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At nearly 90, Charles Stanley makes half a million a year and his ministry is awash in cash

NEWS MARK WINGFIELD | AUGUST 31, 2022



Editor's update: Charles Stanley died April 18 at age 90. [Read his obituary here.](#)

If you're worried about Charles Stanley being destitute in his old age, worry no more. He'll turn 90 years of age on Sept. 25 and still draws a salary of more than half a million dollars annually from In Touch Ministries.

Televangelism still pays very well.

Not only that, In Touch Ministries, the nonprofit organization that distributes Stanley's sermons via television, radio, books and the internet, has net assets of more than \$113 million.

To its credit, all this financial information is transparent and available online because In Touch Ministries has not declared itself a

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Headquarters of In Touch Ministries in Atlanta.

Internal Revenue Service rules for financial reporting through [Form 990](#).

Other big-name evangelical nonprofits — including the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Samaritan’s Purse — have taken advantage of an [IRS loophole](#) to declare themselves churches or an association of churches mainly so they don’t have to file public financial reports.

A recent article written by Kim Roberts for the [MinistryWatch](#) website pointed out this and other financial data about In Touch Ministries. A separate examination of the organization’s IRS filings by Baptist News Global confirmed the facts as reported.

Despite Stanley’s age, he’s still preaching via videos that are broadcast around the world. He may be the most ubiquitous TV preacher anywhere. And In Touch Ministries is thriving alongside him.

According to the latest available financial reports, the ministry took in more than \$97 million in 2019 and tripled its cash assets from 2015 to 2019.

For comparison, \$97 million in annual income is far greater than the annual income reported in 2021 by any one of the six Southern Baptist Convention seminaries. Southwestern Seminary reported \$65 million in income, and Southern Seminary reported \$53 million income.

The ministry took in more than \$97 million in 2019 and tripled its cash

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Stanley also may be one of the best-known Southern Baptist pastors in the world, although his denominational involvement has been minimal except for the two years during the “conservative resurgence” he served as SBC president.

assets from 2015 to 2019.

For half a century, he served as pastor of [First Baptist Church of Atlanta](#) and in his latter years presided over the church’s relocation from downtown Atlanta to the northern perimeter. He officially retired as pastor in September 2020.

The church claims 12,000 members but does not show up on the annual list of the nation’s largest churches produced by *Outreach Magazine*. In that latest list, the 128th largest church in the nation reported 3,225 in average weekly attendance, so the First Baptist attendance would have to be less than that.

First Baptist Church and In Touch Ministries are separate organizations, although there has been significant overlap in personnel and interests through the years because the nonprofit ministry’s primary mission was to disseminate sermons Stanley originally preached at First Baptist.



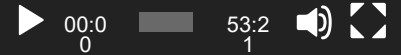
The church’s new pa

stor is Anthony George, a Mississippi native who is a graduate of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., and Criswell College in Dallas. He came to Atlanta from a pastorate in Florida.

Although Stanley retired from the First Baptist pastorate, he’s very much still at work at In Touch, according to the organization. The 2019 Form 990 said Stanley works an average of 30 hours per week

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and earns \$530,225 in compensation. Phillip Bowen, vice chairman of the ministry, received \$438,900 in compensation in 2019.

These financial numbers all were pre-pandemic, but In Touch experienced cost savings without losing contributions during the pandemic, MinistryWatch reported. That actually created a surplus in income over expenses.

“We have been strategizing and repositioning the ministry to use the surplus by creating new ways to present the gospel globally far into the future. Our mission remains steadfast. We want to lead people worldwide into a growing relationship with Jesus. Our methods employed are changing and increasing,” In Touch President Bowen wrote in an email to MinistryWatch.

As for the financial good fortune of In Touch, Bowen said: “We really attribute all growth first and foremost to God’s goodness and his desire to use the ministry to further the gospel. God has blessed the ministry of Dr. Stanley and In Touch.”

According to MinistryWatch, the organization employs 188 people.

One irony is that while the 89-year-old Stanley may be the most widely known Baptist preacher in the world, it is his son, Andy Stanley, who now serves as pastor of the nation’s largest church. *Outreach Magazine* lists Andy Stanley’s [Northpoint Church](#) as having average weekly attendance of 22,473 at its 30 partner churches.

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