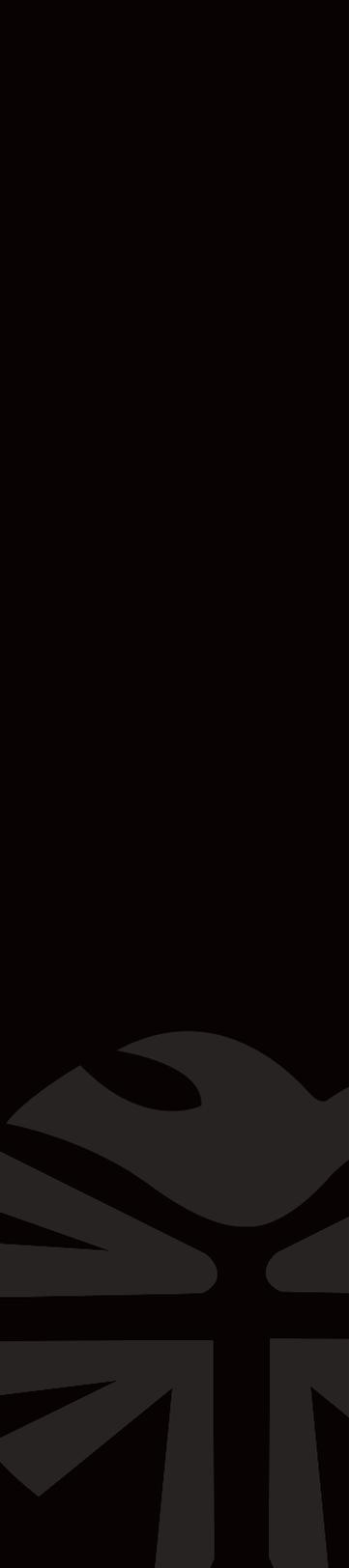


PILGRIMS ON A JOURNEY

The Church Renewal Journey
Leadership Overview





For more detailed information about each Church Renewal Journey Weekend (including applications, forms and templates), visit **namb.net/church-renewal**. For further assistance, contact your assigned visiting CRJ Coordinator or call the North American Mission Board at 800-634-2462, ext. 6481 (**crj@namb.net**).

All Scripture quotations are taken from the Holman Christian Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2009 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission. Holman Christian Standard Bible®, Holman CSB®, and HCSB® are federally registered trademarks of Holman Bible Publishers.

The North American Mission Board is a Southern Baptist Convention entity supported by the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering®.



The Church Renewal Journey Leadership Overview

Table of Contents

ONE It's About the Journey, Saint!.....	4
TWO Preparing for a Church Renewal Weekend.....	6
THREE The General Chairperson as Administrator.....	15
FOUR The Pastor as Cheerleader.....	20
FIVE The Awakening Weekend.....	22
SIX The Empowering Weekend.....	26
SEVEN The Praying Weekend.....	31
EIGHT The Sending Weekend.....	35
NINE A Final Word from Two Pilgrims on the Journey.....	38



ONE

It's About the Journey, Saint!

When you repent of your sin and trust Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, you begin a new spiritual journey. Often, God places people in your path to help in the pilgrimage—people like pastors, deacons, Sunday School teachers, family members and friends. Through their mentoring, as well as your personal Bible study, prayer and circumstances, you grow to a stronger understanding of who Christ is and how you can become more like Him.

Many believers have experienced a time in their lives when the moving of the Holy Spirit was strong and powerful. This may have been during a revival-type meeting where God's presence was strongly felt by many, or it may have been during a quiet time, with just one or two people present. Like the apostle Peter during the transfiguration, the experience is so comforting and refreshing that we pray it will continue forever. Yet, in most cases, we seem to slip back into a normal routine and let the world pull us away from an intimate relationship with God.

The Church Renewal Journey is a series of lay-led renewal weekends, designed to help believers intensify their personal walks with Jesus and with the bride of Christ. With the Holy Spirit's power, these spiritual encounters take a church on a journey to intentional evangelism, personal discipleship and kingdom focus.

The Church Renewal Journey's Rich History

When the former Home Mission Board and the former Brotherhood Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention began a new ministry called "renewal evangelism" in 1972, the word "renewal" was seldom used in the sense of "church renewal" among Southern Baptists. Yet a number of evangelical believers before that time were discovering and practicing the characteristics Southern Baptists now ascribe to.

Although each held differing viewpoints on the practical implementation of renewal principles, there were many points of agreement. The main points are valid today. They include:

- › A renewed emphasis on the doctrine of the priesthood of every believer
- › A rediscovery of the ministry of the laity



- › An interest in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the lordship of Christ
- › A renewed emphasis on a deeper personal relationship with God and with each other
- › A lifestyle of openness and obedience to Jesus
- › A renewed emphasis on involvement in the world in terms of evangelism, missions and ministry

Out of the spiritual awakening of this interdenominational renewal, a grassroots movement sprang from within Southern Baptist circles. Leaders of the Home Mission Board and the Brotherhood Commission felt this emphasis should be incorporated into Southern Baptist life, and that training and guidance should be given to those participating in the renewal. Kenneth Chafin, former director of evangelism for the Home Mission Board, asked Reid Hardin, an insurance executive from Deerfield Beach, Florida, to direct the Home Mission Board's renewal program in May 1972 and the journey began.

More than four decades later, *The Church Renewal Journey* continues. The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention is pleased to have Bob and Phyllis Foy serving as national consultants for church renewal. Together with many state coordinators and over 2,000 volunteers, they are prepared to assist you, the local church, in experiencing a fresh wind of God's Spirit that produces a renewal among His people.

How does *The Church Renewal Journey* work?

The Church Renewal Journey is a ministry provided by the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention. It consists of four weekends. Each weekend can stand alone, enabling the pastor and people to decide what works best for their congregation. A team of outside lay people (called visiting team members) work with the congregation to facilitate an event. Visiting team members come to your church at their own expense. In addition, Church Renewal Journey resources are available to you via **namb.net/church-renewal**, or for further assistance, contact your state CRJ coordinator or the North American Mission Board at 800-634-2462, ext. 6481 (or e-mail **crj@namb.net**).

These Renewal Weekends are:

1. **Awakening Weekend** - *Leading to spiritual renewal*



2. **Empowering Weekend** - *Leading to the discovery of spiritual gifts*
3. **Praying Weekend** - *Leading to praying with a kingdom focus*
4. **Sending Weekend** - *Leading to sending missionaries to the nations*

Is *The Church Renewal Journey* for your church?

Evaluating the experience that his congregation encountered when hosting an Awakening Weekend, Pastor Mark Harris from First Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, said, *“As the church shared testimonies for over four hours, I listened, watched and witnessed a movement of God’s Spirit that was filled with encouragement, healing of hurts, repentance of attitude, expressions of vision and, well, I could go on and on.”*

The Church Renewal Journey is designed to take you and your congregation on a journey—a journey where God “shows up and shows out” among His people, a journey coupled with repentance and renewal, a journey that leads kingdom people to their neighbors and to the nations.

TWO

Preparing for a Church Renewal Weekend

The Church Renewal Journey utilizes the following to facilitate a weekend:

- › **The Holy Spirit** - As teacher, comforter, admonisher and holy God
- › **The pastor** - As cheerleader, advocate and promoter
- › **The general chairperson** - As administrator and principal leader
- › **Six preparation groups** - As workers for the Renewal Weekend
- › **The visiting team members** - As trainers, facilitators and encouragers

This section of the leadership overview is designed to help you understand each person’s role. The beautiful part is that these roles can be used for every Renewal Weekend. In addition, many churches find the structure to be of great assistance in the ongoing management of the congregation.

As most know, ninety percent of an event is in the preparation, so this will help you get started.



Introducing Renewal Possibilities

Ideally, the pastor and key church leaders should have a good understanding of *The Church Renewal Journey* (CRJ) as the congregation considers initiating the renewal process. There are a number of trained renewal consultants who can help the church leadership understand the CRJ. A pastor can talk with a consultant by contacting the North American Mission Board (NAMB) *Church Renewal Journey* team at 800-634-2462, ext. 6481 or by email (crj@namb.net).

The pastor should request an overview presentation of the complete journey for the congregation by submitting a *Church Renewal Journey* application form online at namb.net/church-renewal/application. An overview does not cost or obligate the church in any way.

Weekend Scheduling

Ideally, the CRJ Weekend needs to be a distinct emphasis. For this reason, it should be scheduled during a season when no other major events are pending on the church calendar. There should be a minimum of six weeks before and six weeks after the weekend without other churchwide emphases occurring. This allows the small group Bible studies which come out of a CRJ Weekend to become well established.

The weekend should be scheduled only after the church membership agrees to it. The pastor should then resubmit the *Church Renewal Journey* application form indicating the specific weekend desired and three possible dates on which the CRJ Weekend can be held.

Visiting Team Leadership

The appropriate state renewal coordinator and/or CRJ consultant will assign a visiting coordinator. If a specific person is requested, every effort will be made to honor the request. After a visiting coordinator is assigned, it is the church's responsibility to invite him to visit the church and initiate planning for the weekend. The visiting coordinator will invite a visiting team, which will include a weekend music leader, a student coordinator and a children's coordinator, as well as a certain number of visiting adult team members for the weekend (at least one adult team member for every eight adult church members expected to attend). He will send the church's general chairperson a list of those replying that they can come, along with their contact information.



Local Leadership

Preparation and a committed local leadership team are key to a successful CRJ Weekend and a positive follow-up. The responsibility of planning and preparing the church and promoting each of the Renewal Weekends is the task of the church's general chairperson, the six preparation groups and their subgroups. The pastor's main responsibility in all of the Renewal Weekends is to pray for and encourage his church laity as they serve on the preparation teams and/or attend the event.

The pastor appoints the church's general chairperson (which could be a married couple) who should have some administrative ability and time to invest in working with the preparation groups in preparing the church for the weekend. It is very helpful if the general chairperson has access to a computer and can communicate via email.

The pastor and general chairperson need to form a close working team. The general chairperson, possibly with the help of the pastor, selects the chairpersons for the six preparation groups. The pastor and general chairperson may also assist the preparation group chairpersons with the selection of subgroup chairpersons. The pastor and the general chairperson should work closely with the visiting coordinator in all phases of the church's preparations to assure a well-prepared weekend.

Preparation Groups

The six preparation groups are:

1. *The Spiritual Growth Group*
2. *The Prayer Group*
3. *The Communications Group*
4. *The Coffee Group*
5. *The Publicity Group*
6. *The Food Group*

The four *Church Renewal Journey* Weekends always use the same six preparation groups listed above. However, some subgroups may vary with each of the weekends. Once the church decides which of the four weekends they are interested in pursuing, the church's general chairperson can go to namb.net/church-renewal and download a separate and detailed list of responsibilities for the pastor, the general chairperson, and each group and subgroup for that weekend.



Preparation Subgroups

Each preparation group chairperson is responsible for recruiting their subgroup chairpersons, one for each of the group's responsibilities. It is best to get as many church members as possible involved in the preparation. This is a great way to involve those who are not already involved in leading other church programs. Each subgroup will have only one responsibility. Each of these responsibilities should be carried out for the weekend experience to have its greatest value.

Small churches can combine some of the subgroups if necessary. Subgroups marked with an asterisk (*) can easily be combined. The group chairperson can also take one of the subgroup responsibilities. That said, remember that the goal is to involve as many church members as possible in the preparation for the weekends.

Following is a brief summary of the responsibilities of the groups and subgroups.

1. Spiritual Growth Group

- › **What's Next? Subgroup:** Plans how the church will continue the Journey after the Weekend. This should be three to five visionary church members, including the pastor. It should continue as a group after the Renewal Weekend. This subgroup will become the Mission Strategy Subgroup on the Sending Weekend.
- › ***Small Group Studies Subgroup:** Lines up several small group studies and facilitators for small groups that begin after the Renewal Weekend.
- › ***Literature Table Subgroup:** Sets up a book display table for small group studies that can be ordered or purchased by those interested in being in one of the small group studies or for anyone looking for a personal daily devotional.
- › **Daily Devotions Subgroup:** Has the responsibility of encouraging the church members to begin or maybe use the same daily devotion book or resource during the 8 - 10 preparation weeks before the Renewal Weekend.

2. Prayer Group

- › **Season of Prayer Subgroup:** Works with pastor to plan a prayer seminar or special season of prayer on a Wednesday or Sunday night prior to the Renewal Weekend.



- › **Prayer Vigil Subgroup:** Responsible for lining up a prayer vigil to be held the day before the Renewal Weekend begins. This subgroup creatively changes with prayer emphasis each weekend.
- › ***Tabletop Prayer Reminder Subgroup:** Creates a prayer reminder card and distributes the card to each church family to display on their home table to remind them to pray for the Renewal Weekend each day.
- › ***Prayer Study Booklet Subgroup:** Orders and distributes the specific Weekend prayer study booklet to each church family. The booklet could be taught by the pastor on a Wednesday or Sunday night.

3. Communication Group

- › **Correspondence Subgroup:** Works with pastor and church office in sending out pastor's welcome letters to the visiting team. This group will also send letters to church membership from pastor and general chairperson promoting the weekend.
- › **Housing Subgroup:** Enlists church members to house visiting team members for Friday and Saturday nights of the Renewal Weekend.
- › ***Welcoming Subgroup:** Makes name tags for visiting team members and different color name tags for church members. Sets up a table with simple refreshments/optional goody bags for visiting team members in team meeting room. Sets up a greeting/welcome table for church members to receive their name tags for the weekend.
- › ***Facilities Subgroup:** Sets up Sunday School rooms for small group meeting rooms and has someone lined up to work with video and sound systems in all areas during the Renewal Weekend.

4. Coffee Group (The responsibilities of the following subgroups will vary with each Weekend.)

- › **Attendance Subgroup:** Assigns all adult church members to a Saturday morning Coffee Meeting. This assignment may change during the Empowering and Sending Weekends.



- › ***Coffee Hostess Subgroup:** Enlists church members to open their homes for a Saturday morning Coffee Meeting. This may change during the Empowering and Sending Weekends.
- › ***Coffee Transportation Subgroup:** Enlists church members to drive the visiting team members to coffee meetings. This assignment may change during the Empowering and Sending Weekends.

5. Publicity Group

- › **Senior Subgroup:** Promotes Renewal Weekend to all senior Sunday School classes.
- › **Adult Subgroup:** Promotes Renewal Weekend to all adult Sunday School classes and the general congregation.
- › **Student Subgroup:** Promotes Renewal Weekend to all students and helps visiting student coordinator plan Saturday youth activities.
- › ***Children Subgroup:** Promotes Renewal Weekend to all children and helps gather weekend craft resource and snacks as requested by visiting children's coordinator.
- › ***Preschool/Nursery Subgroup:** Lines up outside workers for preschool and nursery during the weekend. Provides activities and snacks for this group and their caregivers.

6. Food Group

- › ***Meal Preparation Subgroup:** Prepares the meals during the Renewal Weekend.
- › ***Fellowship Hall Subgroup:** Works with Meal Preparation Subgroup to clean up fellowship hall after each meal. A goal for the entire Food Group is to work together so that all are given the opportunity to attend the General Sessions of the Renewal Weekend.



Preparation Group Training

The visiting coordinator and the church's general chairperson work together to set a date for the Preparation Group Training event. Recruiting the chairpersons and subgroup chairpersons and distributing handouts of detailed responsibilities is the only thing that needs to be done prior to the Preparation Group Training. No group should begin working until after this training.

The purpose of this training is to acquaint each Preparation Group with its responsibilities for the selected weekend and to inform those in attendance of the complete *Church Renewal Journey*. This training is a motivational and inspirational time for the weekend leadership and should be scheduled approximately 8 - 10 weeks prior to the actual CRJ Weekend.

The visiting coordinator will lead this training. The Preparation Group Training takes approximately two and a half hours. If possible, the pastor, staff, church's general chairperson, along with the six preparation group chairpersons and their subgroup chairpersons should attend the training. If the subgroup chairpersons have recruited anyone to assist with a responsibility for a Weekend, they should also be invited to attend the training.

Preparation Group and Subgroup Meetings

The church's general chairperson should schedule a meeting of the six preparation group chairpersons as soon as possible after the Preparation Group Training. Likewise, the six preparation group chairpersons should meet several times with their subgroup chairpersons, and, in turn, subgroup chairpersons should meet with their members. In all cases, the meetings are to function more as a "share group" than as a committee meeting. Everyone involved will find that a real sense of renewal can begin in the process of preparing for the Weekend.

Each group meeting could follow this schedule:

- › 1/3 of the meeting in devotion
- › 1/3 of the meeting in prayer
- › 1/3 of the meeting in working on their group's responsibilities

The brief devotional should focus on biblical examples of renewal, such as Jacob, Moses, David or Peter. In addition, Bible promises that show God's desire to renew His people can be shared.



Prayer times should concentrate on group tasks and the Holy Spirit's power and presence in planning for the Weekend. Be sensitive to personal prayer requests and prayer for the visiting team members. Resist using "around the circle" sentence prayers; instead, allow people to pray spontaneously and conversationally as they feel led. Many significant renewal experiences have come from these group meetings.

The final part of the meeting should be about the group's responsibilities and any progress to date. Excitement about the CRJ Weekend grows as the group experiences unity and answers to prayer.

Possible Church Expenses

The visiting coordinator and complete visiting team come at their own expense. Most resources for the weekend are free downloads; however, each weekend has some optional help items that a church may consider purchasing (prayer study booklets, small group study resources, items for the book table, etc.).

Meal Expenses

The biggest expense for the Weekend is the meals; however, many churches place a donation box at the start of the meal line and recoup all or most of these costs. Remember that the churchwide meals will include the visiting team members. The Food Group is responsible for preparing the meals, which are:

- › Churchwide dinner Friday night (this could be a covered dish)
- › Churchwide lunch Saturday (possible student lunch away from the church)
- › Churchwide dinner on Saturday night (this could be covered dish)
- › Sunday lunch for visiting team (churches may include host families or the entire church)

Postage Expenses

The pastor is responsible for writing two letters to the congregation promoting the weekend. The first letter can be sent via email or printed in the church newsletter and/or bulletin rather than mailed. The second letter should be mailed and should include an appropriate prayer study booklet for the specific CRJ Weekend.



The church's general chairperson should send a third letter to the congregation including a copy of the weekend schedule and other important information about the student and children's activities. It may also include the Tabletop Prayer Reminder created by that subgroup.

After the weekend, the pastor is responsible for sending the visiting team members a thank-you note for dedicating and investing their time and travel expense to serve as team members for the weekend. Included with the note should be a report on the Sunday night Evaluation Service.

Publicity/Awards Expenses

The church may want to print CRJ Weekend posters/banners/flyers (available as free downloads at namb.net.church-renewal) for display in the church and community. The children can have a poster contest for publicity purposes. Recognize first, second and third place winners in two age groups on a Sunday morning with ribbons or simple awards. Some churches have a multimedia contest in which students compete by making a promotional video for the CRJ Weekend. A prize or award is usually given to the winners. Winners can enter their videos in a national competition where awards are given annually. Publicity/awards expenses can incur at the discretion of the church.

Preschool and Nursery Expenses

Some churches hire professional child workers to take care of the preschool and nursery aged children during the Weekend (The visiting team will work with first through sixth grade school children.) Another possibility is to hire students from another church or work out a swap with another local church doing a CRJ Weekend close to the same time. Church members who usually work with preschool/nursery should be free to participate in the Weekend.

Name Tags and Other Possible Expenses

Name tags for visiting team members and a different colored tag for the church family could be an expense for the church. Optional goody bags/refreshments are usually inexpensive items that may be supplied by the Welcome Subgroup for visiting team members.



THREE

The General Chairperson as Administrator

The church's general chairperson has the overall responsibility of preparing the congregation for each of the *Church Renewal Journey* (CRJ) Weekends. This position is usually appointed by the pastor and works closely with the church staff. The person or couple who fills this role should have administrative abilities and ample time to devote to preparing the church for the CRJ Weekend. The general chairperson(s) should depend entirely on God's Holy Spirit to work through them to accomplish this task and should pray for God's leadership. For all general information concerning preparation for a CRJ Weekend, see Chapter 2. To download the "Detailed Preparation Group Responsibilities" document, visit namb.net/church-renewal.

Checklist for Church's General Chairperson

- Recruit one chairperson for each of the six Preparation Groups (with pastor's help if needed).
- Download and print two copies of "Preparation Group Responsibilities" for the Renewal Weekend the church has decided to schedule. Keep a complete copy, and divide the other copy into sections to be given to each of the preparation group chairpersons to hand out to the subgroup chairpersons they recruit for their teams. A handout section for the pastor is included.
- Work with the pastor and preparation group chairpersons to recruit a chairperson for each subgroup.
- Request a printout or electronic copy of the current membership/prospect list for the church. The church's general chairperson should keep a copy and give a copy to the chairperson of the Communication Group and Coffee Group to distribute to their respective subgroups: Housing, Coffee Hostess and Attendance.
- For a large church, it is especially helpful to have the current membership and prospect list sent to the attendance chairperson as an electronic document.



- Work with the pastor and visiting coordinator in determining the date and arrangements for the initial Preparation Group Training.
- Encourage all church staff and preparation group/subgroup volunteers to attend the Preparation Group Training, which should take place 8 - 10 weeks prior to the CRJ Weekend. The visiting coordinator will lead this training.
- Work with staff members to determine unique needs for different groups in the church (such as the deaf, internationals, etc.).
- Determine if outside help is needed for the nursery/preschoolers (through age five) during the CRJ Weekend.
- Work with the food group chairperson and pastor to determine how meals will be provided and how to handle any expenses that may be incurred for meals and paper products.
- Determine if the usual children's Sunday School teachers or the visiting children's coordinator will handle Sunday School.
- Contact the visiting student coordinator and discuss the needs for the students for Saturday morning.
- Work with the Publicity Group concerning craft supplies, snacks, etc. needed for the students, children and nursery.
- Keep the planning calendar, and coordinate Preparation Group activities accordingly.

Countdown

- Week 7:** Letter #1 sent from pastor to congregation (can be in a church publication or email)
- Week 6:** Pastor's welcome letter sent to team members (should be sent by the Correspondence subgroup as team members respond affirmatively and should include directions to church and weekend schedule)
- Week 5:** Church membership grouped for Coffee Meetings by Coffee Attendance subgroup
- Week 4:** Publicity posters/announcements distributed



- Week 4:** Letter #2 sent from pastor to congregation (mailed by the Correspondence Subgroup and can include the specific weekend prayer study booklet)
- Week 4:** “CRJ Music Questionnaire” completed by the church’s minister of music (worship leader) and returned to the visiting coordinator
- Weeks 4/3/2/1:** Weekly church newsletters sent that contain publicity, needs, and finally, a schedule
- Week 3:** Prayer vigil preparation begins (sign-ups, if applicable)
- Week 3:** Coffee hostesses list complete. Church membership lists distributed to coffee hostesses and church membership contacts by hostesses begins, if applicable.
- Week 3:** Student outing (if planned) finalized (location, transportation, food).
- Weeks 3/2/1:** Testimonies planned for worship services:
 - › *Week 3 (suggestion: a preparation group chairperson)*
 - › *Week 2 (suggestion: another preparation group chairperson or group member)*
 - › *Week 1 (suggestion: an outside CRJ team member recommended by the visiting coordinator)*
- Week 2:** Letter #3 sent from general chairperson (perhaps with a prayer reminder card) and schedule of the weekend
- Week 2:** Housing subgroup chairperson asks housing hosts to write a note of welcome to their guests
- Week 2:** Coffee hostess subgroup chairperson reminds hostesses to send a personal note of confirmation (with event date, time and directions to the hostesses’ home) to those who accepted the invitation to attend their coffee meeting or home prayer meeting, if applicable.
- Week 1:** Prayer vigil details completed. Copies of the appropriate “Quiet Time Alone with God” prayer guide printed and ready for prayer vigil.



Other Responsibilities

- Work with each group chairperson/subgroup chairperson as needs for each group arise.
- Hold regular group meetings for planning and prayer.
- Hold a joint meeting of all preparation group chairmen two weeks before the CRJ Weekend to go over last minute details.
- Meet with appropriate staff members to cancel the regularly scheduled meetings and duties so nothing will interrupt plans for the Sunday night Evaluation Service.
- Check with the church's worship leader to see if a choir will be used to open the Sunday worship service. Request that the pastor complete the CRJ Sunday Worship Agenda Form and gives copies to the church staff and the visiting coordinator and others involved in the opening session of the Sunday worship.
- Advise adult and student Sunday School leadership of CRJ Weekend Sunday School plans. Determine if the usual adult Sunday School teachers should be prepared to teach the lesson on Sunday morning.
- Consult with the Sunday School director about the method to be used on Sunday morning to collect offering and to count attendance. Encourage the church to omit the usual record-keeping chores if feasible.
- Determine if there will be a children's church service. If so, it will need to be handled by the church, rather than the visiting team.
- (For large churches) Work with the Communications Group to publish a floor plan with a list of small group locations. Include the location of student and children's groups.
- Plan which room will be used for the visiting team meetings and advise the Welcome Subgroup. They will place visiting team member refreshments, instruction sheets/books, name tags, welcome bags and housing assignments on a table in the room for distribution as the team members arrive on Friday.
- The Facilities subgroup should post a number on room doors indicating each small group's location.



- Determine how the congregation can quickly find each small group's location for Friday and Saturday evenings. The visiting coordinator will handle dividing the church into small groups and assigning a team member to each group.
- Check with visiting coordinator to see if any materials are needed for small group sessions during the Weekend (e.g., pens, paper, etc.).
- Work with the visiting coordinator and the Housing Subgroup on Friday evening to make any necessary changes in the housing arrangements.
- Advise the visiting coordinator of the plan for matching housing hosts and visiting team members so that he can tell the team during Friday's team meeting. (One idea is to have team members and their hosts sit together at the Friday evening meal. They could meet down front in the sanctuary on Friday night after the service is completed.)
- Arrange for someone to open the building on Friday, Saturday and Sunday for the visiting team's scheduled meetings.
- Stay in touch on a weekly basis with the visiting coordinator.
- Work with pastor and spiritual growth chairperson to plan the format for the Evaluation Service. Make enough copies of the CRJ Commitment and Evaluation Form for the congregation, including adults, students and children.
- Lead the Sunday evening Evaluation Service. Allow someone from the Spiritual Growth Group to speak about the small group studies that have been lined up to begin after the CRJ Weekend.
- Have the Spiritual Growth Group members pass out the Sunday Night Commitment/Evaluation Forms. Instruct the congregation to fill out the forms (including adults, students and children). Allow a few minutes for the forms to be filled out and then pick them up during the service. Work with the Facilities Subgroup to line up soft background music to play while the forms are being filled out.
- Meet with the pastor and the "What's Next?" Subgroup to evaluate the Weekend and determine the next steps. This should take place approximately two weeks after the CRJ Weekend. This subgroup changes to the "Mission Strategy" subgroup during the Sending Weekend.



FOUR

The Pastor as Cheerleader

Renewal Weekends are lay-led and not more “train cars” for the “locomotive” pastor to pull. A CRJ Weekend should have the pastor’s blessing and support, yet the pastor should have no specific leadership responsibilities during the preparation time or actual event. The pastor’s energy should be given to promoting the weekend from the pulpit and praying for, as well as encouraging, those serving on the preparation groups and those attending the event. Sometimes it is difficult for the pastor to enjoy being a congregation member who is being fed for a change. The main duty for the pastor during the CRJ preparation time and the actual weekend is to serve as cheerleader, advocate and promoter.

The pastor does not have to sell the church on the CRJ process. This is done by a trained renewal consultant or coordinator. The congregation will decide if a CRJ Weekend is the right direction for their church. This method allows the congregation to take ownership of the process and will also involve them in the preparation and promotion of the weekend.

Most CRJ Weekends are initiated by the pastor or interim pastor. However, if the church doesn’t have a pastor, it can be requested by a church leader. This can also be an excellent event for a church without a pastor, with a new pastor or with an interim pastor.

The visiting coordinator will work closely with the church’s general chairperson in preparation for the weekend. They will keep the pastor completely informed and updated with the preparations and progress. The pastor should communicate regularly with the church’s general chairperson to offer guidance and stay in touch with the visiting coordinator if special needs or problems are encountered along the way. For all general information concerning preparation for a CRJ Weekend, see Chapter 2.

Checklist for the Pastor

Before the CRJ Weekend

- Talk with a renewal consultant by contacting the NAMB *Church Renewal Journey* (CRJ) team at 800-634-2462, ext. 6481 or crj@namb.net.



- Submit a request for a CRJ Overview at namb.net/church-renewal by filling out the Church Renewal Journey application form. The CRJ leadership will assign a renewal consultant based on this request.
- Select a church member (or married couple) to be the church's general chairperson, and work with them to assure that all preparation responsibilities are completed as planned.
- Following the Overview, assist the church with the decision to schedule a CRJ Weekend. If agreed upon, resubmit the CRJ application form requesting the selected Weekend.
- Work with the assigned renewal consultant or visiting coordinator to select a date for the Weekend that works best for the church, and confirm that date on the church and the visiting coordinator's calendars.
- Decide with the church's general chairperson how to cover any food costs or the costs for any optional resources needed for the CRJ Weekend.
- If needed, assist the church's general chairperson with the selection of six preparation group chairpersons.
- Plan to serve on the "What's Next?" subgroup of the Spiritual Growth Group. This becomes the "Mission Strategy" subgroup during the Sending Weekend.
- Assign a staff administrative assistant as a point of contact for the preparation groups in order to coordinate work between the groups and the staff (for larger churches).
- Write a welcome letter to visiting team members including directions to the church. The Correspondence subgroup should promptly send the letter (by mail or email) as team members accept the invitation to come.
- Direct pre-weekend teaching/preaching time to your specific CRJ Weekend.
- Write/approve the first letter to the congregation. It can be placed in a church newsletter, bulletin or email in lieu of being mailed. (Week 6)



- Write/approve the second letter to the congregation. This letter could be mailed out by the Correspondence Subgroup to church members and visitors or included in a mailed newsletter. A specific prayer study booklet can be included. Check with the Prayer Study Booklet subgroup. (Week 4)
- Assist the chairperson of the Spiritual Growth Group in planning for the formation of small groups to begin following the Weekend.
- Review specific CRJ Weekend Sunday School and worship schedules with the staff.

Following the CRJ Weekend

- Fill out and submit the Pastor's Evaluation Form (found at namb.net/church-renewal).
- Send a thank you/evaluation letter (via email or regular mail) to each visiting team member with a report of the Sunday night Evaluation Service and your thanks for their service as visiting team members.
- Reconvene the "What's Next?" subgroup two weeks after the CRJ Weekend. This subgroup becomes the "Mission Strategy" subgroup during the Sending Weekend.
- Contact the visiting coordinator for a post-weekend consultation or to plan for the next Renewal Weekend.

FIVE

The Awakening Weekend

What is an Awakening Weekend?

The *Church Renewal Journey's* Awakening Weekend reawakens the church to its purpose and passion. The weekend refreshes believers with a godly perspective of their role in service to others. It restores the love of Christ to those who have drifted away from their commitment. The Awakening Weekend brings the church together as family. Typically, this is the first of four weekends in the Journey.



The following Scriptures reflect the real meaning behind an Awakening Weekend:

Therefore, repent and turn back ... that seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord (Acts 3:19, HCSB).

May they all be one, as You, Father, are in Me and I am in You. May they also be one in Us, so the world may believe You sent Me (John 17:21, HCSB).

Here are some comments by pastors who have experienced an Awakening Weekend:

The one major occurrence, as I see it, was a renewed commitment to the concept of “family” in our church. No longer were we simply members of a church but, for the first time since I have been here, people started to relate to each other in a new and dynamic relationship. The Weekend was the beginning of a new era, not only in our church family, but also in our personal relationship with Jesus Christ our Lord.

Pastor David Richardson, Faulks Baptist Church, Marshville, North Carolina

Our church just completed a Weekend. It was such a blessing for our people and for me as well. Many of our members made commitments of their lives, and we had several youth saved. But most of all, our church was changed. People who have never spoken in church shared during the testimony time. Some prayed for the first time publicly. Over 90% of those attending our Sunday morning worship service made a public commitment for Christ. Our “Evaluation Service” Sunday night lasted over two hours and still people stood around talking after the service. God truly blessed us. We have already committed to the next Weekend.

Pastor Keith Stone, Lynn Lane Baptist Church, Tulsa, Oklahoma

What can you expect from an Awakening Weekend?

During (and after) the Awakening Weekend, based on observations from churches participating, you should expect your congregation to experience the following:

- › Active and busy church members getting to spend some time in large and small groups together and really getting to know each other (rather than just a hello greeting as they pass in the hall at church)



- › Prayer meetings in each other's homes during the preparation for the Awakening Weekend (and on the Weekend), allowing the church family to know how to pray specifically for one another
- › Discussion and prayer in small groups several times during the Weekend, helping friends understand one another's dreams and desires for the church
- › Seeing the laity come alive and on fire for God
- › Encouragement and inspiration for the church pastor and staff.

To download the Detailed Preparation Group Responsibilities for the Awakening Weekend, go to **namb.net/church-renewal**.

Typical Awakening Weekend Schedule

Thursday

3:00 pm 24-hour prayer vigil begins at church

Friday

5:30 pm Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson

6:30 pm Fellowship dinner for entire church family (nursery opens)

7:30 pm General session in sanctuary for adults, students and children

8:00 pm Students and children dismissed with visiting leaders

8:15 pm Adult small group meetings

9:00 pm Closing reports in sanctuary for adults, students and children

Saturday

8:30 am Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson

9:30 am Student and children activities begin at church (nursery opens); drivers for transporting visiting team members to Coffee Meetings meet at church

10:00 am Coffee Meetings for adults begin in church members' homes



- 12:00 pm Churchwide lunch
- 1:00 pm Men's meeting in fellowship hall; women's meeting in sanctuary; students and children go to their classes
- 2:00 pm Free time
- 5:30 pm Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson
- 6:30 pm Fellowship dinner for entire church family (nursery opens)
- 7:30 pm General Session in sanctuary for adults, students and children
- 8:00 pm Students and children dismissed with visiting leaders
- 8:15 pm Adult small group meetings
- 9:00 pm Closing prayer time in sanctuary for adults, students and children

Sunday *(These times may need to be adjusted to church's regular schedule.)*

- 8:30am Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson
- 9:45am Sunday School - Visiting team members will facilitate Adult Sunday School
- 11:00am Worship Service - Church service is opened by pastor and then turned over to the visiting team for testimonies. Service closes with invitation.
- 12:30pm Lunch for visiting team and host families
- 6:00pm Sunday night church-wide Evaluation Service in sanctuary for adults, students and children. No other church activities should be scheduled. The church has a chance to openly discuss and evaluate the Weekend. This is the highlight of the Awakening Weekend.



SIX

The Empowering Weekend

What is an Empowering Weekend?

The *Church Renewal Journey's* Empowering Weekend is a call to personal ministry, evangelism and discipleship. Believers discover their spiritual gifts and the gifts of their fellow church members. They consider practical applications of these gifts for evangelism and ministry. It is here that many Christians understand for the first time that they, too, are called into ministry. This Weekend is usually the second step in the Journey.

Visiting lay people will testify how they have found joy in serving the Lord and their church through their giftedness. This is “pew-to-pew” discipleship. Seeing and hearing how lay people have created unique ministries using their gifts and talents will challenge other believers.

Many discover during the Weekend how God has **shaped** them for different ministries. They learn how their spiritual gifts (along with other gifts from the body of Christ) empower them to accomplish His kingdom purposes. This Weekend also helps the church realize that as individuals they cannot, through human power and energy, accomplish anything. Yet with the power of the Holy Spirit working through them, anything is possible.

The apostle Peter reflects on these special gifts for Christ's Church...

Based on the gift each one has received, use it to serve others, as good managers of the varied grace of God. If anyone speaks, it should be as one who speaks God's words; if anyone serves, it should be from the strength God provides, so that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ in everything. To Him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen (1 Peter 4:10-11, HCSB).



Many churches have been positively affected by the Empowering Weekend. Here are some comments from pastors:

When we had our sharing time Sunday, person after person talked about how God had used the Empowering Weekend to help them see how they could take their abilities, talents and gifts and use them for ministry. At least five people are now thinking about ministries they could lead using their gifts and abilities! That is exactly what we wanted to come out of this weekend. I am confident we will continue to see God use what happened during these three days to change the lives of His people.

Pastor Brian Credille, Cornerstone Baptist Church, Jefferson City, Missouri

During the Sunday morning service folks ... came [forward] to rededicate their lives to Christ and to surrender their gifts and service to God. It was precious. One man filled out on his Sunday night evaluation that he had received Christ as a result of the Weekend. One lady came to me on Sunday morning during the invitation time and said the Lord had laid it on her heart to lead a small group for ladies during the summer.

Pastor George Fox, Bethlehem Baptist Church, Knightdale, North Carolina

What can you expect from an Empowering Weekend?

During (and after) the Empowering Weekend, based on observations from churches participating, you should expect your congregation to experience the following:

- › A deeper sense of confidence that God has called them for His special purpose and plan
- › A strong understanding of their own spiritual gifts, utilizing spiritual gift inventories to assist in assessments
- › An empowering of the local congregation, as believers use their spiritual gifts to edify the church and build up the body of Christ
- › A stronger, more united church, as the laity is empowered to carry out kingdom work.

To download the Detailed Preparation Group Responsibilities for the Empowering Weekend, go to namb.net/church-renewal.



Typical Empowering Weekend Schedule with One Church-wide Coffee Meeting

Thursday

3:00 pm 24-hour prayer vigil at church

Friday

5:00 pm Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson

6:00 pm Fellowship dinner for entire church family (nursery opens)

7:00 pm General Session in sanctuary for adults, students and children

7:30 pm Students and children dismissed with visiting leaders

Teaching Session 1 for adults in sanctuary

8:15 pm Adult small group meetings

9:00 pm Closing reports in sanctuary for adults, students and children

Saturday

8:00 am Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson

9:00 am Coffee/Refreshments in fellowship hall for adults, students and children

9:45 am General Session in sanctuary for adults, students and children

10:30 am Students and children dismissed with visiting leaders

Teaching Session 2 for adults in sanctuary

11:15 am Adult small group meetings

12:00 pm Church-wide lunch

1:00 pm Men's meeting in fellowship hall/women's meeting in sanctuary

Students and children go to their classes

2:00 pm Free time

5:00 pm Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson

6:00 pm Fellowship dinner for entire church family (nursery opens)



- 7:00 pm General Session in sanctuary for adults, students and children
- 7:30 pm Students and children dismissed with visiting leaders
Teaching Session 3 for adults in sanctuary
- 8:15 pm Adult small group meetings
- 9:00 pm Church Affirmation Service in sanctuary for adults, students and children

Sunday *(These times may need to be adjusted to church's regular schedule.)*

- 8:30 am Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson
- 9:45 am Visiting team will teach Sunday School classes for students and children
Teaching Session 4 for adults in sanctuary
- 11:00 am Worship service in sanctuary
- 12:30 pm Lunch for visiting team and host families
- 6:00 pm Church-wide Evaluation Service in sanctuary for adults, students and children

Typical Empowering Weekend Schedule with Home Coffee Meetings

Thursday

- 3:00 pm 24-hour prayer vigil begins at church

Friday

- 5:00 pm Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson
- 6:00 pm Fellowship dinner for entire church family (nursery opens)
- 7:00 pm General Session in sanctuary for adults, students and children
- 7:30 pm Students and children dismissed with visiting leaders
Teaching Session 1 for adults in sanctuary
- 8:15 pm Adult small group meetings
- 9:00 pm Closing reports in sanctuary for adults, students and children



Saturday

- 8:00 am Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson
- 9:00 am General Session in sanctuary for adults, students and children (nursery opens)
- 9:30 am Students and children dismissed with visiting leaders
Teaching Session 2 for adults in sanctuary
- 10:15 am Adults travel to home Coffee Meetings
- 10:30 am Home Coffee Meetings in church members' homes
- 12:00 pm Church-wide lunch
- 1:00 pm Men's meeting in fellowship hall/women's meeting in sanctuary
Students and children go to their classes
- 2:00 pm Free time
- 5:00 pm Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson
- 6:00 pm Fellowship dinner for entire church family (nursery opens)
- 7:00 pm General Session in sanctuary for adults, students and children
- 7:30 pm Students and children dismissed with visiting leaders
Teaching Sessions 3 for adults in sanctuary
- 8:15 pm Adult small group meetings
- 9:00 pm Church Affirmation Service in sanctuary for adults, students and children

Sunday

(These times may need to be adjusted to church's regular schedule.)

- 8:30 am Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson
- 9:45 am Visiting team will teach Sunday School classes for students and children
Teaching Session 4 for all adult Sunday School classes meeting in sanctuary
- 11:00 am Worship service in sanctuary



- 12:30 pm Lunch for visiting team and host families
- 6:00pm Churchwide Evaluation Service in sanctuary for adults, students and children

SEVEN

The Praying Weekend

What is a Praying Weekend?

He was praying in a certain place, and when He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11:1, HCSB).

The Church Renewal Journey’s Praying Weekend is a time for the church to separate from the world and spend time together in God’s presence. Participants will be encouraged and trained in biblical prayer that focuses on kingdom priorities. In Matthew 6:9-10 Jesus taught His followers to pray toward the coming of His kingdom and the accomplishment of His will on earth. Jesus also modeled this kind of kingdom-focused praying in John 17.

Much of our praying today is not focused toward the kingdom. It is usually focused on self or on temporal needs and present circumstances. Often, our praying is more about God blessing our lives or our agendas rather than the moving forward of His work in hearts and lives. Without prayer that seeks God’s kingdom purposes, churches cease to be on mission in their world. That’s why the Praying Weekend is such an important part of *The Church Renewal Journey*.

Here are some comments about the Praying Weekend:

Each time we prayed I could hear people weeping throughout the sanctuary. And Saturday evening to see all the families at the altar, praying and weeping together before the Lord—that is something etched in my mind that I will never forget

Pastor Ed Yount, Woodlawn Baptist Church, Conover, North Carolina



One of the most meaningful parts of our time was when we had a time of prayer for our pastors. We had each person sit with their family in the front pew of one of the five sections. Members came forward and prayed over them. You have no idea how healing that was for all of us to witness their unity, given our challenges of the past few years.

Member Jane Koppenheffer,
Country & Town Baptist Church, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania

How will a Praying Weekend affect your congregation?

First, a Praying Weekend (PW) will give opportunity for individuals and churches to encounter the living Christ through intimacy and prayer. Participants will pray with and for one another, and for their families, communities and the world.

Second, a PW will give opportunity for churches to grow in biblical prayer patterns through the study of God's Word. This takes place as Scripture texts related to kingdom prayer are expounded upon in four teaching sessions throughout the Weekend.

Third, a PW will give opportunity for participants to take prayer to their communities through prayerwalking. The prayerwalking experience takes place during the Saturday morning Coffee Meetings. Everyone is equipped to prayerwalk and then is sent out into their world to pray as they walk in their own communities. This season of prayer always challenges believers to see their world from God's perspective as they spend time praying and walking.

Fourth, a PW is an opportunity for the church to be renewed in its life of prayer both individually and corporately. As God's people encounter Christ throughout the weekend, they are changed forever. Through prayer, God unleashes His church to be on mission with Him in their world. The church as a body is genuinely empowered through prayer for whatever God has next for them.

It is evident that the PW is a key component in *The Church Renewal Journey*. Without heartfelt prayer that focuses on God's purposes and agendas, churches will continue to maintain the status quo or decline. We have never heard a church or individual make the statement that they prayed too much or too often. But, we have heard many churches and individual believers who have said the opposite—"I have not prayed enough or not often enough." The Praying Weekend is designed to "jump



start” a desire to pray kingdom-focused prayers that move Christ’s mission forward in communities and the world.

What can you expect from a Praying Weekend?

During (and after) the Praying Weekend, based on observations from churches participating, you should expect your congregation to experience the following:

- › A stronger understanding of kingdom praying rather than just “physical needs”-based intercession
- › A deeper awareness of the church community, as they prayerwalk from their church base into the mission field
- › A more mature believer, as one learns the value of disciplined praying
- › A healing of those indifferent to God and others

To download the Detailed Preparation Group Responsibilities for the Praying Weekend, go to namb.net/church-renewal.

Typical Praying Weekend Schedule

Thursday One-hour family prayer vigil in each church member’s home at same hour

Friday

- 5:00 pm Visiting team meeting with pastor and church’s general chairperson
- 6:00 pm Fellowship dinner for entire church family (nursery opens)
- 7:00 pm General Session in sanctuary for adults, students and children
- 7:30 pm Students and children dismissed with visiting leaders
Teaching Session 1
- 8:15 pm Adult small group meetings
- 9:00 pm Closing prayer in sanctuary for adults, students and children



Saturday

- 8:00 am Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson
- 9:00 am General Session in sanctuary for adults, students and children (nursery opens)
- 9:30 am Students and children dismissed with visiting leaders
Teaching Session 2
- 10:15 am Families meet together and travel to home prayer meetings (preschool/nursery remains at church)
- 11:15 am Families prayerwalk assigned streets (preschool remain at church)
- 12:00 pm Church-wide lunch and prayerwalking debrief
- 1:00 pm Men's meeting in fellowship hall/women's meeting in sanctuary
Students and children go to their classes
- 2:00 pm Free time
- 5:00 pm Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson
- 6:00 pm Fellowship dinner for entire church family (nursery opens)
- 7:00 pm General Session in sanctuary for adults, students and children
- 7:30 pm Students and children dismissed with visiting leaders
Teaching Session 3 for adults in sanctuary
- 8:15 pm Adult small group meetings
- 9:00 pm Closing family prayer time for adults, students and children

Sunday

(These times may need to be adjusted to church's regular schedule.)

- 8:30 am Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson
- 9:45 am Sunday School - A visiting team member leads discussion in each adult class
- 11:00 am Worship service: **Teaching Session 4** (during sermon time)
- 12:30 pm Lunch for visiting team and host families



6:00 pm Church-wide Evaluation Service in sanctuary for adults, students and children

EIGHT

The Sending Weekend

What is a Sending Weekend?

The *Church Renewal Journey's* Sending Weekend is a time when the church is encouraged to take the bold steps of being on mission to their neighbors and to the nations. At the end of the weekend, the congregation will have committed to an Acts 1:8 strategy, working to penetrate lostness in their Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth.

The believers will be living out the Great Commission in their daily walk, just as Jesus commanded, *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20, HCSB)*. With God’s power, the body of Christ will be saying with kingdom hearts, “Here am I, Lord. Send me!”

Furthermore, rather than just planning one-time mission projects, the church will be seeking out unreached people groups and missionaries to adopt in each of these Acts 1:8 strategic places. In every area they will ask the following questions:

1. *As a mission partner, how can our church intentionally pray for this missionary and his kingdom work?*
2. *As a mission partner, how can our church be actively involved with this missionary and his kingdom work?*
3. *As a mission partner, how can our church creatively provide for this missionary and his kingdom work?*



Here is what churches have said about the Sending Weekend:

The weekend led many in our church in taking steps closer to being that Christian with a mission that God has called them [to]. The Evaluation Service on Sunday Night revealed passions that had not only sparked in many, but passions that had grown deeper in others!

Pastor Chris Jenkins, Unity Baptist Church, Prince George, Virginia

In addition to the emphasis on spiritual growth, the weekend provided specific teaching on the challenge of Acts 1:8 to become witnesses in our Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and all parts of the earth. This weekend combines the best of spiritual discipleship and missions/ministry for the church. It was a fantastic experience!

Pastor Jim Wiley, First Baptist Church, Rochelle, Georgia

What can you expect from a Sending Weekend?

During (and after) the Sending Weekend, based on observations from several churches participating, you should expect your congregation to experience the following:

- › A strong understanding of the heart of God toward those perishing without Christ
- › A renewed emphasis on intentional evangelism, beginning at the local church
- › A clear Acts 1:8 strategy, with a defined partnership to all four corners of the earth
- › A prayerful and “going” spirit toward unreached communities and people groups
- › A sincere surrender of God’s people to kingdom-focused living
- › A tangible commitment to engage in short-term and long-term missions.

To download the Detailed Preparation Group Responsibilities for the Sending Weekend, go to **namb.net/church-renewal**.



Typical Sending Weekend Schedule

Thursday Churchwide prayer vigil begins at church

Friday

- 5:00 pm Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson
- 6:00 pm Fellowship dinner for entire church family (nursery opens)
- 7:00 pm General Session in sanctuary for adults, students and children
- 7:30 pm Students and children dismissed with visiting leaders
Teaching Session 1 for adults in sanctuary
- 8:15 pm Adult small group meetings
- 9:00 pm Closing reports in sanctuary for adults, students and children

Saturday

- 8:30 am Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson
- 9:30 am Refreshments for everyone in fellowship hall (nursery opens)
- 10:00 am General Session in sanctuary for adults, students and children
- 10:30 am Students and children dismissed with visiting leaders
Teaching Session 2 for adults in sanctuary
- 11:15 am Adult small group meetings
- 12:00 pm Churchwide lunch
- 1:00 pm Joint men and ladies meeting in fellowship hall
Students and children go to their classes
- 2:00 pm Free time
- 5:00 pm Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson
- 6:00 pm Fellowship dinner for entire church family (nursery opens)
- 7:00 pm General Session in sanctuary for adults, students and children
- 7:30 pm Students and children dismissed with visiting leaders
Teaching Session 3 for adults in sanctuary
- 8:15 pm Adult small group meetings



9:00 pm Missional Commitment Time and closing in sanctuary for adults, students and children

Sunday *(These times may need to be adjusted to church's regular schedule.)*

8:30 am Visiting team meeting with pastor and church's general chairperson

9:45 am Sunday School for students and children led by visiting leaders

Teaching Session 4 for adults in sanctuary

11:00 am Worship service - Led by visiting team and/or possible Commissioning Service conducted by pastor

12:30 pm Lunch for visiting team and host families

6:00 pm Churchwide Evaluation Service in sanctuary for adults, students and children

NINE

A Final Word from Two Pilgrims on the Journey

Bob and Phyllis Foy, national coordinators for the Church Renewal Journey, SBC

From Bob:

It was 1972 when Phyllis and I experienced our first Renewal Weekend. In those days it was called "Lay Renewal" (now called the "Awakening Weekend"). An awakening was exactly what it was to us. We both had been saved for several years and had been "doing church" since we were married at the age of 16. It was our goal to have a Christian home. I think we were "doing church" as hard as anyone could, being very active and involved in almost everything going on in our congregation. The big problem was we were very busy trying to earn our salvation (as many un-disciplined Christians do).



Our church decided to schedule a Renewal Weekend, which we had never heard of before. Several church members who were serving on the Preparation Groups for the weekend asked Phyllis if the Foy family would agree to host a couple in our home. These strangers were coming to serve as visiting team members for the weekend. Phyllis said we would (before asking me). When she told me, I was upset about her agreement. It is hard to explain now how I was feeling then. In truth, I was dealing with total burn-out from all we were already trying to do at church. I was thinking those coming would tell me that I needed to be doing even more.

Phyllis won that discussion (as she usually does). The visiting couple, Dewey and Willie Smith, came and stayed with us on Friday and Saturday of that weekend. They were a much older couple than we were. I think God picked them out specifically for us. If they were younger, I probably would have argued with them about how you must do works to earn your salvation, but it is hard to argue with grandma and grandpa.

Dewey and Willie were different than most couples. They seemed to have a calm, spiritual glow about them. It wasn't that they were some kind of super Christians; they just had a joyful peace in their countenance. Dewey and Willie seemed to allow God's unconditional love to flow and radiate from their lives. We noticed this during the Friday Renewal meetings at church, and even more as we talked at home. Phyllis and I fell in love with this godly couple. My prayer that night was, "God how can I be more like Dewey and Willie, having their peace and calmness?" The Smiths were living a relationship with Christ that I desired, but didn't know how to accomplish.

That particular Renewal Weekend was a major turning point in my life. We ended up adopting Dewey and Willie as our grandparents. I remember on the Sunday night Evaluation Service how we started at 6:00 p.m. with a song. Then, church member after church member began giving testimonies of how the preparation for the Weekend (and the Weekend itself) had affected their lives. I remember someone saying, "It is 9:45 p.m., and we need to close the service." Yet when we did, many believers assembled in the parking lot and continued giving testimonies until 10:45 p.m. I had never witnessed anything like this before. People were praying together, crying together and laughing together. I don't think many of us had ever experienced such a moving of the Holy Spirit as on that Weekend! I personally became enflamed with the desire to know the Lord more and love Him better. I had found the JOY of being God's child. Everything in my Christian life seemed to be fresh and new.



A year after the Awakening Weekend, our church decided to continue The Church Renewal Journey. We scheduled a Lay Ministry Equipping Weekend, (now called the “Empowering Weekend”). This gathering is about discovering your spiritual gift. I had been a Christian for 22 years, and no one had ever explained to me about spiritual gifts, and that each child of God was given gifts by the Holy Spirit when we accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior. I was working as an electrician at the time. I had been thinking that I was ignoring God’s call on my life by not becoming a pastor. After all, that was the only calling I had ever heard of.

On Friday night of the Empowering Weekend, a heating and air-conditioning serviceman from another church came as a visiting team member. He stood in the pulpit and gave a powerful testimony of how the Holy Spirit was working through his life as a heating and air-conditioning serviceman. He talked as though he really believed he was called to serve God through his job.

I also remember the Scripture he read that night (Exodus 4), where God had called Moses asking, “What do you have in your hand?” He explained how Moses’ staff was a tool of his profession (as a shepherd). He read on about how God told Moses to throw the staff on the ground. It became a serpent. God then told him to pick it up. The serpent became a staff again. Now it was no longer Moses’ staff, but God’s. He instructed Moses to go shepherd His people, with the power of the Lord.

The layman then asked those present, “What would be the tool of your profession that God would ask you to throw down?” The serviceman said that if he were a doctor, it might be a stethoscope, or if he was a mechanic, it might be a wrench. For me, it was a nine inch high-lever Klein cutting pliers that I carried in my back pocket—the electrician’s tool.

I remember asking God if there was any way that He could be calling me to serve Him as an electrician. This Weekend opened my eyes to the fact that God has called all of His children “into the ministry,” but not all as pastors. We are accountable to God for our service to the kingdom (just as the pastor is to his calling). My spiritual gifts (and the other gifts of each church member) go together with the pastor’s gifts to create the “body” our churches are supposed to be. As an electrician, I could serve Him in ways that my pastor couldn’t. I have found out that saying “yes” to the Holy Spirit, allowing Him to work through me to accomplish God’s kingdom work, is one of the greatest things a Christian can discover.



It seems that every day God opens another door where I can serve Him. Nothing is greater than seeing other lay people begin to understand that we are all called and uniquely gifted for God's service. There is a JOY when we discover how He has created us to serve Him.

In addition to the Awakening and Empowering meetings, the other *Church Renewal Journey* Weekends continue to take the church on a further step of growth through "Praying" and "Sending." Please let us know how we can best assist you.

From Phyllis:

What a joy and privilege it has been to be on a journey with Church Renewal. From the very first one our church conducted in Charlotte, North Carolina, my life has been forever changed. I came to know God in a deeper and more intimate relationship than I would have ever thought possible.

Church Renewal team members have a saying, "If you make yourself available to God, you will find yourself in strange and unusual places." Well, that is so true in my life. God has allowed me the journey of a lifetime. I am amazed at how different each Renewal Weekend is because the Holy Spirit is always fresh and new in the lives of His people.

What a blessing to work with the *Church Renewal Journey* ministry. God has been working and has allowed us to be a part of His work. Truly, I am amazed!

Serving with joy,

Bob and Phyllis Foy

National Coordinators for Church Renewal

North American Mission Board

bfoy@namb.net / 800-634-2462, ext. 6481



For more information, or to sign up today to be a part of The Church Renewal Journey, email crj@namb.net, or call 800-634-2462, ext. 6481, or visit churchrenewal.net.



*NORTH AMERICAN
MISSION BOARD*

SEND» **NORTH AMERICA**
namb.net

A Southern Baptist Convention entity supported by the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering®.

For general information call 770-410-6000, or visit namb.net to order materials, call Customer Service Center, toll-free 866-407-NAMB (6262), or visit nambstore.com.