

Our Anniversary Celebration Has Something for You Every Day in August

Welcome to the special 40th anniversary celebration of *Charisma*. Beginning on the first of August and running to the 31st, we will give perspective on what has been going on in the Spirit-empowered movement.

For this month, we are “taking over” the website to celebrate this special milestone. But it’s not about us. It’s about those whose lives have been touched by the Holy Spirit and hopefully in some way by *Charisma*.

We won’t just report on history, but we’ll be sharing insights about each of the four decades. For some who lived it with us, it will bring back memories! For a younger generation, it will provide understanding of what God has done and hopefully bless you as we reprint some of our best articles from the past.

Every weekend we will run articles from our archives—we call it “Pages from our Past.” We’ve published thousands of articles but these are ones we believe are still relevant today.

Since today kicks off our celebration I’m including some things from our very first issue that I believe you’ll find interesting. For example, we reported on how the Great Awakening shaped the colonies in the period leading up to the Declaration of Independence and the Revolutionary War that followed. It’s an article I wrote (as I wrote many in the early days). It represented what some historians have postulated in the past but it’s not something most secular historians would consider. Read it and decide if it’s valid.

You will also read a short article by Jonathan Edwards and an

excerpt from his famous sermon: "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." It's a powerful sermon that most Christians have heard of but few have read. The short excerpt merely gives you a taste of what that sermon was like.

The year 1975 started a yearlong celebration leading up to America's bicentennial in 1976. Both events were featured in the first 32 page issue of *Charisma*, which cost only 50 cents. *Charisma* initially appeared as a church magazine for Calvary Assembly in Winter Park, Florida. I remember, we printed 10,000 copies and gave most of them away!

I'm showing the first issue. That's Thurlow Spurr of Spurlows fame on the cover. At the time Thurlow was the minister of music at Calvary Assembly.

Space will not allow us to reprint as many articles from other issues as I am reprinting from the first issue, but that issue was special because it was first. When we do republish articles, it is because the editorial team feels they will minister to you. There is one exception: it's the first editor's column I wrote in the very first issue.

It was a wrap-up of what would be in the issue (much as I'm doing here for this anniversary celebration) and I tried to give a bit of a vision for why we were publishing *Charisma*. I have added it at the end of this to give you a glimpse into how this really was a church magazine yet in a sophomoric way I had a vision for something much more. In hindsight what I wrote doesn't seem very profound. I was only 24 and I had no idea what the future held. I knew there would be a few people who would enjoy reading it.

That leads me to an article we will run online tomorrow, Sunday, August 2. The article is taken from our anniversary issue in which I took my monthly column to recount our own 40-year odyssey not only as a magazine but as a publishing/media company that it spawned.

Tomorrow you will also read about the “40 People Who Radically Changed our Lives.” This was the cover story for the anniversary issue. The phrase gives a nod to our own company motto that we coined four years ago, which we hope inspires you! Even though the words are new, I think it represents what we’ve been trying to do since we began in 1975.

If you read our print magazine, you’ll see how we ran short features on each of these leaders. To include all 40 we will run two a day each weekday all month. Many of these leaders also wrote articles for us. As appropriate we will reprint some of the articles that are still pertinent today. I believe you’ll be inspired by them.

If you are not a subscriber to the print version of *Charisma* magazine, [click here now](#) for a special rate and begin your subscription with this keepsake edition.

Give me your feedback. You can reply in the comments section online or email me at anniversary@ and tell me your memories of *Charisma* or if you like the articles we are putting up.

Now here’s “The Editor’s Column” I wrote in the first issue under the headline “Introducing *Charisma* magazine.” Notice how much I refer to Calvary, often referring to it as “the Body” (which was religious jargon popular at the time). Notice how I referred to myself in the third person. Notice how I referred to the magazine as being “first-class.” It was printed on uncoated paper and the artwork and layouts were amateurish; it was anything but first-class. Maybe that showed we had a vision for when the magazine would be better. Finally the run-down of the articles gives you a sense of what that first issue was like, which is one of the reasons I’m reprinting this here.

The publication of this magazine begins a bold new ministry for Calvary Assembly.

The church already has one of the best youth ministries in America; a top-notch choir and nationally-known minister of music, and is one of the state's fastest growing churches.

The church also has been experiencing a move of the Holy Spirit and a new depth of Christian growth as God teaches the Body, most recently about the necessity of discipleship.

There's a love that permeates the entire body. The feeling of love is one of the things most visitors notice most frequently.

But the ministry of the body is limited to the 2,000 or so people who attend services weekly or the ones who hear the daily radio broadcasts.

This magazine was designed to broaden the ministry-to share the Gospel to thousands more in Central Florida.

When we decided to publish, we decided to go first-class, with colorful, lively layouts and top-notch writing.

We didn't want to become the kind of boring publications many "religious" journals are.

Instead, we decided to be contemporary so we could speak to the secular community while still being a religious publication.

We live in a secular society and we believe in reaching that society with the Gospel in a contemporary way. That is why we went first-class with this publication.

Of course it cost money. That's why we accepted advertising.

We felt it was a way to defray costs, because our readers, after all are consumers.

The real emphasis of this magazine, is to communicate the love of Christ and the joy of serving Him. We've experienced this in our own lives and Christ's love is evident in the body at Calvary. We want to share that with our readers.

The result is the magazine you are reading.

We even chose the name – *Charisma* – because it goes along with the philosophy behind our beginning this new journal.

The word originally refers to the Holy Spirit. It is the word from which the charismatic renewal gets its name. We are a part of that move of the Holy spirit of which Joel prophesied.

But the name also has a secular meaning today- referring to men who are leaders whom others follow.

We seek to communicate the Gospel in secular world. We believe we can, like Paul, say to those in the secular world- follow us as we follow Christ.

Also, in these pages, we will feature, from issue to issue, people who have not only a secular charisma, but are filled with the charisma of Christ.

In each issue we will bring you articles that speak of Christ in a contemporary world. We will also print articles that teach believers and edify the Body.

Each issue will feature an interview with a well-known person in the religious community. This month we featured Thurlow Spurr, who is pictured on the cover.

Thurlow has been for the past 20 years an innovator in contemporary sacred music has been and where it's going, and how it is able to edify the body of Christ.

There is also a photo feature of the tremendously popular "Freedom Celebration" produced in June by Thurlow and the Calvary Concert Choir in Orlando. The patriotic program emphasized that there will always be good in America as long as it remains one nation under God.

The authors of articles in the issue have varied backgrounds.

Our pastor, Dr. Roy A. Harthern, comes from Great Britain. He has pastored in Beaumont, Texas, as well as Jacksonville and West Palm Beach, Florida.

Pastor Harthern is also beginning a regular column under his byline in this issue.

He writes about people in the nation's capital who have a personal faith in Christ. In addition, he writes in this issue about the necessity for discipleship in Christ's Body, if it is to grow as it should.

George Clouse- who wrote of how God helped him dissolve a \$38,000 debt after he claimed Romans 13:8 – is the head machinist at the Orlando Sentinel Star. In the three years George has been filled with the Holy Spirit, he has been a dynamic christian witness at the Sentinel Star as well as recently becoming a shepherd in the local Body.

Joyce Strader is the wife of Pastor Karl Strader, of First Assembly of God in Lakeland, Fla. Besides being a vital part of her husband's ministry, she is mother of four. She writes this issue of how her youngest daughter taught her a new truth about love.

Alex Clattenburg wrote "A Trial Is No Error." He is a local businessman and youth pastor of Calvary Assembly's Rock House – one of the most dynamic youth ministries in America.

Your editor is a reporter for the Sentinel Star, covering local government, as well as being a sometimes freelance

writer. He is also director—with his wife Joy—of the college and career division of the Rock House ministry.

The next issue of *Charisma* will feature a person interview with Kathryn Kuhlman as well as a story of her ministry of healing and the testimonies of people miraculously healed by the power of God.