

ARC Founder Billy Hornsby Dies

Church-planting pioneer Billy Hornsby, who worked for more than 30 years with church leaders nationally and internationally, passed away on March 23 after a battle with cancer.

“On March 23, 2011 at 9:44 p.m., our father and friend Billy Hornsby went to be with the Lord. Billy’s passion for God, family, life and leaders around the world will be long remembered,” announced Chris Hodges, founding and senior pastor of Church of the Highlands in Birmingham, Ala. Hodges is also Hornsby’s son-in-law.

Married for more than 40 years to his wife, Charlene, Hornsby was a published author who directed a nationwide church planting organization, the Association of Related Churches (ARC)—one of the most successful church-planting organizations in the world—and served as the senior European consultant for EQUIP, John Maxwell’s global leadership training organization. Since Hornsby formed ARC in 2000 with a handful of pastors, the network’s congregations have often been recognized among the fastest growing churches in the nation.

Hornsby was a keynote speaker for churches, conferences, and business groups speaking on the topics of team management, leadership and how to maintain productive relationships. Hornsby was also the guest editor of the March/April issue of *Ministry Today* magazine, in which he shared ARC’s strategy for church growth.

In February, Hornsby spoke at the Church of the Highlands during a service that honored his life and ministry. You can view Hornsby’s emotional message [here](#), in which he discusses how the cancer had taken over his body—“but the gospel is true

to the end,” Hornsby said. “[Jesus] has taken the fear out of death. In all my struggles, I have not had one moment of fear the whole time.”

The Church of the Highlands is holding a memorial service to celebrate Hornsby’s life on Monday, Mar. 28, at 6:30 p.m. The church will provide a live video stream of the service from the Highlands website.

“In lieu of flowers we are asking that donations in Billy Hornsby’s name be made to the Association of Related Churches (ARC) or to a special fund that has been set up for his wife, Charlene Hornsby,” Hodges says.