

Healing Evangelist Charles Hunter Dies

✖ Healing evangelist Charles Edward Hunter died in his Houston-area home Monday night after being in frail health for several years. He was 89.

Hunter and his wife, Frances, spent nearly 40 years leading healing crusades worldwide before her death last July at age 93. Known as the Happy Hunters, the couple wrote numerous books on divine healing, including the best seller *How to Heal the Sick*, and produced teaching DVDs to train others in healing ministry.

"[The Hunters] were a wonderful combination of two people who loved each other and loved the Lord," said Stanley Burgess, a distinguished professor of Christian history at Regent University's School of Divinity and author of *The Encyclopedia of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity*. "The other thing that impresses me about them is that they loved to train people, and you don't find training for healing in many places. It's going to be very hard to find others that have equal success in that area."

Hunter's daughter, Joan Hunter Murrell, said her father had essentially been bed-ridden for several months and suffered from a weakened heart. She said he died peacefully after lying down for bed.

She saw him the previous day to wish him a happy Father's Day.
"I
told him he was the best
father ever, which was true," she said. "Not only to me but to
everybody
he ever met."

Born July 23, 1920, Charles Hunter grew up in Abilene, Texas,
where his parents operated a peach orchard. He accepted Christ
as a teenager
and eventually became an accountant. After a stint in the Air
Force during
World War II, he opened an accounting firm in Houston.

Widowed in May 1969 after 27 years of marriage, Hunter married
an
itinerant evangelist named Frances Gardner on Jan. 1, 1970,
and the two began
to travel in ministry together. Although they sensed a calling
to healing ministry,
they saw a marked increase in miraculous healings after they
embraced the
baptism in the Holy Spirit in 1971 and began speaking in
tongues, authors
Richard Young and Brenda Young wrote in the Hunters'
biography, *Messengers
of Healing*.

"Before their baptism in the Holy Spirit, they had
laid hands on the sick with occasional results," the authors
wrote. "After
their baptism, it was not unusual for person after person to
exclaim that his
or her pain was gone, injured body parts were healed, or that
sores and growths
had shrunk or disappeared."

In 1985, the Hunters began leading large-scale crusades known

as “healing
explosions,” which hundreds of thousands of people attended
around the world.
In 1990, they started the World Evangelistic Census, a
campaign
that mobilized people to evangelize door-to-door. Millions
reportedly came to
Christ through the outreach.

Even when Charles Hunter was well into his 80s and Frances in
her
90s, the couple held seminars to train people in healing
ministry. As
recently as 2007, the couple hosted a Worldwide Day of Healing
for All Nations
that was broadcast worldwide on television and the Internet.

“I believe the gospel must be preached to every creature
before
Jesus comes back,” Charles Hunter said in a 2000 interview
with *Charisma*.
“That’s our aim, to keep busy. To keep on the cutting edge of
what Jesus is
doing.”

Joan Hunter Murrell—Frances Hunter’s daughter whom Charles
legally adopted in 1970—has been leading the Hunters’ Houston-
area ministry since her mother’s death in July.

Charles Hunter is survived by Frances’ two children, Thomas
Steder and Joan Hunter Murrell; nine grandchildren; and 14
great-grandchildren. Funeral services had not been announced
at press time.