

TO THE VESTRY OF ST. GEORGES' CHURCH:
FOLLOW-UP OF THE JOYOUS RENEWAL IN CHRIST

As follow-up Chairman of the Joyous Renewal in Christ, it has been my objective to determine:

1. What was accomplished,
2. Was it worth while, and
3. Where do we go from here.

This report will attempt to answer these questions as concisely and briefly as possible.

A sub-committee to the Renewal Committee was formed consisting of Ernest (Sonny) Singleton, Ed and Frances Jones, Harry and Frances Hewittson, and Betty and David Fitts. This sub-committee drew up a renewal follow-up questionnaire (copy attached) which was distributed to each person attending the evening services. It was intended that all attendees would answer the questions and return the questionnaire to the sub-committee which would analyze the returns and arrive at conclusions. Only 20 questionnaires were returned, however, and, as a consequence, only a few generalities can be made concerning the third objective above.

A Joyous Renewal in Christ was held at St. George's Church at 7:30 p.m. on October 5, 6, 7, & 8, 1975, each evening beginning with a service at the Church and conducted by five visiting Episcopal clergymen: Carl Practish, Clyde Angel, Churchill Gibson, Fletcher Lowe, and Peter Way. After the service, discussion groups were held at various communicant's homes, lasting from 9:00 p.m. until the group decided to call it quits and go home. The clergymen were housed and fed by

various families of the church each day. On Wednesday evening, a service of Holy Communion was held with no discussion group following. Other miscellaneous daytime activities were also held.

All "responders" to the questionnaire truly felt that the renewal was a great success. Almost all said they really felt "renewed", each in his own way. Although the renewal was publicized widely and special effort was made to invite "inactive" communicants, it appeared to most of us on the sub-committee that only the so-called faithful or regular Sunday church attendees came to the renewal (with some exceptions, of course). Statistically, there were 130 people at the Sunday service, 53 on Monday, 75 Tuesday, and 59 Wednesday. No count was made of the number of people at the discussion groups but from all reports they were all well attended. It has been suggested that those who do not come to church on Sunday will not come during the week either.

Those who did respond to the questionnaire had a great variety of likes and dislikes about the renewal. There were those who were delighted by some of the aspects and others who were equally disturbed by the same items. In general, however, the five clergymen and their different views were appreciated by all and it was felt that these men were extremely intelligent, educated and dedicated. Some of the specific comments from the questionnaires were (paraphrased):

Make it shorter

Make it longer

Provide better publicity - get more people to come

Too many clergymen at one time

It was too late at night

More of the same! (more renewals, that is)

Discussion groups were not objective (?)

Discussion groups (as well as Sunday sermons) should center on definite subjects especially the Christian approach to today's problems (crime, starvation, dope, broken marriages, healing, death and how to accept it, the prayer book controversy, etc.).

Have questions and answers in discussion groups rather than before the service (note: perhaps we could have questions and answers at some sessions of the Adult Class).

Have questions and answers once a month in lieu of sermons.

Clarified Christian beliefs

Strengthened faith

My personal feeling is that although we didn't have as many people come as we wanted, those who did attend were rewarded with a delightful (if not "religious") experience. I think we should plan something similar about once a year, perhaps with different formats (such as starting off with discussion groups or having questions and answers in discussion groups). It would not necessarily be required to import a group of clergymen, perhaps one or two, perhaps none. In addition, supplementary events might be planned during the rest of the year, such as evening discussion groups (at the church or at individuals' homes), bible study groups, and teaching sessions (like Dr. Mollekin and Mr. Beckwith). These would have to be planned carefully and well publicized. For some reason, unknown to me, there is a general apathy about attending church functions (and perhaps other types of functions as well). It appears that we, as the leaders of the church, must put forth a special effort to generate interest in such functions. Let us continue to plan for the renewal of ourselves and our fellow communicants in the months and years to come.

/s/ David M. Fitts

RENEWAL FOLLOW-UP

Please answer the following questions in order that we can determine the effectiveness of the Renewal and plan for future programs. You do not have to sign the questionnaire. Give it to any usher, host/hostess (discussion groups), vestryman, committee member or clergyman, or send or bring to church prior to October 12, 1975. Use the other side of this sheet, if required.

- 1) Did you like the idea of a renewal?
- 2) Did you enjoy the Renewal sermons? Discussions?
- 3) Was the subject matter appropriate? What subjects would you like to see treated in future Renewals and/or discussions?
- 4) Were the topics handled effectively?
- 5) Were the discussion groups open and objective?
- 6) What did you like about the Renewal (discussion groups, sermons...)?
- 7) What didn't you like about the Renewal?
- 8) How could we have made the Renewal more effective?
- 9) What effect did the Renewal have on you?