

The Joint Commission on Evangelism and Renewal

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John H. Coleman, Jr., Richmond, Virginia (deceased November 23, 1987)

JOHN COLEMAN

1932-1987

IN MEMORIAM

He was among us as a man of uncommon, common sense. His faith was rooted in an abiding and exuberant love of Jesus. His evangelism was the practical outreach of that love to the down and out, the rejects and the misfits for Jesus' sake. He continually salted our conversation with homely illustrations and colorful images born of his passion to see hungry souls fed with the bread of life. He patiently, tenderly, persistently reeled us in from our flights of spiritual fantasy and grounded us in the blood and sweat and tears of folks thirsting for a word of good news.

We are all of us different because of John Coleman. He has given integrity to our work. Because it bears the stamp of his gracious spirit, it can speak an urgent and profitable message to the Church that he so loved. We therefore are grateful to dedicate this report to him, confident that now with his Lord in Paradise, he continues to labor with us in the cause of an awakened and renewed Episcopal Church.

"I want to test love on earth,
so I can recognize it when I get to heaven."
Rest eternal grant to him, O Lord:
Thank you for the life and witness of our beloved
brother, John Coleman.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COMMISSION AT GENERAL CONVENTION

The Rt. Rev. Donald M. Hultstrand, House of Bishops, is authorized by the commission to receive non-substantive amendments to the report.

Dr. John M. Etheridge (West Texas), House of Deputies, is authorized by the commission to receive non-substantive amendments to the report.

THE BLUE BOOK

FINANCIAL REPORT

	1986	1987	1988
Income			
Appropriated by Convention	\$15,216.00	\$10,240.00	\$ 9,700.00
Expenses			
Meetings	7,616.16	6,575.11	_____
Consultants		863.58	

FORWARD: EVANGELISM AND RENEWAL

The Joint Commission on Evangelism and Renewal, created by the 68th General Convention at Anaheim in 1985, was given the charge, "to hold up before the Church the needs and opportunities for the renewal of the Church and for the exercise of evangelistic ministry. The commission shall develop policy and recommend program in the areas of evangelism and renewal and recommend appropriate action by the General Convention, Executive Council, and the several dioceses in these areas of ministry."

We began our task by affirming accepted definitions for evangelism and renewal. From the House of Bishops Message #133 at the 64th General Convention: "Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, that 'Evangelism' be defined as, 'The presentation of Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, in such ways that persons may be led to him as Savior, and follow him as Lord within the fellowship of his Church.'" We recognize ultimately that the imperative to evangelize comes from the great commission given by the Lord himself: "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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 all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age'" (Matthew 28:18-20). Evangelism is a divine commission, and renewal is the work of the Holy Spirit empowering that commission.

We also began our task in full recognition that when it comes to response to this divine commission, the Episcopal Church has not always been faithful. In the past 25 years we have lost one-third of our membership. It is obvious to us that if nothing is done to remedy this situation, the Episcopal Church is in very real danger of becoming an exotic fossil. So we set out to try to understand the grounds for our past failures as well as mark out a new course of faithfulness for the future.

Our meetings have been held in locations in all parts of the country so that we could observe at first hand individual parishes in very different settings which are already undergoing renewal and practicing evangelism. These meetings have been held in the dioceses of Pittsburgh, Springfield, Los Angeles, Virginia, and West Texas. We heard presentations and interviewed leaders in evangelism, both clerical and lay, from all parts of the Church. We have surrounded our deliberations with prayer. We have been led by the Holy Spirit into a unity of vision.

During this process we have been heartened not only by the powerful renewal already taking place in our Church, but, also by the enthusiastic support of the Presiding Bishop, and the work of the House of Bishops' Committee on Evangelism and the Office of Evangelism Ministries. In his address to the House of Bishops on September 26, 1987, Bishop Browning said, "The time has also come for active evangelism. We Episcopalians are often accused of talking too much of our heritage and too little of God and God's work among us. To be a missionary is to be an

evangelist. Therefore, we must help each other to share more openly. We must find ways to let our rich heritage shape and flavor the message of faith that we share; but the most important focus must be on God and God's work among us through the Lord Jesus."

INTRODUCTION: THE DILEMMA

In trying to understand the problem facing the Episcopal Church, the Commission on Evangelism and Renewal is certain and unanimous in its belief that the reason this Church has little or no evangelism is because there is no clarity of theological vision. Do we believe that God presents himself to us through special revelation, or only through nature and the structures of human society? Do we believe that human beings are sinners in need of redemption, or simply ignorant and in need of education? Do we believe in salvation by grace through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ alone, or do we work out our relationship with God on our own subjective terms? Is there such a thing as an objective moral standard, or are Christian ethics changing from situation to situation? Is Jesus God's only Son, or is "the Christ" manifest in all religions? Much of the contemporary theology of our Church has espoused philosophical skepticism, which is opposed to certainty, commitment, and conversion. A historical God may be affirmed, but not an empowering God who leads to life-changing renewal. The Bible and historical tradition are seen as brittle artifacts with no binding authority in the present. Consequently, we have become a church which takes its agenda from whatever is "hot" at the moment. We have become a trendy people, "tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine" (Ephesians 4:14). When evangelism is promoted at all, it is almost always linked as an addendum to the Church's program. The result is a witness shorn of power.

What we are left with is a church where the divine commission of the Lord has become unclear. Evangelism is dismissed as being unnecessary. We may be concerned, to a degree, about our neighbor's material well-being, but we feel free to ignore our neighbor's spiritual well-being. "Evangelize? We Episcopalians don't do that." When it comes to evangelism we have become like the church at Laodicea, about which Jesus said, "I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth" (Revelation 3:15-16).

As our former Presiding Bishop John Allin said in his final address to a joint session of the House of Bishops and House of Deputies at the 1985 General Convention, "[I confess] I have loved the institutional Church more than I have loved the Lord Christ." In spite of this, the Holy Spirit is bringing about renewal and evangelism throughout the breadth of our Church. Now is the time for the Episcopal Church as a whole to respond with faithfulness to the divine commission for evangelism. We find ourselves often more concerned about preserving the Church than proclaiming the Gospel. As the Presiding Bishop said to the House of Bishops this past September 1987, "My friends, the time that God has put before us is precious and God's call is clear. We don't have time for navel gazing, we don't have patience for nit-picking, we don't have energy for fanciful distractions . . . I'm here to tell you that the train is leaving the station, and it's time to either get on it or continue to sit on your bags."

This report seeks to assist Episcopalians to think through and live out the imperative to present "Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, in such ways that persons may be led to him as Savior, and follow him as Lord within the fellowship of his

Church.” The Joint Commission on Evangelism and Renewal, created to implement that task, has attempted to respond in the following ways:

1. To explore the biblical theology for evangelism;
2. To identify the historical and contemporary conditions of the Church in which evangelism and renewal take place;
3. To challenge the Episcopal Church to make the necessary provisions to make evangelism and renewal its highest priority in the next decade.

Finally, as John Coleman continually reminded us, as expressed in that old axiom, “Love is one beggar telling another beggar where to find Bread.”

THE BIBLICAL THEOLOGY FOR RENEWAL AND EVANGELISM

Pascal wrote that within every human being is a God-shaped vacuum. We spend our lives vainly trying to fill that space, cramming it with achievements, with material objects and sensual pleasures. Yet we are never satisfied, we always want more, because the emptiness inside us is God-shaped. Only God can fill the void. This is the consistent teaching of the Bible.

There are two creation stories in the Bible. The first creation story in Genesis 1:1—2:3 was written in response to the question, “Where do we come from?” The answer is quite simple: God, who created us and the universe we live in. At each stage of the creation, God paused and saw that it was good. The pinnacle of creation came when God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” To be in the image of God means to be a person. As God is personal, so human beings in his image are persons.

To be a person consists of two things: to have a unique self-consciousness, and to have the ability to be in relationship with other persons. Our identities as unique, self-conscious persons are shaped by the relationships we have with other people. The primary relationship for each human being was intended to be with God himself, sharing fully in his life and honoring him as Creator. The first creation story relates that after he created humanity in his image, and knew the blessings human beings would enjoy in relationship with him, God saw that it was very good.

“What went wrong?” The second story in Genesis 2:4—3:24, the story of the Fall, answers that question. Adam and Eve rejected intimacy with God in order to worship self. It was God’s intention for human beings to find their identity not in self but in their relationship with him. The rejection of that relationship in the Fall is the biblical definition of sin. Lost in the Fall was intimacy with God, and thus the sharing in his life, and the receiving of his love, his joy, his peace.

It is at this point that the real story of the Bible begins, the story of the restoration of humanity to intimacy with God. Though mankind could do nothing to accomplish this restoration, God himself could and did. The story of the Bible can be reduced to a simple sentence: God redeems helpless humanity.

Jesus Christ began his public ministry proclaiming that the Kingdom of God was at hand. Through what he said, and far more importantly, by what he did, Jesus declared that he was the fulfillment of the promise to restore humanity to intimacy with God. He was not just the Messiah, he was Emmanuel, “God with us.” He was God the Son, who existed in eternal intimacy with God the Father. He was the incarnation of God, God come to us as a human being in order to redeem us. As sin destroyed humanity’s relationship with God and resulted in death, the death of Jesus as an offering for

humanity's sin "and a perfect sacrifice for the whole world" restored the relationship with God and destroyed the power of sin and death.

God the Father raised Jesus Christ from the dead on Easter morning. In his resurrection, Jesus represents humanity restored to intimacy with God the Father. This intimacy is offered to all human beings through a relationship with Jesus Christ. Since he is the one who shares fully in the life of God the Father, by entering into relationship with Jesus we enter into the life of God. At Pentecost, the risen, ascended Lord sent the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit, to the Church to make intimacy between God and humanity a personal reality.

When we are in relationship with God, he shares his life with us and slowly transforms us into the human beings he intends us to be. As God fills the empty space inside us, we discover not only what it means to be fully human; we discover our own personal identity as well. In the mind of God, every human being exists in perfection. We are not yet that person, the person God intends us to be. We become that person at the resurrection. The future, our own future in God, breaks into our present reality. The vacuum inside us is filled. We begin to become the people we were created to be. This relationship, which leads to a new quality of existence, is renewal. And renewal is the ground for evangelism.

Christianity is about the restored relationship between God and humanity. This relationship exists on several levels, between God and individuals, God and the Church, and God and the entire world. The ability to have this relationship rests entirely on what God has done for humanity in Jesus Christ. The fulfillment of God's promise in the redeeming work of Jesus Christ is an objective reality. It exists in human history independent of any subjective experience. We enter into this relationship through baptism and a faith commitment to Jesus. The spontaneous joy experienced in this relationship is the basic imperative for evangelism. It comes with the desire to share the wonder and love with others.

RENEWAL AND GRACE

It is essential to remember that renewal, in its widest and deepest sense, is a response to a given, objective fact. This given, objective status is the redemption of humanity in Jesus Christ. It is God's intention that people enter this through a relationship with him. There is nothing we can do to earn this. It is God's gift. We simply have to receive it through faith. Regardless of what we learn about renewal, regardless of how we discipline ourselves in prayer, study, and worship, any deepening of intimacy with God depends entirely on God's grace and on his initiative. As Jesus said to the Pharisee Nicodemus in the third chapter of the Gospel of John, "I tell you the truth, unless one is born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

So the Christian life is lived out in the tension between self-discipline and the free gift of grace. Yet slavishly giving ourselves over to a discipline of spiritual life and service to others doesn't mean we will automatically experience joyous intimacy with God. That discipline and service to others may easily become routine, life-killing legalism, all form and no substance. Spirituality degenerates into law when used to manipulate and control others. Yet awareness of the living death of legalism may lead to another error, that of simply relaxing in God's grace and doing nothing. One of the mysterious paradoxes of the Christian life is that it is in the practice of spiritual discipline that we enter into the grace of God in Jesus Christ. We must remember that it is always God who brings renewal and not us.

This new quality of existence in Jesus is present in the Church through the Holy

Spirit. Through the Church he calls women and men into this new existence through relationship with him. That call is the divine commission for evangelism.

THE CONDITIONS FOR RENEWAL AND EVANGELISM

In the history of the Christian Church there have been several great periods of renewal and evangelism. In just a matter of days, the power of Pentecost transformed the tiny, dispirited band of apostles into a vibrant, irresistible community of several thousand. During its first centuries the Church maintained a discipline of renewal and evangelism that eventually captured the entire Roman Empire. Beginning in the eighth century, Celtic monks (part of our Anglican heritage) conquered the fierce pagans of Scotland, Northern England, the Low Countries, Germany, and Scandinavia with the gentle message of God's redemptive love in Jesus Christ. In the thirteenth century itinerant preachers such as Francis of Assisi brought profound renewal to a deadened Church. The power unleashed by the Reformation transformed all of Europe, both Protestant and Catholic. The Great Awakening in the eighteenth century, led by the Anglicans John Wesley and George Whitefield, transformed the very societies of England and North America, and eventually spawned the greatest outburst of missionary activity in history. In our own time, the Church in East Africa (primarily Anglican) and the Church in Korea have led unparalleled renewal and growth.

Certain characteristics are shared by all renewed and evangelistic churches regardless of their culture or place in history. For example, they are communities that travel light. Rather than being overly concerned with institutional structures and denominational peculiarities, they are free to follow the Holy Spirit into new experiences of fellowship and new areas of ministry. They have a clear theology, rooted in the atonement and Lordship of Jesus Christ. They clearly proclaim Jesus Christ crucified and risen.

In his address to Episcopalians at the North American Congress on the Holy Spirit and World Evangelism held at New Orleans in the summer of 1987, Bishop Browning said, "It is very easy for those of us who find ourselves in the structure of the Church to become too heady and too practical. More than before, today in this time, in this world community, there is a need to have a direct encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ and to be able to articulate that encounter for the sake of the whole Church."

Renewed people maintain a life of disciplined piety. They stress education, both as a means to grow in faith and to equip themselves for ministry. The Bible is considered to be the Word of God and is studied with devotion and passion. Prayer, both personal and corporate, is woven throughout their lives. They maintain a ministry of all believers and see service to others as the natural fruit of faith. Ministries of social and political action are common. They are a powerful outgrowth of renewal. The entire life of the community flows from fellowship with Jesus Christ. Consequently, renewal and evangelism are the primary ministry. Yet more than anything else, all renewed churches share the confident expectation that God will speak and act in their midst. Their faith is living, powerful, and vibrant.

It is a faith that is built on the expository preaching and teaching of the Bible. The Anglican writer John Stott defines expository preaching as having certain characteristics. It begins with two convictions. The first is that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, that the men and women who wrote the books of the Bible were being led by the Holy Spirit and are revealing the person and will of God. The second conviction is that the Bible needs to be interpreted.

Finally, expository preaching and teaching take place with two expectations. The

preacher, the teacher, and the people will expect that God's own voice will be heard. The second expectation is that when God's voice is heard, his people will be obedient. If it is about God's awesome majesty, the response will be humble worship. If it is about God's righteous holiness, it will be penitent confession. If it is about Jesus Christ's atoning death, it will be faith in the Savior. If it is about the commandment to love our neighbor, it will be compassionate action. If it be the Great Commission, the response will be to bear witness to our call to evangelism. Waiting expectantly for God's voice to be heard and obeyed is the certain ground of renewal.

HOW RENEWAL IS TAKING PLACE IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Renewal is already taking place in the Episcopal Church in all parts of the country and in all kinds of settings. The Joint Commission on Evangelism and Renewal recognizes this as an act of God that has taken place in our midst. This movement of the Holy Spirit is not something unique to Episcopalians, but can be found in all denominations, and in all parts of the world. In this country, the renewal movement has led Episcopalians to make a recommitment to the classical foundations of Anglican doctrine and spirituality. Renewed Episcopalians believe in God's grace being manifest to the Church in Holy Scripture, the sacraments, and the gifts of the Spirit.

We have identified four ways in which renewal is taking place in the Episcopal Church.

The charismatic movement, which emphasizes the supernatural gifts of the Spirit, has been active in the Episcopal Church for well over twenty years. Although glossolalia, or speaking in tongues, is often seen as the characteristic gift of the movement, other gifts such as healing, discernment, and prophecy are also in the forefront of charismatic piety. Charismatics stress an openness in worship, which when practiced within the formal structure of our Prayer Book liturgies often results in powerful experiences of God's grace. Many Episcopal parishes have groups of charismatic believers worshipping within more traditional congregations. The Episcopal Renewal Ministries is an outgrowth of the charismatic movement.

The evangelical movement has a long tradition in the Anglican Communion reaching all the way back to the Puritan divines. Evangelicals stress the proclamation of the Word of God through biblical preaching and teaching. They believe that the proper response to God's Word is conversion, consisting of repentance and a personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ. Anglican evangelicals have a long tradition of balancing their piety with active ministries of evangelism and social action. In recent years, evangelicals have founded the Fellowship of Christians in Universities and Schools, the South American Missionary Society, and the Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry.

The Anglo-Catholic movement also has a long tradition within the Anglican Communion. Anglo-Catholics focus their piety on the redemptive presence of God in the sacraments and liturgical life of the Church. They have championed religious communities and have focused on developing personal piety through disciplines such as spiritual direction. The Anglican Institute in St. Louis is an outgrowth of Anglo-Catholic renewal.

There are also many ministries and movements for renewal within the Episcopal Church which cut through the theological distinctions of the above movements, such as: the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer, the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, the Daughters of the King, the Church Army, Faith Alive, Cursillo, the Order of St. Luke, Episcopal Church Missionary Community, Sharing Our Ministry Abroad (SOMA), Marriage

Encounter, Christian Mission to the Jews, various healing ministries, and ministries of musical and liturgical renewal.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the foregoing analysis, the commission believes the time has come to involve all of the structures of the Episcopal Church so as to bring the divine imperative for renewal and evangelism directly and actively into the central life of the Church. To meet this end we present the following specific recommendations for various elements within the Church.

I. The Laity

Evangelism is to be done primarily by lay people, renewed in faith, who will joyously share their belief in Jesus Christ in their secular settings of work, recreation, and neighborhood. The laity will need training to become competent evangelists, so that they will be able to articulate faith with integrity, simplicity, and power.

II. The Seminaries

Our seminaries need to train clergy who are competent in being leaders in renewal and evangelism.

The seminaries need to rethink the ministry of the Church, moving from preoccupation with maintenance to commitment to mission. Training needs to move away from an exclusively pastoral model to one which will enable clergy to equip the laity for mission, ministry, and evangelism.

The seminaries need to prepare men and women to teach and preach the Gospel in ways which will lead to renewal.

Special departments on evangelism and renewal need to be created for our seminaries so that persons who are skilled and gifted in the area may actually work in the training of clergy.

III. The Clergy

As the bishop should be the chief evangelist in the diocese, and the priest the chief evangelist in the parish, there needs to be a shift in the discernment process for ordination:

We should accept men and women who have an articulated, mature, and demonstrated commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and are willing to be his servants in the Church.

We need clergy who see as their primary task the preaching and teaching of Jesus Christ and his Kingdom so that evangelism is automatically included in every aspect of church life.

Clergy who have been ordained for several years need the opportunity to reformulate their ministry in ways which will enhance renewal and evangelism.

IV. The Congregations

Each congregation should have an articulated and ongoing commitment to preach and teach the Gospel to those outside the Church.

Each congregation should have an evangelism committee.

Each congregation should plan for church growth.

Each congregation should be integrated into the vision and plan for evangelism and renewal on diocesan and national levels.

V. The National Church

Evangelism must become in fact and not just in resolution the first priority of the Church.

The Church should provide statements and papers from bishops supporting evangelism and renewal.

The national Church must articulate the belief that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the urgent need of all people.

What is our source of authority for evangelism? In the words of our Presiding Bishop, "That someone is Jesus Christ. That someone is the Lord and his redeeming work in his life and ministry and in his death and resurrection. I say to you that the authority of our mission is in Jesus Christ. We find our authority in the great commission, 'Go and make disciples.' We find our authority in the great commandment, 'Love God and your neighbor.' In Jesus Christ is our authority. In Jesus Christ is our very being itself."

CONCLUDING STATEMENTS AND RESOLUTIONS

Resolution #A057

Call to Evangelism

Whereas, evangelism is in direct response to the divine imperative of our Lord Jesus Christ; therefore be it

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That this Church adopt the following plan of apostolic action:**

1. **To alert all Episcopalians that every member of the Church is called by virtue of Holy Baptism to share his or her faith in Jesus Christ;**
2. **To call each congregation to be a center for the extension of the Gospel;**
3. **To incorporate evangelism into the official and ongoing structure of every diocese and congregation;**
4. **To pray for renewal in all parishes in order that they may be spiritually empowered;**
5. **To express the Good News not only in word but also by loving acts, service and justice for the community in which each congregation finds itself; and be it further**

Resolved, **That the 69th General Convention designate the 1990s a Decade of Evangelism, during which we will endeavor, with other Christian denominations, to reach every unchurched person in the nine Provinces of the Episcopal Church with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and that 1989 will be set aside as a Year of Prayer seeking God's empowerment and grace to do so.**

Rationale

Our Lord sets forth the imperative for evangelism in these key passages.

Luke 4:18-19 - "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

Matthew 28:19-20 - "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 all that I have commanded you."

Furthermore, the Presiding Bishop, in his address to the House of Bishops on

September 26, 1987, said, "The time has also come for active evangelization To be a missionary is to be an evangelist . . . Every Episcopalian is a missionary."

In the mission imperatives of the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council, evangelism along with servant ministry is given the highest priority.

Resolution #A058

Assistant Co-ordinator for Evangelism Ministries

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That the position of Assistant Co-ordinator for Evangelism Ministries be established at the Church Center for the purpose of expanding the following services:**

- 1. Communication with and among provincial, diocesan and voluntary organizations already committed to the work of evangelism;**
- 2. Access to the resources of these organizations to all churches;**
- 3. Promoting, publicizing and supporting the work of these groups;**
- 4. Identifying national, regional and local programs and resources for the advancement and enrichment of evangelism;**
- 5. Strategies for the groups which are underrepresented in the Church;**
- 6. Encourage each diocese and congregation to study available resources and to develop and implement an intentional strategy in evangelism; and be it further**

Resolved, **That the sum of \$300,000.00 be appropriated for the creation of this office and the expenses of the expanded services in the next triennium.**

Rationale

The work of evangelism in the Episcopal Church is clearly needed in our time. The groups, organizations and societies which are already committed to this work must have their efforts integrated.

In addition, the 68th General Convention requested that a forceful strategy for evangelism be targeted to reach young adults, ages 18-35, and further directed the Joint Commission on Evangelism and Renewal to develop a strategy that broadens the evangelistic outreach of the Church to bring into its fellowship groups which by the evidence of the 1982 Profile of Episcopalians are underrepresented in the life of the Church with respect to age, race, education and income.

Resolution #A059

Establishment of a Standing Commission on Evangelism and Renewal

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That Title I, Canon 1, Section 2(o) be amended to read,**

There shall be a *Joint Standing* Commission on Evangelism and Renewal, consisting of 12 members (3 Bishops, 3 Presbyters or Deacons, and 6 Lay Persons). Its duties shall be to hold up before the Church needs and opportunities for the renewal of the Church and for the exercise of evangelistic ministry. The Commission shall develop policy and recommend program in the areas of Evangelism and Renewal and recommend appropriate action by the General Convention and the Executive Council in these areas of ministry.

Explanation: The Joint Commission on Evangelism and Renewal has met five times during the triennium. These meetings have been productive and encouraging,

but have pointed up the immensity of the task before the Church in the area of evangelism and renewal. Unanimously, we agreed that a Standing Commission, which can anticipate continuing its work from triennium to triennium, rather than completing a task for each General Convention, would give life and vitality to this important ministry of the Church.

We have begun the work, but there is much to do. Our Lord calls us to witness to him in our world today. We have begun to learn how to spread the Word, but we must do more to pass that knowledge along to the Church. We have seen the way in which renewal is enlivening our faith and we are able to share some of our learning in this report, but the work must be ongoing. If we are to evangelize this country and renew the people of the Church it is time to plan for the future by establishing an ongoing Standing Commission on Evangelism and Renewal.

Resolution #A060

Whereas, The Standing Commission on Evangelism and Renewal has new tasks to perform for the next triennium; therefore be it

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That \$45,000 be appropriated for this Standing Commission on Evangelism and Renewal.**

Resolution #A061

Evangelism in Theological Education

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That the Standing Commission on Evangelism and Renewal be included in the exploration of the Board for Theological Education as it seeks to implement the report on the future of theological education in congregations, seminaries, and post ordination training, in order to achieve the goal of educating for evangelism.**

Rationale

The Board for Theological Education in its report, "The Future of Theological Education in the Episcopal Church," states that "... the entire church is called by God to move from maintenance to mission Theological education concerns the confession of faith, proclamation in word and deed, and sharing in Christ's priesthood Its focus is properly on the saving story and asks the question, 'Are we mobilizing for mission and recruiting leadership in mission?'"

The Standing Commission on Evangelism and Renewal believes that a special program for evangelism needs to be created which seminaries can share, namely to have a "floating faculty" on evangelism which could move from seminary to seminary: persons skilled in evangelistic preaching, others who are expert in church growth, others to bring strategies for training the laity for evangelism, and others to bring skills in relating evangelism to community outreach.

We urge this cooperative venture as a key portion of this exploration with the Board for Theological Education to fulfill the need for a regular department for seminarians but also as a source for post ordination study and for lay leaders.

Resolution #A062

A Canonical Change to Authorize the Licensing of Evangelists

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, **That**

1. Title III, Canon 2, Sec. 1 be amended to read as follows:

Sec. 1. A confirmed adult communicant in good standing, committed and prepared

to serve the Church as Lay Reader, Lay Preacher, *Lay Evangelist*, or Catechist, may be licensed to this ministry by the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the person is canonically resident. Guidelines for training and selection of such persons shall be established by the Ordinary of the Diocese and include provisions of Secs. 3-6 below, as applicable.

2. Title III, Canon 2, be amended by adding Sec. 8. as follows:

Sec. 8. A Lay Evangelist is a person licensed to lead in and train others for evangelism ministries in congregations. Prior to licensing, the Lay Evangelist shall be trained, examined and found competent in the following subjects:

- (a) The Holy Scriptures, contents and background;*
- (b) Missiology;*
- (c) Christian initiation;*
- (d) Apologetics;*
- (e) Use of the voice;*
- (f) Use of the mass media; and*
- (g) Interpersonal communications.*

Rationale

The role of evangelist in the Church has always been alternately respected and underrated. Since biblical days, the evangelist has been called to a very special ministry, one that is not always comfortable, but one which is necessary for the leading of persons to know Christ. There is a need for recognized evangelists in the parishes of the Episcopal Church, ones who would be called upon for special work in the Church and in the community. These persons would be trained in ways which would enhance their gifts and talents and which would keep them accountable to the parish and the diocese.