

THE

August 2020

# HELMSMAN

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF REVIVAL FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL



**THE HISTORY OF  
REVIVAL  
FELLOWSHIP  
INTERNATIONAL**



A photograph of a man with short hair, wearing a dark blue sweater and light-colored trousers, sitting on a wooden chair outdoors. He is holding an open book and looking down at it. The background is a lush green lawn with some plants. The text 'Celebrating 25 Years' is written in a large, white, cursive font across the middle of the image, with 'THE HISTORY OF RFI' in a smaller, white, sans-serif font below it.

# Celebrating 25 Years

## THE HISTORY OF RFI

*Dr. John at Lake Naivasha, Kenya*

**J**ohn 15:16 *“You did not choose Me, but I choose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.”*

The history leading up to the birth of RFI in 1995 is a supernatural journey of faith and Holy Spirit encounters. I graduated from Dayton Bible College in 1980 and was asked by the Eastern Divisional Superintendent of Open Bible Standard Churches to fill in on Sunday for a small pentecostal church in Fairmont, WV. The church was about 40 people most of which were over 60 years old and well set in their ways. They decided to keep me and “elected” me for one year to be pastor, and continued to vote me in each year from 1980-83.

1983 was a pivotal year for the ministry at which time I introduced a “theocratic” constitution and by laws, setting the church in biblical order and ending the “congregational vote.” I then became the pastor indefinitely

in keeping with the guidelines of the governing documents and was able to appoint a Board of Trustees that shared my vision. We immediately exploded in growth from 75 people in 1983 to 250 in 1986, over 100 were new converts, it was a Holy Ghost Revival. In 1983, God told me to change the name of our church and call it “Light of Life World Outreach Center” which sounded like a really big deal in our little town of 18,000 people. I obeyed God who had told me that “if I would call myself a World Outreach Center, He would make me one.” It was the same challenge He gave to Abram when He changed his name to Abraham who “called those things which be not as though they were.” (Romans 4:17-21)

We opened our first Bible College campus that year in Fairmont in partnership with the Bob Tilton Satellite Network with 20 students training for ministry. Up till now, we have established colleges in Bulgaria, Kenya, Swaziland, Liberia, and Croatia, which is in process of

filming courses. College campuses in the US include West Virginia, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Maryland. Our college in Kenya which began in 1998 has graduated 2000+ leaders that have planted 600+ churches, some of which are mega in size. Many apostolic networks have been formed by our alumni in Kenya, based on apostolic doctrine.

I also had a supernatural prayer encounter that same year that brought me into the Apostolic ministry. I was walking in prayer in the sanctuary when I stepped through 5 anointings as I walked, I knew what each one was as I walked thru them, ending up in the apostles anointing. I learned in that encounter that the apostle walks in all five gifts at different times and for different reasons in building the Church. Following the encounter and change in my primary ministry anointing, I was invited to Kenya in December, 1983 where I preached to 800 youth members of the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya (150,000 members). We had a Holy Ghost



outpouring for the week and I was subsequently asked to be the main speaker for all the youth conferences of the organization, making 21 trips to Kenya from 1983-1990 and preaching to thousands of youth all over the nation. This established our ministry in East Africa to include ministry in Tanzania, Uganda and Malawi. Later on we branched to South Africa, Namibia, Swaziland, Nigeria, Liberia and Ghana.

During that time period I began planting churches as the international apostolic ministry began to unfold, television and radio ministry opened up and expanded to include international short wave, local and national tv broadcasts with LeSea Global Network (Lester Sumrall). We were riding high on the tail end of the Charismatic/Word of Faith movement and learning more about being an "apostle" all along. The denomination I was serving at the time didn't believe in Apostles and Prophets, so I had no mentor but Holy Spirit. I was often ridiculed for believing the New Testament and preaching the Restoration message but God was faithful to give us grace to move on and up.

One of the most outstanding moves of God we experienced during the 80's was a revival in the jail and prisons of West Virginia (*I explain it in detail in my book entitled "Victorious"*). A revival broke out on a Monday night in the Marion County jail where I started a bible study for inmates when men were sovereignly baptized in the Spirit and healed, all documented by jail officials. We then were led into the Maximum Security Prison in Moundsville, WV for several years of fruitful ministry and into two other State institutions with revival services and bible instruction. It was a glorious season of fruitful ministry that changed many lives eternally. All this ministry took place while Rebecca and I were pastoring the church in Fairmont, WV which was

church in Fairmont, WV which was an "apostolic hub" that remains to this day.

In 1991 God sent me to the denomination I served as a Faith/Healing Ministry. I traveled from Ohio to Oregon conducting healing meetings in the churches of that denomination with so many miraculous healing that I was asked to write a section in the denomination handbook for new believers on the subject of Divine Healing. During the period from 1987-1994, God used me as a prophetic voice to the denomination where the word of the Lord came forth in many District and National Conventions, calling the organization back to its roots as an apostolic revival movement as it had been in the 1930's -50's. Much of that prophetic ministry was ignored and the old wineskin remained in a stagnated condition. I was being used by God to try and "reform" the organization here in the US and the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya at the same time, preaching the message of Acts 3:19-21 in both places. God has plans for us that we cannot conceive of and sometimes don't even realize until it is over and we can look back and understand what He was doing all along. Those years were formative years for me in preparation for leading the movement we call Revival Fellowship International.

In 1994 I was led to leave the denomination which was a very difficult decision to make after 14 years of serving in various positions and ministries. I was also among the top tithing pastors and contributors to the World Mission department, we were well established and known by the organization. We had three noted prophets visit us at different times during the six month period of prayer before making the move, all three not having spoke to one another prophesied our exit and beginning of a new day in our lives. At this time, a well respected Evangelist contacted



Hundreds of youth receive the Word of God in Kenya, 1983.



Bible College Graduation in Monrovia, Liberia



Ministry among the Gypsies of Bulgaria.



Santa Cruz , Bolivia.



Teaching in Pentacostal Bible College in Singapore.





Skype Crusade Lahore, Pakistan.



Men's Conference held in Fairmont, WV.



2008 RFI Conference in Hendersonville, NC.



2020 Graduating Class at Restoration College International in Fairmont, WV.

me with a “word from the Lord” telling me that I was supposed to organize a ‘fellowship for churches and ministers’ that he would be part of. I was shocked and had no previous notion to do something along that line so I went off for a season of fasting and prayer. On the fourth day, God spoke to me, “Organize Revival Fellowship as a network for churches and ministers’, what we now call “an Apostolic Network.” I followed up immediately and we had our first meeting as a network in July 1995 in Fairmont, WV with five official members. It was the beginning of a “restoration revival movement” that has gone progressively on for 25 years to include churches and ministers in 13 states and 7 nations.

God spoke to me saying, “I will give you favor with national ministries who will impart anointing into the “apothecary” of RFI.” I understood that God was “mixing anointing” in our “house” for access by all those who are “connected” and making “withdrawals” on the anointing of the house. Some of those great ministries who have left a deposit into our lives include Kenneth Hagin, Lester Sumrall, Mike Murdock, Gary Greenwald, Ellen Parsley, Don Meares, John Kelly, Roberts Lairdon, David Crank and others. We truly have a “rich deposit” to draw from in RFI.

As a result, we have increasingly enjoyed “present truth” from Holy Spirit and seen growth in the lives of all our “family members” over the years who have planted churches and apostolic networks. RFI has grown in “faith and love” to be a model of an “apostolic movement” characterized by the

Elijah Anointing of restoration. The “love of God” is prevalent in our members and meetings that are more like “family reunions” when we gather. We are now preparing for the next generation of leaders to move up in the ranks and carry the mantle into the future. We expect that will take place over the next 10 year period if Jesus doesn’t return.

I want to thank all those who have joined our movement and been such a blessing to us over the years. As I look around, I see people who have been with us from the beginning and others who have been a part for 5, 10 and fifteen years. We are truly blessed. God spoke to me one day saying, “RFI is a plum.” I understood God to mean that it is a “sweet fruit to Him.” I was very happy. All praise, honor and glory to Him forever who has brought us this far and will lead us to the final destination prepared from the foundation of the world.

Love to all,  
John and Rebecca Polis, Founders



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**Thanks to those who sowed a gift of honor to Dr. Rebecca and I for the 25 year Anniversary. May God reward you abundantly for your love and faith.**





Word of Life Church,  
Zagreb, Croatia.



Eldoret Bible College  
Graduation, Kenya.



2009 Women's Conference  
held in Fairmont, WV.



Dr. Lester Sumrall ministering  
with us in 1995.



Apostolic Marketplace Center in  
Altea, Spain.



RFI Summer Teen Camp.



Renowned Eschatologist Dr. Oneal Carman was a  
Founding member of RFI in 1995 and close friend of  
Dr. John. Greatly loved and deeply missed since his  
passing.



50th Anniversary of Full Gospel Churches of Kenya.



Keynote speaker at 50th Anniversary of Full Gospel  
Churches of Kenya.





## RFI LIBERIA AND ICAL

**FROM RICHARD COLE JR.**

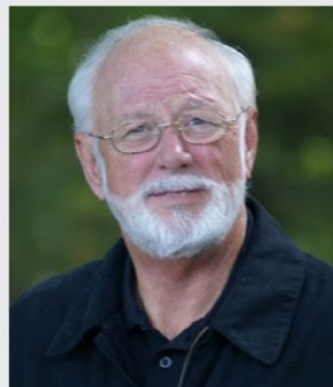
Hi Daddy, how are you doing today? Hope all is well. Yesterday, The Revival Fellowship International - Liberia and Liberia Coalition of Apostolic Leaders had a joint Leadership Meeting at Rev.

Saydee's church. The purpose of the meeting is to work together as a family and ministries to take the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every parts in Liberia and the world at large. Since the two ministries are working together in the US, we

decided also to come together to join forces in making sure the dreams and visions of our two spiritual fathers be achieved here in Liberia through the Grace of God Almighty. Please continue to pray for us.

## AP. RON DEPRIEST

Apostle Ron DePriest went to be with Jesus recently after a season of physical challenges which he valiantly fought. A beautiful memorial service was held at Heritage Fellowship, Florence, Kentucky where family and friends shared the impact of Ron's life on his generation. He will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him.



## PS. AGGREY OWINO

Ps. Owino recently graduated to Heaven after a lengthy battle with cancer. He pastored a thriving church in Eldoret and was an EBC alumni from the first graduating class in 2000. He was a prayer warrior involved in leading prayer movements around Kenya. He wife Jane remains with the church and RFIK. Tim Bolyard and Michael Kangogo appear with the Owino's.





# DR. JAY GRIMSTEAD

Since our 25th Anniversary Celebration was hindered by the pandemic, we had a smaller informal gathering for those who could come to Lake Lure, NC for a three day gathering with Dr. Jay Grimstead and his lovely wife, Donna. We had meetings Thursday and Friday night at the Rumbling Bald Resort with Dr. Jay speaking, and a cookout at my home nearby on Saturday. About 35 of us gathered for a sweet time of fellowship and sharing. It was well worth the investment of our time as we enjoyed the Presence of God and the beautiful Lake Lure and Chimney Rock State Park.

We brought Jay and Donna to Fairmont for a meeting with local pastors on July 30th including a catered luncheon. I interviewed Jay with some serious questions regarding the Great Evangelical Disaster which has overtaken large parts of the Church. If you would like to see this one hour meeting, it can be viewed at [www.rfiusa.org](http://www.rfiusa.org).

It was a great honor to host a “church father” like Dr. Jay Grimstead, 85 years old and full of fire and faith for the Church he loves, and for his beloved America.



## 2020-2021 SAVE THE DATES

OCT  
24TH

**WOMEN'S  
GATHERING**

FEB  
27TH

**SCHOOL OF THE  
SHEPHERDS**

DEC  
20TH

**HOLLY JOLLY  
CHRISTMAS  
PARTY**

JULY  
22ND  
THRU  
24TH

**RFI FAMILY  
GATHERING**

FEB  
13TH

**SWEET RETREAT**

There will be a renewal of vows for all married couples wanting to participate on Sunday, February 14th at Faith Church International during the morning service at 10am.

**Revival** Fellowship International - [www.rfiusa.org](http://www.rfiusa.org)





# 25 YEAR ANNIVERSARY



Early days of ministry in Busia District, Kenya, 1983.  
Dr. John Polis (pictured on the left)



**REVIVAL FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL**

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