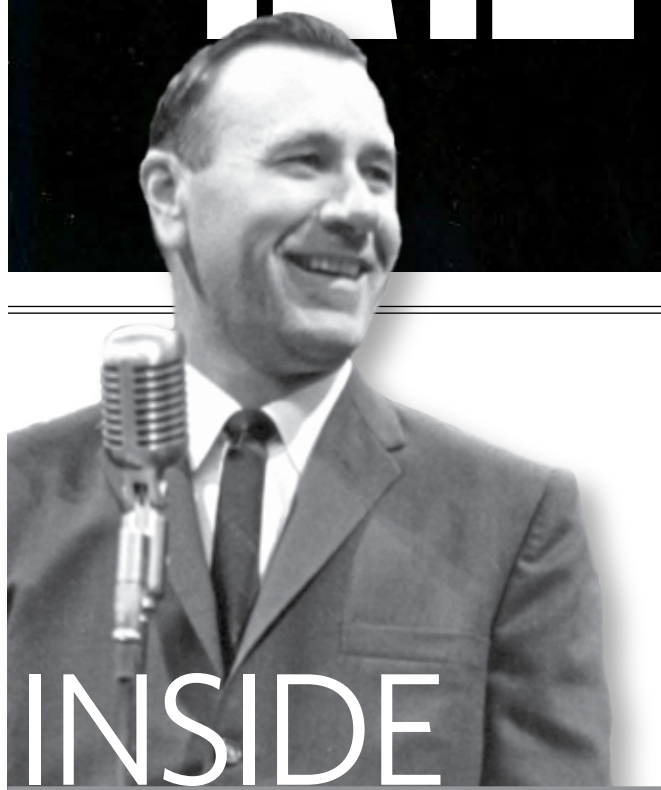


# ORAL ROBERTS 1918-2009

# LEGACY



## INSIDE

A pioneer of televangelism, Roberts leaves a lasting legacy. **Pages 2-3**



ORU makes a comeback. **4**



Alumni relive glory days. **5**



Roberts' last interview. **5**



A timeline of his life. **6**

[TULSAWORLD.COM/ORALROBERTS](http://TULSAWORLD.COM/ORALROBERTS)

**Oral Roberts: The Man. The Mission. The Ministry.** View a Web site dedicated to his life and career as an evangelist. View a complete archive of stories written about Roberts, watch videos and slide shows and view an interactive timeline.

[TULSAWORLD.COM/ORALROBERTS](http://TULSAWORLD.COM/ORALROBERTS)





Oral Roberts lays hands on a man at a healing crusade. He once said he had laid hands on 1 million people over his years of ministry. Beryl Ford Collection

# A LASTING INFLUENCE

BY BILL SHERMAN WORLD RELIGION WRITER

**I**t is difficult to overstate Oral Roberts' influence on 20th-century Christianity, church leaders say.

When Roberts pioneered his healing tent crusades as a young Pentecostal Holiness preacher in the 1940s, Pentecostalism was a small, poor, persecuted faith on the wrong side of the tracks.

When he died Tuesday, 640 million people embraced some form of his teaching that God is a good God who wants to bless people spiritually, physically and economically.

Worldwide, the Pentecostal/Charismatic family is second in size only to Catholicism and is the dominant form of Christianity in much of Africa, Asia and South America.

Among the many people involved in the worldwide explosion of Pentecostalism, Roberts is singled out as the most influential.

Often belittled in the press and taken for granted in his own hometown, Roberts was a hero to Third World Christians. Visitors to churches in Africa who mention they are from Tulsa inevitably will be asked, "Oh, do you know Oral Roberts?"

"I don't think there's any question he and Billy Graham are the two towering figures from the 20th century," the Rev. Jack Hayford told the Tulsa World on Thursday. Hayford recently completed a five-year term as president of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel.

In his book, "The Charismatic Century," he wrote that without the ministry of Oral Roberts, "the entire charismatic movement might not have occurred."

Vinson Synan, a church historian, ranked Roberts with Graham and Pope John Paul II as the leading religious figures of the 20th century.

"I think he stands on that level," said Synan, dean emeritus and professor of church history at Regent University in Virginia Beach, Va., and author of "The Century of the Holy Spirit: 100 Years of Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal, 1901-2001."

"Billy Graham led the rebirth of evangelicalism, Oral led the growth of Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Move-

ment, and Pope John Paul II helped bring down communism."

Synan was a high school student in 1949 when he met Roberts.

His father, J.A. Synan, was the presiding bishop of the Pentecostal Holiness Church and was Roberts' spiritual overseer at that time.

"I went to see him at a tent crusade in Norfolk, Va. It was the biggest crowd I had ever seen. I got saved at that meeting."

Synan said his father told him after that meeting that Roberts was like a different man.

"He had stuttered so badly, he could hardly get a sentence out. But in the pulpit, he was a ball of fire — no stuttering at all," Synan said.

Synan said Roberts changed the face of Pentecostalism, at that time an often ridiculed brand of Christianity that emphasizes healing, miracles and speaking in tongues.

"He planted the seeds of the charismatic renewal."

Through him, the movement spread worldwide, and now his teachings on healing and prosperity are spread all over the world, Synan said.

Among his disciples have been some of the top Christian leaders of the world, including Tulsa's Kenneth E. Hagin, German evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, Texas evangelist Kenneth Copeland and Korean pastor Yonggi Cho, founder of the largest church in the world.

Synan said Roberts was the key to what is called the word of faith movement, a

'He had stuttered so badly, he could hardly get a sentence out. But in the pulpit, he was a ball of fire — no stuttering at all.'

**VINSON SYNAN**  
Church historian

SEE FAITH OR3

# ORAL ROBERTS

1918-2009



Oral Roberts preaches to a near-capacity crowd attending a healing crusade at the Mabee Center in 1983. SHERRY BROWN/Tulsa World file photo



Oral is pictured with his wife, Evelyn, in 1976. They met in 1938 and were married for 66 years. Tulsa World file photo



Roberts is shown at the dedication of City of Faith Hospital in Tulsa in 1981. Tulsa World file photo



Roberts speaks during commencement services at Oral Roberts University in 1987. SHERRY BROWN/Tulsa World file photo

## DEFINITIONS

### Classical Pentecostalism

A Christian movement that came out of a 1906 revival on Azusa Street in Los Angeles, characterized by speaking in tongues, healing, miracles and other gifts of the Holy Spirit. Oral Roberts' Pentecostal Holiness denomination; Church of God in Christ, which is America's largest black denomination; and the Assemblies of God are part of that movement.

### Charismatic Movement

A loose-knit movement closely related to classical Pentecostalism that arose both in and out of the major denominations in the 1960s and 1970s, characterized by the gifts (charisma) of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues, miracles and healing. Most of Tulsa's large independent churches grew out of that movement, all of them influenced by the Oral Roberts ministry.

### Speaking in tongues

Adherents say it is the practice of speaking or praying in an unknown language by the power of the Holy Spirit, a spiritual discipline that Oral Roberts has said was an important means of inspiration for him.

## FAITH:

FROM OR2

sometimes controversial theology that teaches that God wants to bless people spiritually, physically and financially and will do so in response to faith.

Some people have taken that teaching to extremes, Synan said, and Roberts told him he was unhappy about that.

Thomson Mathew, dean of the Oral Roberts University School of Theology and Missions, said: "I consider him one of the top two religious men of the 20th century — Billy Graham in crusade evangelism and Oral Roberts in the healing evangelism world."

Mathew said Roberts introduced the concept of healing evangelism as a new paradigm, from huge tent meetings to television and foreign crusades.

"There are a lot of imitators, but he was the pioneer," he said.

In the field of education, Roberts launched the concept of educating the whole person, body, mind and spirit, a concept that has since spread to other schools and has affected the world, Mathew said.

In the field of medicine, Roberts pioneered the concept of treating the whole person, he said.

He held whole-person healing conferences in the 1980s that brought together doctors, nurses and ministers.

"People were laughing at him. Now Harvard University conducts spiritual

and healing conferences, and nobody is laughing. He was about 25 years ahead of his time."

Willie George, pastor of Church on the Move, one of Tulsa's largest churches, said Roberts "taught us to think big. He was the first one to do that."

Until he came along, George said, Pentecostals "had low self-esteem ... and hand-me-down buildings. Oral was the guy who really let us see we could have God's best."

"The whole idea that God is a good God can be traced back to Oral Roberts. So many Christians had the view that God is waiting to get you. Oral was the one who changed that."

George said when he moved to Tulsa to work in a church and the situation fell through, he was devastated.

"I was broken-hearted. I sat in the parking lot of ORU late one night, crying my eyes out.

"God spoke to my heart and said I'd be OK, that he would give me a ministry across the United States.

"I can't tell you how many ministers I know who have had a similar experiences" connected to the Roberts' ministry, he said.

"He taught us to think big, to dare to dream. It had a huge impact on people like me."

George said Roberts was a leader in using the mass media for ministry.

"He understood the power of communicating through television to a larger audience at a time when others didn't understand what he was doing," George said.

Roberts was racially colorblind, a fact evident by the strong presence at ORU of people of every race around the world.

Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake, head of the Church of God in Christ, the nation's largest black denomination, said Roberts' conviction about racial equality and the free involvement of all races in the life of the church characterized his entire life.

"As an African-American leader, I was so honored to play significant leadership roles in various organizations which he headed.

"I was aware of the deep respect and affection that he had for me and other African Americans.

"His far-reaching, bold vision inspired me to think bigger than I'd ever thought before," he said.

"He was a giant of a man."

Blake pastors the 25,000-member West Angeles Church of God in Christ in Los Angeles, and he was on the board of International Charismatic Bible Ministries, a fellowship of charismatic leaders founded by Roberts.

International evangelist T.L. Osborn, a lifelong friend of Roberts, said Roberts' life has "impacted the world, reminding every man, woman and child that 'God is a good God.'"

"His legacy of faith, carried on through the lives of the thousands of Oral Roberts University graduates, will continue touching every person's world until Jesus comes," Osborn said.

Bill Sherman 581-8398  
bill.sherman@tulsa-world.com

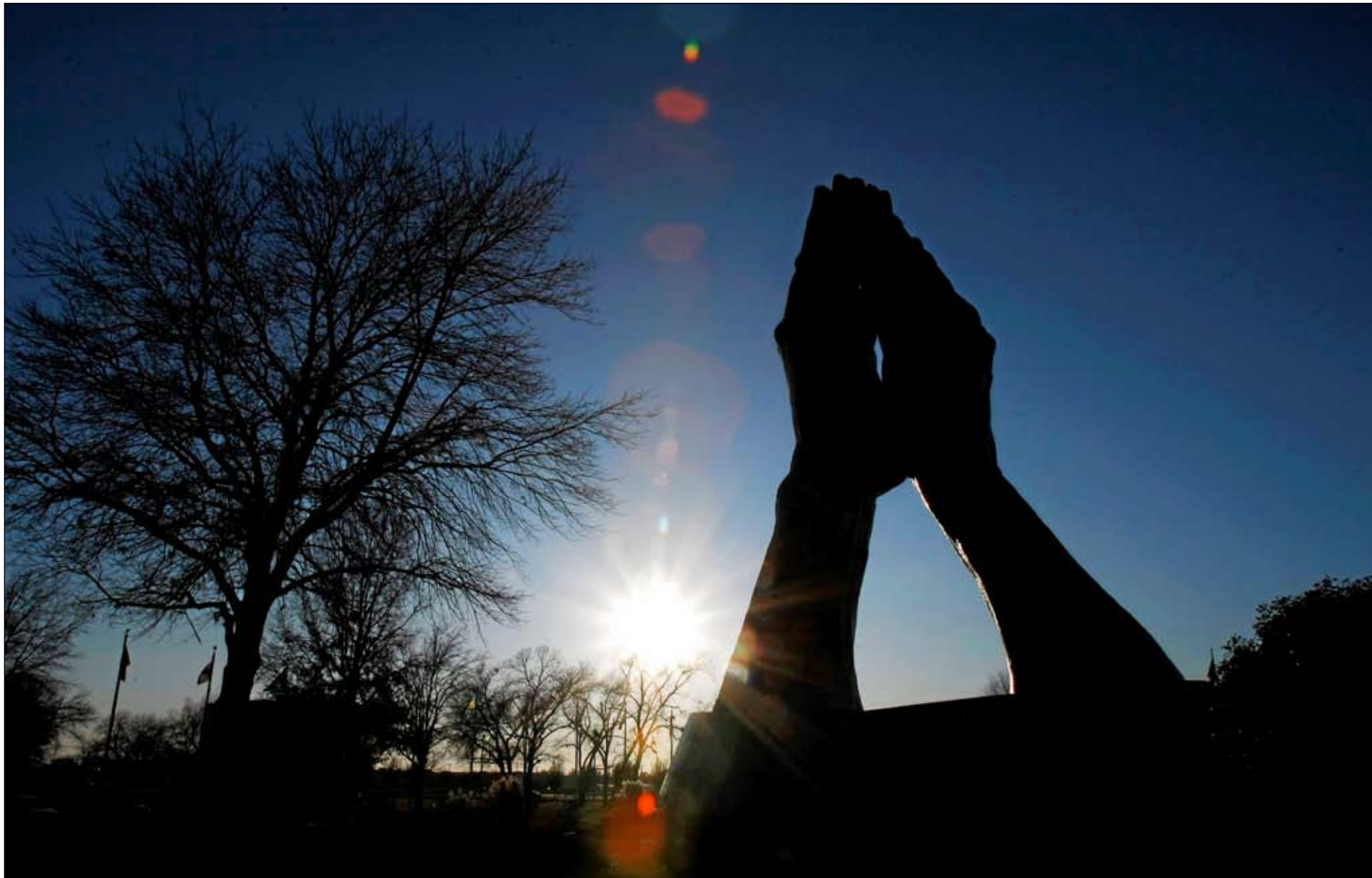
'The whole idea that God is a good God can be traced back to Oral Roberts. So many Christians had the view that God is waiting to get you. Oral was the one who changed that.'

**WILLIE GEORGE**

Pastor of Church on the Move, one of Tulsa's largest churches

# ORAL ROBERTS

1918-2009



The Praying Hands statue is silhouetted by the sun on the campus of Oral Roberts University on Tuesday, hours after Roberts died of complications from pneumonia in Newport Beach, Calif. He had survived two heart attacks in the 1990s and a broken hip in 2006. STEPHEN HOLMAN/Tulsa World

## A BRIGHT FUTURE

BY SHANNON MUCHMORE WORLD STAFF WRITER

• A \$70 million donation helped ORU move away from a troubled past and years of spiraling debt.

**I**n its 44-year history, Oral Roberts University has seen its share of controversy and financial crises, as well as international praise and tangible alumni support.

From its beginning of 300 students in 1965 to its heyday of medical, dental and law schools on campus in the early 1980s, to scandal and rebirth in the most recent decade, the university has maintained a commitment to its founding mission and principles and continued to graduate students from around the world.

The evangelical school with a 500-acre campus in south Tulsa and an enrollment of more than 3,000 is pushing forward with new leadership apart from the founding family but with the same vision as its namesake, Oral Roberts.

Roberts continued to serve as the university's chancellor until his death Tuesday in Newport Beach, Calif. He was 91.

### 'Raise up your students'

In 1965, Roberts, by then already a well-known faith healer and evangelist who could attract thousands to his tent revivals, dedicated the university as a place for what he called the "daring new concept" of teaching the whole person.

"It was planned to be from the beginning — one that would be able and willing to innovate change in all three basic aspects of your being, the intellectual, the physical and the spiritual," Roberts said at the time.

He said God had instructed him to build the university four years earlier, telling him "to raise up your students to hear my voice. Their work will exceed yours, and in this I am well pleased."

Famed evangelist Billy Graham visited the school in 1967, drawing an estimated crowd of 20,000 people. Officials from throughout the state as well as visitors from coast to coast listened to Graham and Roberts give speeches recalling their crusades.

George Gillen, the only founding faculty member to still teach full-time at ORU, said the faculty and students were determined to build an accredited, well-recognized institution.

"We were all stimulated to build a great university," he said.

### Expansion and contraction

In 1975, ORU announced plans to establish medical, dental and law schools by 1980 as part of Roberts' master plan for the university. By 1990, none of the graduate schools remained at ORU's campus.

Financial trouble and legal fees plagued the medical and law schools from the be-

ginning. When the medical school and the City of Faith complex that housed it closed in 1989, the university had accumulated a debt of \$25 million.

David Dyson, an ORU business professor and alumnus, said the university suffered as it fought the American Bar Association, which was concerned with the school's religious affiliation and in particular its intolerance of homosexuals.

"They went through a very lengthy battle in the courts with both sides arguing First Amendment rights," Dyson said.

The university also struggled with the licensing of its hospital. It overestimated patient numbers and didn't anticipate changes in Medicare costs. The lack of expected revenue sent ORU into a time of immense financial difficulty.

Gillen said it was sad for everyone involved in the university.

"Those were very difficult times because the zeal that we had was probably overbounding, and we probably moved too quickly," he said.

Also, in the spring of 1987, televangelists such as Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart were mired in scandal. Roberts churned up his own controversy by announcing he would die if he didn't receive \$8 million for medical student scholarships.

Donations to the Roberts ministry had dropped from an average of \$5 million to \$2.5 million, according to news archives.

ORU's dental school closed in 1986, and the law school was given to CBN University — now Regent University — in Virginia Beach, Va., in 1985.

Dyson said watching the university work steadily toward its goals only to see them fade away was difficult for morale.

"The potential impact of the university was great," he said. "We could see world-changing institutions and operations."

### A tough inheritance

In 1993, Oral Roberts' son Richard, also a faith healer, took over the reins as president of ORU. It was an expected move, and Richard Roberts had already undertaken many presidential duties.

Richard Roberts pledged to continue the school's strict dress code and mandatory chapel attendance, while announcing the school would be "strong in athletics again."

ORU remained a school in financial distress. Enrollment and donations were falling, and a few alumni questioned whether Richard Roberts could continue his father's fundraising efforts.

"He inherited a university that had some problems to begin with," Dyson said.

In late 2007, Richard Roberts and ORU were sued by three professors who alleged wrongful termination. The suit touched off a massive controversy that caused some to fear for the university's very existence.

The professors' lawsuit, along with subsequent filings from a former employee and former students, alleged that Richard Roberts and his family had misused university money to support a lavish lifestyle.

ORU revealed that it was \$55 million in debt. Faculty later said they felt stifled and afraid to speak out at the time.

Gillen said faculty began to realize that changes would have to be made at all levels. "The debt continued to rise, and there seemed to be on the horizon no indication that changes were being made," he said.

After months of turmoil and an overwhelming vote of "no confidence" from the faculty, Richard Roberts resigned in 2007.

He and his family denied all allegations of wrongdoing, and the lawsuits were

dropped, dismissed or settled out of court for undisclosed amounts.

### Turning a corner

Immediately after Richard Roberts' resignation, the family of Yukon businessman Mart Green, who had no previous connection to ORU, offered the university a donation of \$70 million.

The financial bailout from the Green family, which founded the Hobby Lobby and Mardel chain stores, came on the condition that the university reform its system of government and embrace financial transparency. The university did so and disbanded its regents. Green became chairman of ORU's new board of trustees, which quickly adopted shared governance with the faculty.

The environment on campus began to lighten as officials discussed a "new ORU" that would move away from its troubled past.

In January, former pastor and missionary Mark Rutland, then president of Southeastern University of Florida, was chosen as the third president of ORU and the first outside of the founding family.

"The transition was very remarkable," Gillen said. "It went very smoothly, and there was no antagonism toward him. He won the hearts of students and faculty immediately."

Rutland, who was recruited by Green and Oral Roberts himself, began to open the university to visitors and the Tulsa community, pledging to learn from — but not dwell on — ORU's occasionally sordid past.

In September, Rutland announced that ORU had eliminated all of its long-term debt. Gillen said morale at the university now is the highest it has ever been.

"It's one of the most remarkable things that I have ever seen," he said.

Dyson said students, staff and faculty maintained their commitment to the university during its struggles by sticking with the mission statement.

The current environment on campus is one of a new horizon and renewed optimism, Dyson said.

"We see a great future ahead for ORU," he said. "This is a brighter day than we have seen in at least 15 years."

Rutland, who was offered a job at ORU about 25 years ago, said he was always aware of the university and its efforts. The school's story is one of ups and downs, he said.

"It is absolutely a miraculous story," he said. "I don't think there is any that quite corresponds to it."

Rutland repeated a mantra of the last few months at the campus, saying that ORU's best days are ahead of it.

"We're economically sustainable, and our enrollment is up," he said. "I think we've weathered the storm and we're on to clear sailing."



Mart Green (left) and Mark Rutland (right) join Oral Roberts in September during Rutland's inauguration as the third president of Oral Roberts University. MIKE SIMONS/Tulsa World

Shannon Muchmore 581-8378  
shannon.muchmore@tulsaworld.com

# ORAL ROBERTS

1918-2009

## Alumni include authors, leaders

BY SARA PLUMMER  
World Staff Writer

Several notable and distinguished alumni from Oral Roberts University remember the college's founder fondly and acknowledge the education they received at the university as one reason for the personal and professional success they have now.

Oral Roberts died Tuesday in his Newport Beach, Calif., home at the age of 91.

Kathie Lee Gifford, an actress, singer and talk show host, attended ORU for 2½ years and worked alongside Oral Roberts on his television show.

"He was a pioneer but an intensely personal man," Gifford said in an e-mailed statement. "I never questioned his sincerity, and I'm grateful for the role the university played in my development as an artist. It truly did good things for me."

At ORU, the concept of educating the whole person — mind, body and spirit — is something many alumni still apply to their lives today.

Kelly Wright, a correspondent at FOX News, said it's those character traits he has taken into his professional life.

"By applying what I was taught at ORU ... I have life skills that enable me to embrace people from all backgrounds, all races," Wright said.

Stephen Mansfield, author of "The Faith of Barack Obama" and "The Faith of George W. Bush," said Oral Roberts' emphasis on faith's relevancy outside the four walls of a church had a profound effect on him.

"I became a Christian at ORU, so the whole-man concept was new to me," Mansfield said. "You need to develop your mind, your body and your spirit but also be relevant to the world."

David Barton founded Wall-builders, an organization that seeks to educate people about the history of the United States with an emphasis on the moral and religious aspects.

"Faith does not have to be compartmentalized. It goes into every aspect of life," said Barton of what he took away from his time at ORU.

Rick Westcott, Tulsa City Councilor for District 2, said he not only received a spiritual education at ORU but a top-notch academic education as well.

"Without the academics, it would just be another Bible college, and without the spiritual element, it would just be another university," said Westcott, who also taught at ORU for more than 10 years.

Tulsa District 7 City Councilor John Eagleton also attended ORU and said he continues to connect his professional life as a criminal defense attorney with his personal life as a Christian.

"I'm not a minister, not an evangelist, but I can reach in and touch people," Eagleton said. "We carry with us our belief in Christ that allows us to turn people around."

Oral Roberts influenced several alumni to become religious leaders, ministers or inspirational speakers.

Ron Luce, founder of Teen Mania Ministries, said that some of the most profound things he learned in life, he learned as a student at ORU.

"It taught me to dream big. At ORU I did a lot of growing up. I learned how to be a man," Luce said.

Clifton Taulbert founded Community Building Institute and speaks to corporations and businesses about fostering community in the workplace. Taulbert said he wanted to attend ORU after hearing Oral Roberts' message while he was living in the Mississippi Delta.

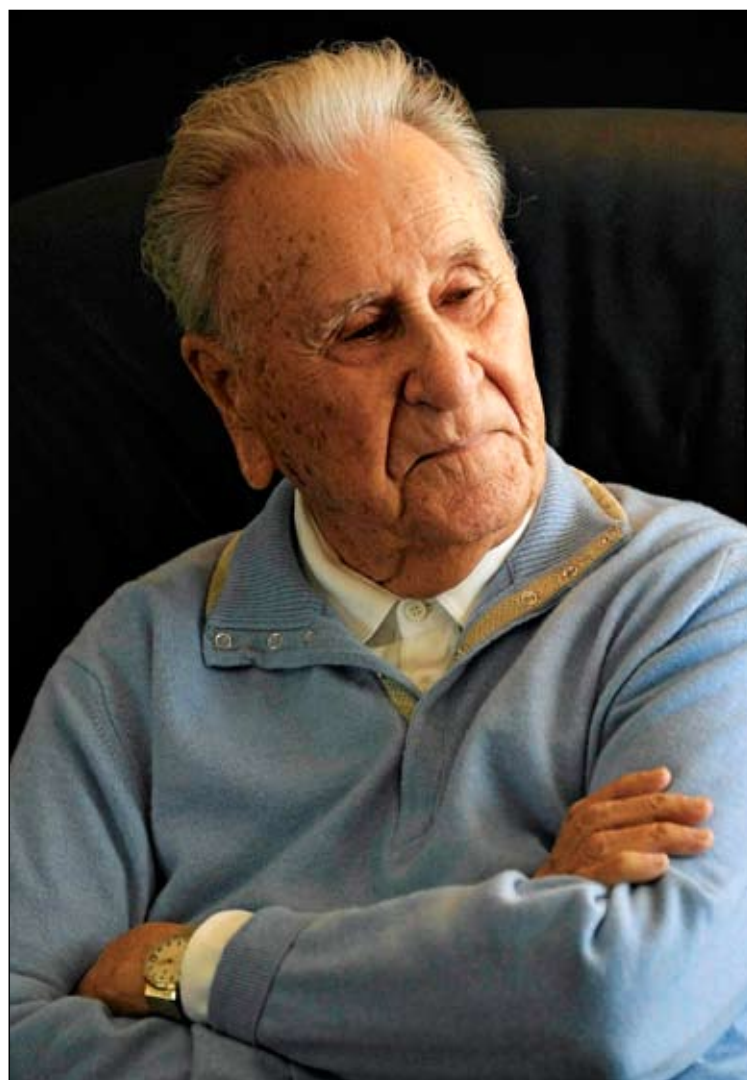
"Oral Roberts' ministry and Oral Roberts as a person personalized religion in a way I had never heard before. It wasn't just an insurance policy for the end of your life," Taulbert said. "It was the idea of going into every man's world."

That concept is one that has stayed with Tulsa County District Attorney Tim Harris.

"Use our education and talents to make a living, but also be a light for Christ in the world," Harris said.



Oral Roberts in 1956. Tulsa World file



Oral Roberts in 2009. MINDY SCHAUER / The Orange County Register

# IN HIS OWN WORDS

BY BILL SHERMAN WORLD RELIGION WRITER

Tulsa radio icon John Erling interviewed Oral Roberts Aug. 11 at his Newport Beach, Calif., home, in what may have been his last public interview. The more-than-one-hour, wide-ranging interview covered everything from his grandfather coming west in a wagon train to his eagerness to get to heaven. "His demeanor was very sweet and pleasant. His mind was very clear," Erling said. "I was impressed with his forthrightness." Erling did the interview as part of his "Voices of Oklahoma" oral history project, which will be officially launched early next year on the Web site "voicesofoklahoma.com." So far, the compilation includes the stories of 41 older Oklahomans. Here are edited excerpts of the Roberts interview:

#### On his parents

My father's people came from Wales. Mother was a Cherokee Indian.

Mother believed in faith healing more than my dad. She taught me how to pray for the sick. My mother was a brilliant woman. If I had a problem, I went to her.

#### On his early life in Pontotoc County

I was born in a two-room log house, with a little lean-to. I went to school at age 6. I stammered very badly and couldn't say my name at school that day. The kids tormented me, and Vaden (his older brother) took care of me. There was some fistfighting.

#### On how he met his wife

I met Evelyn in 1938. I was driving with a friend of mine who had a big truck. He was carrying tomatoes. He said, "Oral, it's time you got married." And I agreed with him.

He said, "What do you want in a wife?"

I said I want 10 things. I told him what they were, and he said, "I know the girl. ... She's 600 miles away in South Texas."

I called her and talked to her and then wrote her every day. I asked if I could come see her.

I fell in love with her immediately. We had a marriage of 66 years, the greatest days of my life.

#### On being shot at during an early tent meeting in Tulsa

During the crusade, a man pulled out his gun and shot at me. The hole was 18 inches from my head. ... We forgave him and went on our way.

The national media picked up the story, and in one day, I was known from coast to coast. People came from all over and asked me to come to their churches.

#### On his friendship with evangelist Billy Graham

Billy was the most generous man in the ministry I've ever met. He accepted me as a brother. He said he fell in love with my ministry. I counted him the No. 1 evangelist in the world. We became very close friends.

#### On the 1977 plane crash that killed his daughter Rebecca and her husband, Marshall Nash

We were crushed. We were driving over to tell the children that their dad and mother were not coming home from Colorado. And on the way over, I heard God's voice say: "I know something about this that you don't know."

It was a crushing experience for the children.

#### On the 1982 death of his son Ronald

He was a drug addict. I went out to Stanford (University) and restored him twice. I brought him back to Tulsa and put him in rehab. I thought he was cured from the rehab, but he wasn't. He was just a few weeks away from getting his Ph.D. at USC in Los Angeles, and he got ahold of some kind of drugs. He came out to see me to borrow money. I gave him every dollar in my wallet, but I said, "This is the last money you will ever get," because my money was not given to me to

support drugs. He took it and left and saw the jig was up and went out and shot himself.

We prayed, and we got over it. I've never blamed God for anything in my life.

#### On his relationship with U.S. presidents

President Kennedy reached out and shook my hand. It was the most powerful handshake I've ever had in my life. I almost fell down. And he looked at me and said, "How about all those people you're praying for?" I prayed for him and asked him to pray for me. I had a wonderful time with him.

Nixon was determined that he would see me, and I was determined that he would not. He had my senator from Oklahoma put the pressure on me, and I told him I wouldn't do it.

He came back three different times and said, "The president has to see you," so I flew out.

I found out what he wanted. He said he was nervous on TV and I wasn't. And he wanted to know how I did it. I told him I was nervous too when I started. But I pictured a woman, 60 years old, and that I wasn't preaching to the world, I was preaching to one person. He thanked me.

When Carter was making up his mind to run for president, he flew to Tulsa and came to the house, came in the front room, knelt, put his arms around my legs and said, "Brother Roberts, I'm going to run for president. I'm going to win. I don't know how to be president. Will you pray for me?" So I prayed for him.

#### On closing down the City of Faith

When I closed the City of Faith, the American Medical Association sent a man down to close it and to relocate the students.

He said, "Dr. Roberts, I know this is a letdown. You may not know it, but the medical world has known every step you've taken. We've followed you. I want you to know that you've not been a failure because you've affected the medical association forever. There was no talk about merging medicine and prayer until you came along. And you're right. Someday that'll be there."

I've never been sorry.

#### On his son Richard stepping down as president of ORU

We came to the moment when I saw that Richard had served his time and he needed to go. He made up his mind that he had and that God had told him to go into his own ministry, which is preaching and praying for the sick.

#### On Oral Roberts University

It is my legacy. It will outlive me. It's in the best shape it's ever been through the Greens. ORU is safe spiritually and financially.

#### On going to heaven

I'll be myself there. I'm awaiting the call. I wake up some mornings and I ask God, "Are you going to take me today?" And there's never been a reply, so I quit asking. And I'm just busy in my ministry. I've got lots of people coming here.

Bill Sherman 581-8398  
bill.sherman@tulsaworld.com

'During the crusade, a man pulled out his gun and shot at me. The hole was 18 inches from my head. ... We forgave him and went on our way.'

#### ORAL ROBERTS

on being shot at during an early tent meeting in Tulsa

# ORAL ROBERTS

1918-2009



**<<< Jan. 24, 1918:** Granville Oral Roberts (on right) is born near Ada.

**July 1935:** Gravely ill with tuberculosis, he is healed at a tent revival.

**August 1936:** Ordained as a Pentecostal Holiness minister.

**Dec. 25, 1938:** Marries Evelyn Lutman in Westville.

**July 1947:** Moves to Tulsa from Enid; founds the Healing Waters Revival Ministry at 1149 N. Main St.

**November 1947:** Begins publishing Healing Waters magazine.



**Dec. 2, 1948:** Purchases lot at 1648 S. Boulder Ave. for new headquarters.

**September 1949:** Completes single-story building on Boulder Avenue lot; later adds two stories.

**Jan. 10, 1954:** First segment of Roberts' television show "Your Faith Is Power" airs. The show runs weekly for six months.

**Jan. 15, 1955:** Returns to Tulsa after monthlong trip to Jordan, the Mideast and South Africa. Says 30,000 people converted in Johannesburg, South Africa.

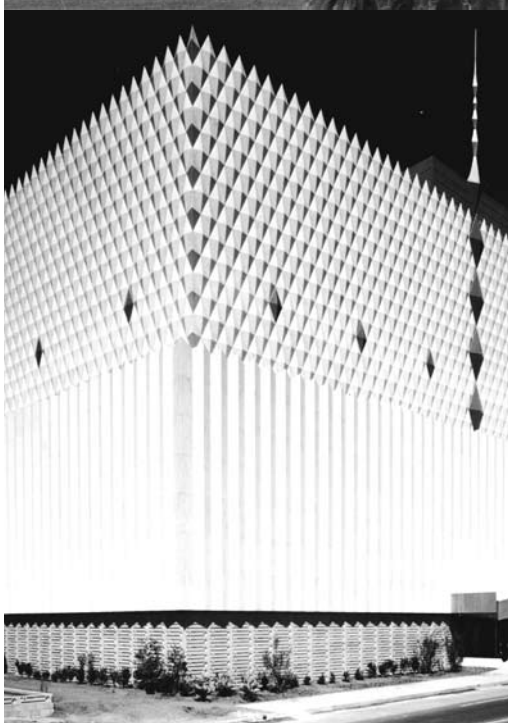


**Feb. 6, 1955:** Begins new television ministry with revised format and state-of-the-art production equipment; Tulsa stations refuse to air it.

**Dec. 10, 1955:** Announces goal for 1956 of winning 1 million souls for Christ.

**Jan. 17, 1956:** Receives critical newspaper coverage in Manila, Philippines, during eight-day crusade; says 20,000 converted to Christ.

**Oct. 30-Nov. 4, 1956:** Conducts Tulsa Crusade at fairgrounds Pavilion.



**March 18, 1957:** Renames Healing Waters Inc. as Oral Roberts Evangelical Association Inc.

**<<< May 23, 1957:** Breaks ground for new six-story, white marble building at 1720 S. Boulder Ave., just south of previous building. Gov. Raymond Gary attends ceremony.

**1958:** Establishes Abundant Life Prayer Group.

**1961:** Purchases 160-acre farm for \$1,850 per acre at 81st Street and Lewis Avenue; adjoining 20-acre property is added to create future Oral Roberts University campus.



**Dec. 5, 1961:** Announces plans for a university.

**<<< February 1962:** Trustees break ground for Oral Roberts University.

**Sept. 7, 1965:** ORU campus at 7777 S. Lewis Ave. opens with 303 students.

**1967:** Prayer Tower on campus completed.

**April 2, 1967:** Billy Graham speaks at ORU's dedication; Roberts is named its president.

**March 17, 1968:** Switches affiliation from Pentecostal Holiness to Methodist.

**Nov. 16, 1972:** Inducted into Oklahoma Hall of Fame.

**Dec. 4, 1972:** Mabee Center arena dedicated.

**April 28, 1975:** Plans medical, law and dental colleges by 1980.

**Feb. 11, 1977:** Plane crash kills daughter Rebecca and her husband, Marshall Nash, a Tulsa banker.

**Sept. 7, 1977:** Announces plans for \$100 million medical complex, to be named City of Faith.

**Jan. 24, 1978:** Ground broken for City of Faith.

**April 26, 1978:** Construction of City of Faith begins within two hours of approval by Oklahoma Health Planning Commission.



**Aug. 21, 1978:** School of dentistry opens.

**Aug. 22, 1979:** Law school opens.

**<<< Sept. 19, 1979:** U.S. Supreme Court Justice Byron White speaks at law school's dedication.

**May 26, 1980:** Says he was told by a 900-foot-tall Jesus that the City of Faith will be built.

**March 24, 1981:** State Supreme Court clears way for City of Faith to open, overturning a lower court ruling that partially cited the constitutional provision for separation of church and state.

**May 2, 1981:** School of dentistry dedicated.

**Nov. 1, 1981:** City of Faith opens.

**May 6, 1982:** Tells audience for "The Phil Donahue Show" that he saw the 900-foot-tall Jesus with his "inner eyes."

**June 9, 1982:** Son Ronald D. Roberts dies.

**June 21, 1985:** Announcement that the school of dentistry will be phased out.

**Nov. 1, 1985:** Law school transferred to Pat Robertson's CBN University.



**Jan. 4, 1987:** Says that if he doesn't raise \$8 million for a medical missionary program by the end of March, God will "call Oral Roberts home."

**March 22, 1987:** Enters the Prayer Tower to begin a nine-day prayer vigil.

**April 1, 1987:** Richard Roberts says \$8.7 million donated for the medical missionary program.



**Sept. 13, 1989:** Announces closing of City of Faith and medical school because of \$25 million debt.

**March 1991:** Undergoes surgery to alleviate narrowing of carotid artery.

**<<< July 24, 1991:** Praying Hands statue relocated to main campus.

**September 1991:** Enters St. John Medical Center for prostate surgery.

**Oct. 29, 1993:** City of Faith complex renamed Cityplex Towers.



**Jan. 27, 1993:** Richard Roberts becomes ORU's president, and Oral Roberts is named chancellor.

**May 4, 2005:** Evelyn Roberts dies.

**Oct. 22, 2007:** Returns to ORU to support Richard Roberts, who would resign as the university's president a month later amid allegations of financial misconduct.

**Dec. 12, 2009:** Falls in his home, breaking his pelvis and neck.

**Dec. 15, 2009:** Dies at 1:40 p.m.