some that are not as advanced on their spiritual journeys. This provides a point of identification for everyone.

The Lay Renewal Weekend focuses on deep, full, complete commitment of self to Jesus Christ. The term "total commitment" often is used throughout the weekend. It is defined: "committing as much of myself as I know, to as much of Christ as I understand now."

Through large and small group sharing, the team members demonstrate openness, honesty, acceptance and personal vulnerability. The local body of believers will have four opportunities in which they are encouraged to share spiritual joys, needs or struggles. An accepting environment allows people to share or simply listen. As many people begin to take off their "spiritual masks" and allow others to see them as they really are, a response of love and caring is evident. Those who are brave enough to become transparent may find they are not alone in their struggles. A spirit of unity prevails.

Although this is not the focus, the Lay Renewal Weekend often introduces a local church to the development of new lifestyles and new relationships. Pastors often give testimonies of experiencing

the emergence of a true equipping ministry as members report the discovery of new and varied ministries. As pastor and members begin to discover the mutual ministry, the layperson becomes the minister in the community - the pastor becomes the minister to the "marketplace ministers."

The Lay Renewal Weekend demonstrates through ordinary people a new understanding of "a witness." The word "witness" becomes a noun (a person) as well as a verb (an activity). Just as this seeks to describe what the Lay Renewal Weekend is, there are just a few things it is not. The emphasis will not cure all the problems in the church. It does not teach a technique of soul winning, but rather provides an example of what full, honest, vulnerable commitment looks like in the lives of "everyday" people.

In short, on a Lay Renewal Weekend the church discovers what they have in Christ, what they have in each other and they begin to celebrate and share it!

WHAT CAN I EXPECT TO HAPPEN?

After three-to-six months of preparation by your church with as many people as possible involved in planning and praying, the weekend arrives.

On Friday night the coordinator and team members will have an "all-church" supper with the members of your church. The church and team then share a time of praising the Lord through music. The coordinator will ask some of the team members to share about some part of their lives. School children will go with visiting children's team members to their learning activities. Adults and youth have a time of small group sharing separately, followed by a time of review together. Adjournment is about 9:30 p.m. Team members go home with host families for the evening.

On Saturday morning there are coffees for adults in the homes of the host church members. Children have activities at the church under the guidance of the children's coordinators. The youth gather with youth team members for a youth outing led by the youth coordinator.

At noon the adults return to the church (or some other agreed upon place). Usually, separate luncheons are planned for the men and women, with the children bringing sack lunches. The youth have a cookout away from the church. Following lunch, the men and women have separate meetings where team members and local church members share what God is doing in their lives. All groups are dismissed by 2 p.m.

Saturday night all groups meet together in a general session, Again God speaks through music and testimonies. Following this, the different groups assemble - children with their coordinators and youth and adults have small group sharing. Following the small group time, a time of commitment is usually planned in the worship center.

On Sunday morning the team leads the youth and adults in the Sunday School, and the coordinator provides the leadership for the morning worship hour. An invitation to commitment is issued. After a brief lunch, the visitors leave.

On Sunday evening the local people join in a "Commitment and Evaluation Service." This service is led by the general chairperson of the LRW. The body is encouraged to share how the Lord has spoken to them through the weekend experience. This is one of the most meaningful services of the weekend. During this final service, the Spiritual Growth Group passes out commitment and evaluation forms, which are filled out immediately. A section of this form gives the people an opportunity to be included in future small groups where the journey continues.

Chapter 3: Preparations for the Lay Renewal Weekend

Preparation is the major key to a successful Lay Renewal Weekend. The responsibility of planning and promoting this initial renewal experience lies with the pastor and the general chairman. The pastor must be committed to the renewal process if it is to be successful.

INTRODUCING RENEWAL POSSIBILITIES

Ideally, the pastor and key church leaders should have a good understanding of the Church Renewal Journey as the church considers the possibilities of initiating the renewal process.

Your scheduling office has trained a number of volunteer Renewal Journey Consultants who can help church leadership understand the Church Renewal Journey. A pastor can request a consultant to visit with the church leadership by calling or e-mailing the Church Renewal Journey team at the North American Mission Board at 800 634-2462 ext 6481 or email crj@namb.net

The Renewal Consultant will visit the church and spend time in a "listening dialogue" with the pastor and church leadership. An Overview of the Church Renewal Journey can be presented to the church body on a Sunday night or Wednesday night service. A Search and Discovery Group is formed if the pastor or church body desires to explore the renewal possibilities further.

PREPARATION FOR RENEWAL THROUGH PRAYER

If at all possible, plans for embarking on the Church Renewal Journey should include some type of church-wide prayer emphasis during the early Initiating Phase or about 12 to 14 weeks prior to the Lay Renewal Weekend.

The Praying Men Seminar is available from Lifeway. It is conducted by use of video tape, or by a seminar leader or both.

WEEKEND SCHEDULING

The LRW should be scheduled only after the Search and Discovery Group, the deacons, church council and church membership agree to schedule the event. Once it is decided, the Registration Form is sent to the appropriate state scheduling office. (A form may be secured from the scheduling office or a renewal consultant, or the form can be filled out online at www.churchrenewaljourney.net)

In most states the scheduling office is the State Evangelism or Brotherhood Director. States that do not have a scheduling office should contact the North American Mission Board, Church Renewal Journey Ministry, 2400 North Point Parkway, Alpharetta, GA 30004, 800 634-2462 ext 6481 or e-mail us at crj@namb.net.

PLACING THE LAY RENEWAL WEEKEND ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR

The LRW is best placed into the life of a congregation as a separate and distinct emphasis, which involves far more than just the Weekend. The best results occur when the LRW is seen as the initiating event in the Church Renewal Journey.

For this reason, the LRW should be placed on the church calendar at a time when there is a minimum of six weeks before and six weeks after the weekend where no other major church-wide emphasis is planned. It is imperative that the small groups, which will be a natural outgrowth of the LRW, be given sufficient time to become well established. These initial groups will be meeting for a total of 13 meetings following the Weekend before new groups are formed. The groups should begin to function immediately after the Weekend

SELECTING LOCAL LEADERSHIP

Once the Weekend has been scheduled, the church should select the best leadership available. If the pastor appoints a Search and Discovery Group after having the Overview presented to the church, this group should become the Spiritual Growth Group. Some also might be members of other groups. A committed local leadership team is needed to insure a good LRW and a positive follow-up. The persons selected should give careful attention to the details for preparation.

The Weekend preparation organization consists of a general chairperson and 13 groups. Before the coordinator makes the first visit to help plan the weekend, the general chairperson should be selected. Together, the pastor and general chairperson select chairpersons for all 13 Preparation Groups and decide whether each of the group leaders will select their own members or whether these two will assist in enlisting all the group members.

VISITING TEAM LEADERSHIP

The scheduling office and/or church journey consultant will assign a coordinator to your church. (If a specific coordinator is requested, every effort will be made to honor the request.) After a coordinator is assigned, it is the church's responsibility to issue an invitation to visit the church to initiate planning for the weekend. The coordinator will help determine the number of team members to be invited.

The assigned coordinator will secure a *youth coordinator*, *children's coordinator* and *music leader* to help lead during the Weekend. If the church is to make provisions for the children, the coordinator will advise the church at the initial planning meeting.

THE ROLES OF THE PASTOR AND GENERAL CHAIRPERSON

The pastor and general chairperson should form a close working team throughout the preparation period. They select the chairperson of the 13 groups (or 15 groups if they decide to use the two optional groups) and they must work closely with the group chairpersons. Not only do they delegate responsibility, but they check periodically to be sure each function is being performed properly. Youth as well as adults should be included in the groups where possible. Youth representatives are especially needed in the Spiritual Growth, Prayer, Housing, Food and Welcome and Transportation Groups.

Pastors are encouraged to serve on the Spiritual Growth Group but not as chairman. Planning how the church will respond to the moving of the Holy Spirit during and after the Lay Renewal Weekend is critical.

The Chairperson of the Spiritual Growth Group cannot accomplish his/her responsibilities without the close input of the pastor. What type and how many small groups are formed and when they begin their meetings and who will facilitate the leadership of these small groups, requires the pastor's assistance.

We are always praying for God to send a mighty movement of His Holy Spirit, but fail many times to plan for what the church and it's members are suppose to do when He does honor and answer our

prayers. One of the main purposes of the Church Renewal Journey is to encourage the church to develop a future vision and plans what and how the church will respond in order to continue the Journey, and not have the church members sit back down on the church pews in only a few months after the Renewal Weekend.

The pastor and general chairperson each send a letter to the congregation to encourage attendance and to advise of the schedule for the Lay Renewal Weekend. They both work closely with the coordinator in all phases of the church's preparations to anticipate any problems that might arise and assure a well prepared Weekend.

THE ORGANIZATION MEETING

Once the leadership for the Lay Renewal Weekend has been selected, a date is set for the organizational meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to describe the LRW, to acquaint each group with its responsibilities and to give an overview of the preparation so that the activities may be properly coordinated. Copies of the Preparation Groups responsibilities are available on the Resource Website and should be printed out and be given to all chairpersons prior to their meeting with instructions on the portions they are to review. The general chairperson and pastor may direct this meeting, or they may invite the coordinator to do so.

Many churches and coordinators have found it very beneficial to hold a Renewal Retreat with the leadership for the LRW. The pastor and other staff members of the church, the general chairperson and the chairpersons of the 13 groups should attend this retreat. Members of each group may also be included. The retreat, held in the church or other selected location, lasts about seven hours. It includes spiritual preparation as well as group responsibilities.

The retreat will introduce the concept of renewal through small group experiences and testimonies given by visiting team members. "Renewal" will begin to happen at this retreat for many of the persons involved in preparation. Their resultant desire for God to renew the church will greatly motivate their preparation.

The LRW is structured so that one experience builds on another. A person attending only the Friday night session but no others until Sunday morning may not fully appreciate what is happening. All publicity and promotion of the LRW should emphasize total participation for the entire time. People should be challenged to give 42 hours to an experience which may be the most meaningful they have ever had. Be careful not to discourage those who can attend only one of two sessions. Renewal has occurred to many that have attended only a portion of the weekend.

Stress that the LRW is for the entire church body. Families and individuals need to be aware that the children will have special renewal activities as well as the youth. Youth need to know that other young people will be coming to share with them.

FOLLOW-UP

The LRW will be the beginning of new things in the life of the church. The pastor and leadership of the church should make preparation for the new life that will emerge from the experience.

The Spiritual Growth Group may well be the most important group of the entire emphasis. A spiritually mature person should be chosen as chairman of this group.

SOME BENEFITS

1. As a result of the LRW you can expect a new depth of Christian love and fellowship to develop. You can confidently expect a substantial number of people to have a deeper awareness of God and others and for them to be self-giving, caring and open.
2. You can expect from the LRW a focus on personal commitment. The coordinator and team members present commitment to Christ in a positive, appealing manner. Many people have the mistaken idea that Christian commitment is "something to give up." Such an erroneous view elicits a negative response and blocks a genuine response of love. Through love, acceptance and affirmation, people can move toward commitment in their own way and at their own pace.
3. You can expect the Lay Renewal Weekend to stimulate a deeper desire for involvement in the life of the church. In almost every church there are always more jobs to do than there are people to do them. But when people really have a vision of the living church, they seek opportunities to represent Christ to others and to the world.
4. The benefit of the Lay Renewal Weekend is a total membership visitation. Doubtless there are members in your church who have not been contacted by the church for a number of months. Some would dare say the last time they were contacted by the church was to make a pledge to the budget. By following carefully the detailed preparation, each person in your church will be contacted three separate times and given a personal invitation to:
 - (1) A dinner on Friday evening
 - (2) A Coffee Group on Saturday morning
 - (3) A luncheon and a men's or women's meeting on Saturday
 - (4) In addition to these contacts, there will be a number of announcements by letter and bulletin.
5. A result of your LRW is that every person who participated will get a new vision of the church.
 - Each person who participated will see laypeople - men, women, and youth - performing a significant ministry in the church. The laypeople will be talking about Christ and their relationship to Him. They will be listening to the church members as they share their deepest feelings and concerns. They will be offering prayer and extending love with a deep feeling that Jesus Christ has called them into his ministry.
 - As a result of your church's encounter with these vital persons, there will be new friendships. You will probably hear someone in your congregation say, "What we experienced during the LRW must have been very much like the early church."
 -
6. As a result of your LRW, members in your congregation will discover joy - joy in being God's people and joy in giving themselves to Christ and to others. They will discover this through their interaction with the visiting lay team members and through the rich discovery of new friends in the congregation.
7. The LRW can bring a new depth of personal renewal, a new focus on personal commitment, the release of motivation for work and ministry, the visitation of the total membership, the beginning of a new vision for the church in the 20th century and person joy. **THE CHURCH RENEWAL JOURNEY** will be under way!

CHAPTER 4: PREPARATION GROUPS

Preparation for the Lay Renewal Weekend is centered in the work of 13 groups. A brief description of each group's responsibilities is presented in the chapter. Detailed list of suggestions and a checklist for each group are in Exhibits 12-13M.

The groups are:

1. Spiritual Growth Group
2. Prayer Group
3. Housing Group
4. Welcome & Transportation Group
5. Attendance Group
6. Coffee Hostess Group
7. Correspondence Group
8. Publicity Group
9. Literature Group
10. Youth Group
11. Children's Group
12. Nursery Group
13. Food Group

Optional Groups

14. Seniors Group
15. Facilities Group

Each of these groups has a specific function to perform. Each function must be completely and fully carried out for the weekend experience to have its greatest value. Remember, the positive, on-going results of a Lay Renewal Weekend are in direct proportion to the effectiveness and thoroughness of the preparation.

PREPARATION GROUP MEETINGS

The group approach introduces the type of group process used on and after the LRW to those involved in the preparation process! Each group involved in the preparation is encouraged to function more as a "share group" than as a committee carrying out a duty. They will find that in the "doing" or preparation, a real sense of renewal can begin.

Using this manual as a resource, each group leader should meet with his group regularly. (The pastor and general chairperson must meet with all the group leaders regularly.) A possible meeting format for each group meeting, and group leader's meetings, could follow this schedule, allowing one-third of the time devoted to each area:

- 1/3. Bible Study and Devotions
- 1/3. Praying and sharing of each group member's expectations, concerns, needs and victories. Praying for each other and for God's guidance for the group.
- 1/3. Planning and carrying out the specific responsibilities of the group.

The brief Bible study time could focus on examples of renewal in people's lives: Jacob, Moses, David, Peter or John Mark. Promises from the Word that illustrates God's desire to renew His people could be shared. At each meeting, someone should be selected to review group responsibilities and progress made to date.

Sharing should focus on anticipation of the weekend, personal needs of individuals in the group and other concerns. A good format would be to follow the "Acts in Prayer" booklet format available from Lifeway Stores. (Lifeway ISBN 080549209-7)

Prayer times should focus on the task and needs of the group, the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in the planning and preparation for the Weekend, and personal burdens. A list of known unsaved people should be made available to each preparation group. Prayer should include each of these. Do not make this "around the circle" sentence prayer. These prayer times should be times when people pray spontaneously and conversationally as they are led.

Many significant renewal experiences have come from these group meetings. Groups gain a vision that God's Spirit will awaken the church to spiritual vitality and new life through sharing and seeing the answers to prayers concerning the needs for housing, coffee hosts, etc.

THE PASTOR'S ROLE IN THE CHURCH PREPARATION

The pastor is the key person in preparing and motivating the people in the church to look forward to a significant work of God in the life of the church. He will, of course, be involved in the investigating stage of The Church Renewal Journey; seeking the mind of the Lord in deciding to lead the church into the process of renewal. The pastor should plan to lead the church on the entire Church Renewal Journey.

The pastor will select the general chairperson. They will select the 13 Group Chairpersons. The pastor and other staff members should be very involved in the decision making that affects the LRW, meeting regularly with the leadership to help make decisions and give support. They should be quite familiar with all of the preparation materials.

But, the pastor should not try to coordinate the planning of the LRW. Nor should any other staff member be given the task. The impact on the membership of the church will be much greater when the leadership comes from the laity.

The pastor should communicate regularly with the general chairperson to give guidance to the preparation tasks. He will stay in touch with the coordinator to communicate special needs or problems encountered along the way.

The pastor will prepare the church to receive the renewal which God desires for the church through his ministry of the Word, through his correspondence to the church and through his obvious desire for God to work through the LRW.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF PASTORS

1. Select General Chairperson
2. Advise and cooperate with the general chairperson in assuring that all preparation responsibilities are completed as planned and involved the church staff in the preparation process (see General Chairperson's role in Exhibit 12).
3. Direct part of teaching/preaching to spiritual renewal incorporating concepts from "The Purpose Driven Life", "Forth Day of Community", "Master Life", "Prayer Life", etc.
4. With the chairperson of the Spiritual Growth Group, plan for the formation of small groups following the Weekend (see Exhibit 13A in the Lay Renewal Weekend Preparation Manual LRWPM).
5. Send the scheduling office an evaluation of the Lay Renewal Weekend (Exhibit 17 in the LRWPM).
6. Channel the Spiritual Growth Group in preparation for the Lay Ministry Weekend.
7. Plan and conduct Body life Reporting Services following the LRW
8. Reconvene the Spiritual Growth Group two weeks after the LRW.
9. Contact the consultant and arrange a post-weekend visit.

THE GENERAL CHAIRPERSON'S ROLE IN PREPARATION

The primary responsibility of the general chairperson for the Lay Renewal Weekend is to coordinate all the planning and preparation needed to set the stage for God to renew His church. The general chairperson works closely with the pastor, other staff members and the 13 preparation groups and is the liaison between youth and children's coordinators and the coordinator and the church in making the necessary preparations.

This person should be deeply committed to the Lord and His church, and have a strong desire and expectation for real renewal from God. The person should have the gift of administration and be able to lead others. The membership should know this person as one who is respected by others.

The general chairperson will probably be a person who was involved in "investigating phase" of the renewal journey. Preparation materials should be studied carefully as soon as they arrive. The general chairperson should work closely with the pastor in selecting the leaders of each group. The spiritual gifts of each individual should be considered.

It would be well for the general chairperson to attend a LRW in another church prior to the scheduled LRW. The consultant or coordinator will be able to assist in doing this. This will greatly enhance understanding of the renewal concept and in anticipating preparation problems.

The general chairperson should introduce the "Group Approach" as described under the heading, "Group Meetings," to the 13 Group Leaders. Using such an approach will create a desire for church-wide renewal among the preparation groups.

The general chairperson will lead the Sunday Evening Evaluation Service, consulting with the pastor and the Spiritual Growth Group Chairperson in making plans for this exciting conclusion to the LRW.

(For more details and a checklist of suggestions see Exhibit 12 in LRW Preparation Manual)

The next few pages will have a brief explanation of the duties of each of the Preparation Groups, which is to help in recruiting Preparation Group Chairpersons.

A much more detailed list of the responsibilities of the General Chairperson and of the Preparation Groups are listed as Exhibits 12, 13A through 13M in the LRWPM.

GROUP 1 - SPIRITUAL GROWTH GROUP

This group is charged with a number of responsibilities which guide and influence the renewal process in the church. The Search and Discovery Group, if used in the Investigating Phase, should become the Spiritual Growth Group for the preparation of the LRW. This group also assists in the continuing spiritual growth of the church membership through small groups in the weeks and months following the Lay Renewal Weekend. The pastor and other professional church staff members should also be a part of this group.

The Spiritual Growth Group is responsible for four different aspects of the Lay Renewal Weekend:

1. Developing personal devotional life among the members before the LRW.
2. Initiating small groups after the LRW.
3. Assisting the pastor in providing training for the leadership of these small groups.
4. Providing continuity for on-going Church Renewal Journey Process by setting a possible date for Lay Ministry Weekend if church decides to continue the Journey

(For more details and a checklist of suggestions see Exhibit 13A in LRW Preparation Manual)

GROUP 2 - PRAYER GROUP

The Prayer Group's primary responsibility will be to saturate the Lay Renewal Weekend in prayer. Unless the entire effort is submerged in prayer, the results will be shallow and temporary.

Members of the Prayer Group should be committed prayer warriors who realize that God is the only source of spiritual renewal. They should be people who can lead others by example to spend time with the Father and to seek a fresh breath of His Spirit in their lives and in the life of the church.

The Prayer Group has specific tasks that focus on giving prayer support to the Lay Renewal Weekend:

1. Encourage the church to have a prayer seminar four to eight weeks prior to the Lay Renewal Weekend.
2. Encourage church-wide prayer for renewal for an extended time through prayer groups, home prayer meetings and a prayer reminder card for each home.
3. Develop a current prayer list with specific needs/burdens of the church family, unsaved people, etc. to share with the other preparation groups and with the church.
4. Assist in the plans for teaching/distributing the booklet, "Acts in Prayer."
5. Make plans for having a 24-hour prayer vigil at the church the day before the Weekend begins.

(For more details and a checklist of suggestions see Exhibit 13B in LRW Preparation Manual)

GROUP 3 - HOUSING GROUP

The Housing Group will need to provide housing for couples, single adults, and the youth on the visiting team. This group should meet as soon as possible and begin to pray for God's direction in the selection of homes in which the members of the visiting team are to stay.

God provides wonderful works through the team as they stay in the homes of members over the LRW. The group will want to pray earnestly over the homes chosen. Team members should generally be placed in the homes of persons who are less active in the church. Keeping someone in their home will help insure that a family will participate in the LRW themselves.

(For more details and a checklist of suggestions see Exhibit 13C in LRW Preparation Manual)

GROUP 4 - WELCOME AND TRANSPORTATION GROUP

As the name implies, this group will be greeting everyone who participates in the Lay Renewal Weekend - the team members and the membership. This group has responsibility for helping blend the team and church members into a friendly, relaxed fellowship for the LRW. They will provide transportation as it is needed, but the main transportation responsibility will be to arrange transport of the team members to the Saturday morning coffees. It is possible for one large group to handle both responsibilities in most churches. In large churches, the group may want to consider forming two subgroups to concentrate on each task.

The Welcome and Transportation Group will make arrangements to meet and transport any team members who will arrive by plane or other public transportation. More often, team members come in their own cars. Youth team members, who sometimes do not have cars, usually manage very well by riding to and from church with their host families. This group should publicize a telephone number to be called if transportation is needed by either a team member or a local church member. This number could be included at the bottom of the schedule for the LRW.

(For more details and a checklist of suggestions see Exhibit 13D in LRW Preparation Manual)

GROUP 5 - ATTENDANCE GROUP

The task of the Attendance Group is to obtain maximum participation from everyone during the entire 42 hours for the LRW experience. This group will be involved in encouraging every member of the church and every person on the current list of prospects to participate. Essentially, every member should be contacted a number of times through the following means:

1. Two letters from the pastor to the membership.
2. A letter from the general chairperson to the membership which includes a schedule of the LRW.
3. Publicity in the weekly church mail-outs.
4. A personal invitation from a coffee hostess.
5. A personal invitation with delivery of "Acts in Prayer."

(For more details and a checklist of suggestions see Exhibit 13E in LRW Preparation Manual)

GROUP 6 - COFFEE HOSTESS GROUP

The Coffee Hostess Group is responsible for organizing informal coffee sharing groups in the homes of church members throughout the areas of the community to which the church relates. The sharing groups are led by the team members. The coffees are co-hosted by the couple having the coffee in their home and another couple, when possible. The other couple might be selected from those members who might not otherwise attend.

(For more details and a checklist of suggestions see Exhibit 13F in LRW Preparation Manual)

GROUP 7 - CORRESPONDENCE GROUP

The Correspondence Group will work with the church staff to prepare, duplicate and mail or collate the necessary correspondence items for the Lay Renewal Weekend. Essentially, the responsibilities involve:

1. Assist the pastor in inviting team members.
2. Receive the reply cards of the team members and advise the Housing Group and the Welcome and Transportation Group of the acceptances.
3. Duplicate and mail three letters to the congregation about the LRW: two from the pastor and one from the general chairperson with a schedule.
4. Print materials needed for team member instructions as requested by the coordinator. Duplicate other materials needed for the LRW small group participants.
5. Print materials needed by other preparation groups, if requested.
6. Mail a "welcome" letter with enclosures to the team members who accept the church's invitation.
7. Correspond with the visitors after the LRW to express appreciation and report results.

(For more details and a checklist of suggestions see Exhibit 13G in LRW Preparation Manual)

GROUP 8 - THE PUBLICITY GROUP

The Publicity Group provides the maximum amount of exposure for this "different" weekend experience. The goal encourages the entire church family (adults, youth and children) to participate all weekend. Other groups will be involved in personally inviting each member of the church family, while the Publicity Group keeps the coming LRW constantly before the church body through various means.

This group certainly should work with other groups who are involved in "designing" and distributing materials that publicize the LRW.

1. The Prayer Group will be sending a tabletop prayer reminder card to each church family. The Publicity Group could offer assistance in design.
2. A booklet, "Acts in Prayer," may be personally delivered by the Attendance Group, deacons or some other group.
3. Should such a visitation campaign be planned, a publicity piece needs to be ready to distribute with the booklets.
4. The Publicity Group may wish to assist in this visitation task.

(For more details and a checklist of suggestions see Exhibit 13H in LRW Preparation Manual)

GROUP 9 - LITERATURE GROUP

The Literature Group is responsible for encouraging the church family to read good inspirational and motivational materials. It is suggested that each preparation group chairperson for the Lay Renewal Weekend receive the On Mission Magazine available from NAMB.

A selection of books will be sent to the church upon request from the Brotherhood Commission along with other preparation materials. The Literature Group should plan for the most effective way these books can be used to encourage spiritual growth among the membership. The Spiritual Growth Group has been charged with the responsibility of encouraging the members to develop a personal devotional life. It would be well for these "renewal" books to be a part of that emphasis.

(For more details and a checklist of suggestions see Exhibit 13I in LRW Preparation Manual)

GROUP 10 - YOUTH GROUP

The Youth Group is comprised of adults and youth that will be involved in the preparation and promotion phase of the Lay Renewal Weekend. Adults usually are free to attend the adults' sessions during the weekend. The coordinator will recommend an experienced youth coordinator who will lead the activities for the youth all weekend, with the help of a group of youth team members.

The Youth Group's responsibilities include encouraging the young people of the church to participate in the Weekend. They should stress that they will be led by other young people, who are facing similar problems in their lives. For some of the young people, this will be the first time they meet peers who are fully committed to Jesus. Encourage some of the youth group to request a team member to stay in their home.

(For more details and a checklist of suggestions see Exhibit 13J in LRW Preparation Manual)

GROUP 11 - CHILDREN'S GROUP

The LRW should be exciting for the participant's children. If the children are happy and satisfied, the parents will be encouraged to attend all the sessions.

The coordinator will enlist a children's coordinator to lead children in grades 1-6. They should ask the coordinator for the name, address and phone number of the children's coordinator and establish contact as soon as possible. It is possible that a children's coordinator will not be assigned by the coordinator to work with the team. In this instance, the coordinator will assist the Children's Group to prepare for the arranged activities for the children.

(For more details and a checklist of suggestions see Exhibit 13K in LRW Preparation Manual)

GROUP 12 - NURSERY GROUP

The Nursery Group is responsible for providing child care for children below the first grade. Provision should be made for child care for all sessions during the Weekend: Friday evening, Saturday morning and afternoon until approximately 2-2:30 p.m., Saturday evening and Sunday morning and evening.

The responsibility of the Nursery Group is to secure workers for child care from outside sources. Do not use church members, if at all possible. The membership should be free to attend each session of the LRW.

(For more details and a checklist of suggestions see Exhibit 13L in LRW Preparation Manual)

GROUP 13 - FOOD GROUP

The Food Group will have the responsibility of coordinating meals provided by the church. Team members' meals are provided either in the homes, at the church or otherwise for all the meals while they are there (six in all). The entire church membership is usually included in two or more. All church families inviting team members into their homes are responsible for meals not provided by the church. This is usually only two breakfast meals.

The Food Group should participate in each session of the LRW. They should plan with this priority in mind. The Food Group should have informal meals by using paper plates, cups and napkins and throw-away utensils. Considering past meals for large groups at the church, they should plan the menus; arrange serving areas and give instructions to the church family. They should enlist sufficient help for a quick clean-up allowing everyone involved to go immediately to the session.

(For more details and a checklist of suggestions see Exhibit 13M in LRW Preparation Manual)

Optional Preparation Groups

The pastor and General Chairperson will need to consider if the following two Preparation Groups are needed for their church.

GROUP 14 – SENIORS GROUP

Some times the seniors members of a church will not understand that the Lay Renewal Weekend is for the entire church and for all age members. If this is a concern, we suggest adding this special group.

The Seniors Group should be chaired by a senior person or couple, actively involved in the senior activities of the church.

This group's responsibilities will be to plan activities such as cottage prayer meetings that would help the seniors understand that the Lay Renewal Weekend is for them also. They should encourage all seniors to participate and may want to work out transportation for any who could not come otherwise.

This group could promote the Lay Renewal Weekend through the Seniors Sunday School Classes and at other senior's meeting.

GROUP 15 – FACILITIES GROUP

Many churches now have their sound equipment under lock and key and we prefer to have an authorized church member present for the operation of their equipment.

This group is responsible for having someone available to operate the church's sound system during the sessions of the Lay Renewal Weekend.

They will need to have the microphones, CD or cassette player set up and ready for the different sessions of the weekend. The sound system will need to be on and operating for the Men's and Ladies Meetings following the Saturday lunch, when needed. The chairman of this group would not necessarily need to know how to operate the sound system, but would scheduled someone to be present that could and would have a key to the system when it is locked. Microphones and stands will be needed to be set up for the Sunday Night Evaluation Service.

This group should also help with setting up tables and chairs for the meals Friday night, Saturday Lunch and Saturday night. They would also need to place the chairs in the class rooms in circles in preparation for the small group meeting during the Lay Renewal Weekend.

GLOSSARY

Acts in Prayer: This is a prayer study booklet. A copy of the prayer guide is suggested to be given to each church family to help them prepare through prayer for the LRW. *Acts in Prayer is available from Lifeway Stores ISBN 080549209-7*

Children's Coordinator: A person designated by the coordinator to supervise the activities of children during the LRW. This person may bring other team members to assist them depending on the number of children. This coordinator will be responsible for the teaching and craft activities for the first through sixth grade children. Some churches place the K5 with the Children and the 6th graders with the youth. Crafts and Bible teaching will be planned for these ages and children below the first grade (or K5) should not be placed with the children but with the nursery.

Church Renewal Journey: A church discipleship process consisting of two or more Renewal Weekends lead by a visiting coordinator and team.

Consultant: Conducts Consultations with local churches interested in the Renewal Journey, serves as an advisor throughout the Church Renewal Journey and serves as resource person for Renewal Workshops, Seminars, Retreats, etc. Some states will have the Weekend Coordinator serve as the Consultant also.

Coordinator: A person, normally selected by the scheduling office, recommended to the church and then invited by the pastor to coordinate the entire LRW.

General Chairperson: A local church member selected by the pastor who works directly with the pastor and the Coordinator in the preparation for the LRW.

Group Chairperson: A person selected by pastor and general chairperson to direct the work of one of the 13 Preparation Groups that plans, promotes and presents the LRW.

Ice Breaker: A fun question used to open a small group meeting to allow persons to "open up" and get to know each other.

Lay Renewal: A term used to designate a lay led process of awakening a church to a renewed understanding of who we are as Christians and whose we are as God's children and what difference that should make in our lives as individuals and as a church body.

Lay Renewal Weekend (LRW): A Friday through Sunday experience in which a group of laypeople, including youth, visit a local church to share their faith in large and small groups.

Lay Ministry Weekend (LMW): The "second weekend" or "equipping phase" of the Church Renewal Journey that teaches that all church members are called, gifted, equipped for service and helps each person to discover their unique SHAPE for ministry. This weekend usually follows the LRW in 6 to 12 months.

Relational: To be immediately present and involved with others in their struggles and victories at a deeper level than "church socials."

Renewal: "Renewal" has to do with individual and corporate acceptance of the New Testament idea that each Christian has been called and gifted for ministry. It seeks to discover, implement and encourage the one who is seeking to take Christ and His call seriously in daily life.

Scheduling Office: Either the State Convention Baptist Men's or Evangelism Office where a church requests assistance in scheduling and conducting a LRW.

Sharing Groups: Groups which meet to study, share and pray about their trials and triumphs in the Christian life. They maybe referred to as "Journey Groups or "Discipleship Groups."

Team Member: An adult or youth who has been invited by a church to visit that church on a designated weekend, at their own expense, to share their faith through brief testimony and facilitate.

Youth Coordinator: A person invited by the coordinator to supervise the activities of the local church youth during a LRW. The youth coordinator may bring several assistants with them depending on the number of youth expected to attend the LRW.

Youth Team Member: A young person who has been invited by the coordinator to serve as a visiting team member during the LRW. This maybe a son, daughter or grandchild of an invited adult team member. They may work with the Youth Coordinator as an assistant.



LAY RENEWAL WEEKEND SCHEDULE

(This suggested schedule should be adjusted to fit church needs.)

THURSDAY

5:00pm 24-Hour **PRAYER VIGIL** begins at church.

FRIDAY

5:00-6:00pm Visiting Team Prayer & Preparation Meeting with Pastor & Home Chairperson.
6:30pm Nursery opens.
6:30-7:30pm Fellowship Dinner for entire church family in fellowship hall.
7:30-8:15pm General Session: Children, Youth, & Adults meet in Sanctuary.
8:15-9:00pm Planned activities for Children & Youth: Adult Discussion Groups.
9:00pm Group Reports and Closing Prayer Time: everyone meets back in Sanctuary.

SATURDAY

7:15am Host/guests breakfast in home of host family.
8:30-9:30am Visiting Team Prayer & Preparation Meeting with Pastor & Home Chairperson.
9:30am Nursery opens, children & youth activities, drivers for coffees meet at church.
10:00-11:30am Coffees in church member's homes for adults.
12:00-1:00pm Church-wide lunch followed by separate Men's and Women's Meetings (Youth sometimes have a cookout or lunch away from church).
2:00-5:00pm Free time
5:00-6:00pm Visiting Team Prayer & Preparation Meeting with Pastor & Home Chairperson.
6:30pm Nursery opens.
6:30-7:15pm Fellowship Dinner for entire church family.
7:30-8:15pm General Session: children, youth, & adults meet in Sanctuary.
8:15-9:00pm Planned activities for children & youth: Adult discussion groups.
9:00pm Closing prayer time: everyone meets back in Sanctuary.

SUNDAY

8:30-9:30am Visiting Team Prayer & Prep Meeting with Pastor & Home Chairperson.
9:45-10:45am Sunday School Hour.
11:00-12:00pm Morning Worship Service
12:30pm Lunch for visiting team members and host families. Visiting team leaves for home after lunch.
6:00pm **Church-wide Evaluation Service** (For entire church, no other church activities). The church has a chance to openly discuss and evaluate the weekend and what the Holy Spirit has said to them. This is the *highlight* of the weekend.



EXHIBIT 2

Seven Hour Retreat Renewal Spiritual Awakening and Preparation Group Training

8:30- 9:00am	Breakfast and fellowship.
9:00- 9:15am	Opening thoughts, introduction of visiting couples.
9:15- 9:30am	Instructions and preparation for "The One Hour Quiet Time."
9:30- 10:30am	Each person spends an hour going through <i>TIME ALONE WITH GOD</i> - One hour prayer study.
10:30- 10:45am	Coffee break.
10:45- 11:00am	Testimony of Coordinator.
11:00- 12:15am	Small groups praying and sharing led by team members.
12:15- 1:00pm	Lunch and fellowship.
1:00- 1:30pm	Testimonies by team members.
1:30- 2:00pm	Sharing by Preparation Group.
2:00- 3:30pm	Review or introduction of the LRW Schedule and training and discussion of the responsibilities of each Preparation Group.

EXHIBIT 3

Lay Renewal Weekend Planning Calendar

WEEK 20-18

- Consultant meets with pastor and several church members for Church Renewal Journey (CRJ) Overview

WEEK 18-16

- Consultant presents CRJ overview to church during Sunday night or Wednesday night service (optional)

WEEK 16-14

- Church votes or decides to initiate the Church Renewal Journey by scheduling a Lay Renewal Weekend.
- Pastor selects local church General Chairperson. State office assigns Coordinator to coordinate weekend

WEEK 14-12

- Pastor and General Chairperson select 13 Preparation Group.
- Pastor and General Chairperson set the date for the Coordinator to come to train 13 Preparation Groups.
- Each Preparation Group Chairperson should enlist 4 to 6 church members to serve on their group.
- Pastor and General Chairperson plan "Church-wide Prayer Seminar" (optional)

WEEK 10-9

- Coordinator comes to church and conducts training for 13 Preparation Groups.
- Training can be done as part of "Seven Hour Renewal Leadership Retreat" away from church (optional)

WEEK 8 – 7

- Pastor invites Coordinator to come and share testimony at the Sunday Worship Service.
- Coordinator may suggest Renewal Team Members to come and give testimony.
- *General Chairperson orders "Acts in Prayer" booklets from Lifeway or state convention.*
- Coordinator presents suggested visiting team member list to General Chairperson.
- Correspondence Group along with pastor mails or e-mails invitations to Visiting Team Members

WEEK 6

- Correspondence Group mails pastor's first letter to congregation about Lay Renewal Weekend.

WEEK 5

- Attendance Group divides church membership into groups for Saturday LRW Coffees.

WEEK 4

- Publicity Group plans for skits about LRW in Sunday School and Worship Services.
- Publicity Group begins plans for LRW Poster contest among youth and/or children (optional).

WEEK 3

- Prayer Group begins sign-up for 24 Hour Prayer Vigil.
- Correspondence Group mails out pastor's second letter to congregation (include *Acts in Prayer* booklet).
- Coffee Hostess Group completes enlisting homes to host LRW Saturday morning coffees.
- Housing Group completes enlisting church members to house visiting team.

WEEK 2

- Correspondence Group mails letter from General Chairperson to congregation, which should include a weekend schedule and prayer reminder cards from Prayer Group.
- Correspondence Group mails welcome letter to team members with a map and a schedule of LRW.

WEEK 1

- Preparation Group members give testimonies in Sunday School and Worship Service. (Optional)
- Home Prayer Meetings led members of Prayer Group (optional).
- 24 Hour Prayer Vigil begins on Thursday at 5:00pm
- Visiting Team Members arrive Friday for 5:00pm Team Meeting.

EXHIBIT 7

Guidelines for Pastor's Letter to Visiting Team Members about the Results of Lay Renewal Weekend and Evaluation Service.

1. Thank them for faithfulness and contribution.
2. Discuss your assessment and a summary of the Sunday night Evaluation Service. Be as positive as possible, but also be realistic. Give God the praise.
3. Discuss visible results surfacing during the Weekend. Especially address the following:
 - a. Sunday night Evaluation Service
 - b. Professions of faith
 - c. Rededications
 - d. Commitments
4. Evaluate those invisible results which you feel will appear as the church continues on the Renewal Journey.
5. Pastor may want to send a letter of thanks to the pastor of each team member, thanking him and the church for their role in discipling and allowing their church members to come and serve as visiting team members on this Lay Renewal Weekend. Explain some of the blessings the church received through the ministry of the visiting team member. (This is optional and will take a little more time, but will be a powerful and thoughtful way of thanking the visiting team members.)

EXHIBIT 9

Lay Renewal Commitment and Evaluation Form

Please make copies of this form for each Adult, Youth & older Children attending the Sunday night Evaluation Service
Please also inform the Weekend Coordinator of any church member interested in being a team member to another church

Personal Commitments

Because of God's work in my life this weekend, I want to share the following decisions:

- I have accepted Jesus Christ's gift of eternal life, and have received Him as my personal Lord and Savior.
- I request baptism and church membership.
- I present my life to Jesus Christ in total surrender to His Lordship.
- I desire to develop a personal quiet time with the Lord each day.
- I want to learn to share my faith in Jesus.
- I want to make the following personal commitment:

(Use back of this form if more space is needed)

Continuing Commitments

I want to embark on the Renewal journey in the following ways:

- I want to be part of a small group that meets for approximately 13 weeks for study, prayer support and ministering to each other.
- I will commit to faithfully meet with my small group over the summer months (specific day and time to be determined by the group) with the exception of family vacation times and other major events.
- I am willing to open my home for small group meetings
- I prefer to be in a group that meets at the church on Sunday or Wednesday
- I have interest in participating as a team member in future Renewal weekends at another church. (See info at bottom of page to register online.)
- I am interested in facilitating or leading a small group.

Personal Comments and Evaluations of the Weekend (Use back of this form if needed)

Future Plans

Do you think our church should continue to the next step of the Church Renewal Journey and schedule a Lay Ministry Weekend which deals with the equipping phase of the Journey? _____

If so, will you plan to participate? _____ Would you like to serve on one of the Preparation Groups for the Lay Ministry Weekend? _____ Which group or area? _____

Name: _____ Today's Date _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Telephone No. (Home): _____ (cell) _____
E-mail Address: _____
Church _____ Pastor _____
Your Birthday ____/____/____ Spouse's Name _____

You can register on our National Renewal Team Member Database on-line by going to www.churchrenewaljourney.net . Click on Team Member's Registration Form in left column. Complete the form and click on submit at the bottom of the page. If you have any questions contact us at crj@namb.net



Registration Form for **Church Renewal Journey Weekends**

PASTOR'S NAME _____ CHURCH PHONE _____

NAME OF CHURCH _____

CHURCH ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP _____

ASSOCIATION _____ NAME OF STATE CONVENTION _____

RESIDENT MEMBERSHIP _____ NUMBER OF CHURCH FAMILIES _____

AVERAGE SUNDAY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE:

ADULT _____ YOUTH _____ CHILDREN _____ NURSERY _____

CIRCLE THE TYPE OF WEEKEND YOU ARE REQUESTING:

LAY RENEWAL LAY MINISTRY MADE TO COUNT DISCIPLESHIP EXPERIENCING GOD

ACTS 1:8 CHALLENGE or other type of weekend _____

PREFERRED DATE: (please allow 3 to 6 months preparation time)

1st Choice. _____ 2nd Choice _____ 3rd Choice _____

HAS YOUR CHURCH EVER EXPERIENCED A RENEWAL WEEKEND BEFORE? _____ Approx year _____

Do you have a preference for a Consultant _____ or weekend Coordinator _____

Would you like to schedule an Overview Presentation of the Church Renewal Journey to learn more? _____
(The presentation takes approximately 45 minutes plus a few minutes for questions and answers)

Would you prefer the overview to be with the pastor and a few church leaders? (Deacons, church council, etc) _____

Possible date for an Overview Presentation _____ time _____ (there is no cost or obligation for this meeting)

Or would you prefer the Overview to be for the entire Congregation on a Sunday Night or Wednesday night _____

Sunday night Service date _____ time _____, or Wednesday night service date _____ time _____

Pastor's Signature _____ Today's Date _____

Pastor's E-mail _____

This form can be filled out online at www.churchrenewaljourney.net under the heading Renewal Weekend Application Form, or complete and fax to: Church Renewal Journey Fax 770 410-6054 or e-mail to crj@namb.net or mailed to:

Church Renewal Journey
Attn: Glenda Diehl, North American Mission Board
4200 North Point Parkway
Alpharetta, GA 30022-4176