

The ‘New’ Charisma

Much has happened since *Charisma* was started in 1975—in the church, in our culture and with technology. Over those 30-plus years I’ve been blessed to be part of many powerful moves of the Holy Spirit. Yet seasons change.

God is doing new things. We want to stay in step with the Holy Spirit’s new direction. Therefore we have redesigned our publication to better follow what we sense God is doing today, to reach a new generation of readers and to better serve the global church. In this issue we feature our fifth logo change but the first major redesign in many years. We hope you like it.

While continuing its unique mission to serve the Spirit-empowered community, the “new and improved” *Charisma* will feature new departments, features and voices—all with a more contemporary design to serve its changing audience. But *Charisma* isn’t just in print. Beyond what’s at , we also have a digital version with rich media such as music, videos, podcasts and Web links. This month we’re also launching the *Charisma* app. It’s free and, as far as we know, the first original Christian news app. Download it to your smartphone and tell your friends about it too. It’s just one more way we’re trying to serve you—and the Lord—in new ways.

Many of you know I took a sabbatical for several months last year. After doing the same thing for nearly 35 years, I enjoyed some much-needed rest. It was a wonderful time with God. I’ve returned feeling refreshed and excited about the future. My vision has never been stronger to serve the growing Spirit-filled community focusing on the life-transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

During my sabbatical we moved Lee Grady’s popular column to the inside back page—a spot where Jamie Buckingham wrote for

13 years and where my column has been for more than 17 years. I've known Lee since we were both in our 20s and have enjoyed working with him on staff since 1992. Now God has opened new doors for him to minister around the world. Even though he's stepped down from his role as lead editor, he'll continue as a contributing editor and his column will remain where it is. In a way, Lee has taken on Jamie's journalistic/prophetic mantle in recent years, while my role has become more like my late mentor Robert Walker, a networker and visionary who did new things and connected people in new ways. In fact, in the next couple months I have some exciting announcements to make about new directions we're taking to connect the Christian community even more.

From the earliest days I've seen my role as reporting—as Walker did before me in *Christian Life* magazine—on what the Holy Spirit is doing in the world today. We often gave major coverage to new faces as they emerged, including leaders such as Marilyn Hickey or John Bevere, and we highlighted major trends such as the growing independent charismatic movement among African-Americans. But we also covered ministries such as John Jacobs, Larry Lea and Ted Haggard who ended up being disappointments. Did we not do our due diligence? At the time we did. Yet later these episodes were an embarrassment to the body of Christ. In the Spirit-filled movement there's a lot of excitement and fire; sadly, sometimes it's wildfire.

During this time of transition we're examining our own policies. We've tightened up on who can advertise to be sure they have credibility and integrity. And we're focused on calling God's people to holiness and righteousness, and on doing what we can in print, online and behind the scenes to correct past mistakes.

For years pastor Jack Hayford has been the spiritual covering for our ministry. When I shared these thoughts with him recently, he replied: "You are precisely on target. The new *Charisma* is going to be a great instrument in the Lord's

hand.”

We’re excited about the new opportunities technology gives us to spread our message worldwide. We believe this time of transition will make *Charisma* even stronger in a way that will benefit the church, our readers and the advertisers we serve. And a Spirit-empowered church will, in turn, affect society.

Steve Strang is the founder and publisher of *Charisma*. Follow him on Twitter at *sstrang* or become a Facebook fan of *Charisma*.