



THIS WEEK IN AG HISTORY

BY DARRIN RODGERS

Pandita Ramabai (1858-1922), widely regarded as one of India's most prominent female social reformers and educators, played a significant role in pioneering the Pentecostal movement in India.

Highly intelligent, Ramabai attended college in England, where she joined the Church of England. While there, she learned to distinguish between the institutional church and what she termed the "religion of Jesus Christ." She returned to India and established homes for dispossessed widows and children. She also fought for social reform, including provision for quality health care and education.

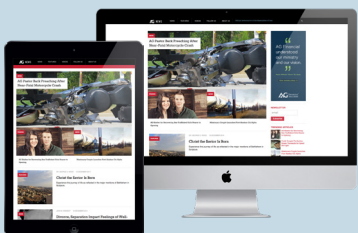
Despite criticism, she founded additional orphanages and a home for prostitutes. Importantly, Ramabai's social

ministries cared for both the body and soul. They sheltered, educated, and fed women and children, and they also taught Christian doctrine.

According to Ramabai, the girls at the orphanage in Mukti prayed each day for more than 29,000 individuals by name. They prayed, among other things, for them to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and to become true and faithful Christian witnesses.



Alfred G. Garr, the first missionary sent by the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles, recounted his interactions with Ramabai. Read his article, "The Work Spreads to India," on pages 4 and 5 of the April 1, 1916, issue of the *Pentecostal Evangel* online at s2.ag.org/april11916.

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AG[®] NEWS

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A MISSION GREATER THAN THE SACRIFICE

BY DAN VAN VEEN

Chaplain Chuck Kish, who pastors Bethel Assembly of God in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, had reached his breaking point. He had just served as on-scene chaplain at two suicides. He was emotionally, physically, and spiritually spent.

He turned off his cell phone, incapable of handling another chaplaincy call that day.

Then, the house phone rang. It was the police. The only time they call the house is when there is a tragedy that they specifically want him to handle.

An endorsed AG chaplain through U.S. Missions Chaplaincy Ministries, Kish is a proponent of Christians being available at individuals' "points of pain." This phone call would ultimately break him, but God had something for Kish.

As he arrived at the scene, the senior officer who met Kish was visibly shaken.

"A young husband, home from the military and suffering from PTSD, had shot himself in the head in front of his

wife. He was lying on the floor in the doorway of the home in a huge pool of blood. I had to step over him to enter the house," Kish recalls, pausing at the memory. "His wife [Jen] was still standing right there, holding a 3-month-old baby, and both she and the baby were covered with his blood."

Kish went into chaplain mode. After the 29-year-old mother and baby were cleaned up, he met with her in the living room — where the Holy Spirit took over.

"I told her, 'Your destiny is not determined by those who leave you, but rather by those who stay. Whether God, family, or friends are at your side, you are not alone. There are people you will meet in the future who are going to need you, and you will need them. Press on. Your life matters.'"

Those words, repeated over and over, seemed to break through and provide a sense of comfort.

"I was five weeks pregnant," says Jen, now 32. "I was in shock. At the

REVISITING THE MEMPHIS MIRACLE

BY JOHN T. MAEMPA

MEMPHIS, Tennessee — Leaders from across Pentecostalism gathered at the historic Mason Temple and world headquarters for the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) in Memphis on March 19 for the annual Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA) meeting and to celebrate the 25th-year anniversary of what is known as the "Memphis Miracle."

A quarter century ago, delegations from the white Pentecostal Fellowship of North America (PFNA) came together with leaders and members of the predominantly black COGIC. For decades, the PFNA had been an all-white organization. However, in the early 1990s, key leaders began to dialogue on ways to heal the racial divide, which led to a defining moment in October 1994. As a consequence of the meeting 25 years ago, the PCCNA replaced the PFNA, signaling inclusiveness of all races and ethnicities.

During the original meeting, participants in the dialogue bowed on the floor to ask God's forgiveness

for past racism and intolerance. The miracle of Memphis brought Pentecostals back to the roots of the Holy Spirit's outpouring early in the 20th century.

Today, Spirit-baptized believers constitute the largest family of Protestants in the world. This Spirit-empowered river has touched virtually every nation, race, and language group, and today numbers nearly 700 million people worldwide. At Azusa Street, a spark became a prairie fire, and today is recognized by historians and scholars as one of the mightiest revivals and missionary movements in the history of the Church.

At this year's celebration, a special moment of Holy Communion took place. COGIC Bishop Charles E. Blake, AG General Superintendent Doug Clay, and Samuel Rodriguez, president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, led the observance.

"May we who come to the table of the Lord as one body recognize that we are brothers and sisters in Christ because of His shed blood," Clay said.

THE ABCs OF SALVATION

ACCEPT that you are a sinner, and God's punishment for your sin is death and separation from God forever.

BELIEVE that Jesus paid God's price for your sin when He died on the cross.

CONFESS "Jesus, I believe You are who the Bible and history declares You are – the Son of God. I humble myself and surrender to You. Forgive me. Make me spiritually whole. Change my life. Amen."



TWO DEGREES OF SEPARATION

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY

Arnie Ferguson became pastor of Seymour AG in 2013 in the rural Iowa community of 700 people. Ferguson and his wife, Lynda, had never worked in a small community before, and that factored into approaching ministry differently than in a larger city.

Mark Haines, a semiretired farmer, has been a board member and Sunday School teacher at times during his 25 years at Seymour AG. He gained insights about church life while recovering recently from shoulder surgery. His rehabilitation efforts required him to try to move his shoulder two degrees more each day. Haines applied a spiritual parallel to the Christian walk.

"We need to develop a two-degree culture where we make small, intentional changes in life," Haines says. "This involves intentional stretching — which is sometimes painful — every day to achieve goals, like developing pathways of discipleship for all ages."

Linda Ballanger, who has attended Seymour AG for 35 years, says although it's an aging congregation, there are plans to implement relational small groups focused on topics such as finances and marriage.

Ballanger, who farms with her husband, Ralph, thinks the Fergusons have brought a different, needed perspective.

"A lot of people in town aren't going to church and we need to reach them," Ballanger says. "Arnie and Lynda have ideas that are just what this church needs. We've learned how to motivate people in the community to be a part of us."

The pastor has found that a culture of apathy is a hurdle in the small agricultural community.

"The Lord has given us a field to cultivate," Ferguson says. "It's not going to happen overnight, but the key to changing the culture is to continue the process."

CHURCH'S SANDY SOIL SOLUTION

BY ERIC TIAN SAY

Living Waters Assembly of God in Apalachicola, Florida, recently built a pavilion at Magnolia Cemetery for the town to be used for graveside funeral and committal services.

Located near the coastline, Apalachicola has soil that is extremely sandy, which makes graveside services dangerous. With growing frequency, attendees near a casket have fallen into the hole dug for the deceased when soil gave way. That has caused some cemeteries to ban graveside services.

Pastor Scotty Lolley saw the pavilion project as a way to build bridges in Apalachicola. Initially, town officials, graveyard personnel, and funeral home employees all expressed skepticism about the plan. They acquiesced after being convinced the church would donate the entire \$11,000 to make the project a reality. The pavilion has opened doors for the church to minister.

Lolley says the building of the pavilion — for which the town committed an additional \$10,000 to install memorial benches — has caused many people to ask questions.

"On several occasions, we had unsaved members of our community pull up, get out of their vehicles, and ask us to pray with them," says Lolley. "Several families have visited and others regularly attend our services stating that they want to be a part of a church that is busy showing people they care about them."

CELEBRATE THE LIGHT PREMIERE

BY DAN KERSTEN

The new *Celebrate the Light* (CTL) video presentation titled "FREEDOM and FIRE" will premiere at the Light for the Lost luncheon at General Council, on Friday, Aug. 2, in Orlando, Florida.

"As usual, we expect tickets to go quickly," says Rick Allen, national Light for the Lost director. "The videos we're going to show are the best we've ever produced. The ways in which Light for the Lost partners with missionaries are incredible, and these two videos illustrate them beautifully."

In two powerful video segments, 2019's CTL features evangelism stories illustrating Light for the Lost's close ministry partnership with Project Rescue and the *FireBible*.

In "FREEDOM and FIRE," a young woman trafficked from West Africa into Spain who finds rescue, hope, and restoration headlines the Project Rescue segment. A dramatized look at the history of a region in deep need of the gospel and a local language edition of the *FireBible* is the second segment.

"More than the stunning visuals, the human element and the evangelism aspect in these videos are the most powerful," says Dan Kersten, director of communications for Light for the Lost.

Senior pastors and their spouses may claim free tickets, while all other tickets are \$55 each. However, anyone requesting tickets must RSVP with Casey Linder at clinder@ag.org.



FROM AN EPITHET TO A SAVIOR

BY RACHEL ELLIS

Every week at the Gill Terrace Apartments in Ludlow, Vermont, a group of retired residents gathers to learn scriptural truths, pray for one another, and experience God responding to their needs.

Jessica Lyn Arnold, co-pastor of Calvary Church in Proctorsville, Vermont, has led the study since 2014. Every Thursday, about a dozen residents meet in the building's common room to hear Arnold preach and to partake in Communion.

Arnold says she has gone through a basic overview of all the books of the Bible, but she also teaches deeper theological truths, including the gifts of the Spirit from a Pentecostal perspective. Through this teaching and the weekly prayer time, participants have seen God's healing hand.

Three years ago, Shirley invited her friend, Janice, to attend the study with her.

"Everyone else had a Bible, but I

didn't feel right being without one," Janice remembers. Janice, 72 at the time, never had owned a Bible. She had known Jesus only as a word by which others swore, having no idea He existed in history as the Son of God. Arnold bought Janice an easy-to-read Bible. Every week since, Janice has attended the Bible study, learning more about Christ.

"I read my Bible every day," she says, "I believe there is a Jesus now."

"The first time she heard what Communion actually meant, we read the whole story of how Jesus died," Arnold says. "She thought it was a miracle that He would do that for her. Jesus went from a swear word to a Savior for her."

After Janice received her copy of the Scriptures, other residents wanted the same version, so Arnold has purchased over 15 Bibles for group participants. Some of the residents' workers, who help with baths and cleaning, also asked for a Bible to read.

time, I was wondering what was wrong with me, why was I left . . . , but pastor Chuck's words really gave me a different viewpoint — that I was still loved, I still have worth, still have value . . . and those words all came true."

Kish remained to help clear the scene of the suicide aftermath. The next day, the powerful emotional trauma struck him, leading him to weep uncontrollably.

"I spent time going to a Christian counselor following that," Kish says, humbly. "I needed to."

Although the trio of suicides traumatized Kish, he later realized, the message the Holy Spirit spoke through him are words people suffering a traumatizing loss of a loved one need to hear.

He also realized that nothing existed that could be given to help those who were suddenly faced with tragic loss.

"So, we created a free, high-quality booklet, *Caring For You*, that can be customized to the community entity using it — EMS, hospice, hospitals, coroner, police — that explains, step-by-step, what to do in the case of losing a loved one," Kish says. "In each of those booklets, that statement the Holy Spirit spoke through me is featured. Thousands have already been comforted by those words" (email pastorchuck@bethelcarlisle.com for details).

The cost of ministry that tragic day was personally high for Kish, but he says the mission God gave him was worth the personal sacrifice.

TEACHING MORE THAN JUST SOBRIETY

BY ROBERT E. MIMS

After four years of drug and alcohol addiction, Tyler Paul Wolfe overdosed on heroin. When he gasped back to life, God awaited.

"This time there was no Narcan, no cops, no paramedics," recalls Wolfe of the 2009 incident in the back seat of a car in a parking lot. "I woke up gasping for air, blood running down my arm from the needle."

Wolfe entered a yearlong substance abuse program at Minnesota Adult & Teen Challenge and quickly committed his life to Christ. Wolfe transferred to Adult & Teen Challenge of Wisconsin, where he helped others struggling with their addictions.

He then became youth pastor at

Waupaca First Assembly of God. In 2015, Wolfe took on similar duties with Todd W. Pope, pastor at Bridge Church in Waukesha. A year ago, the 30-year-old Wolfe became pastor when Bridge Church planned to launch a campus in Oconomowoc, 20 miles northwest of Waukesha.

Bridge Church-Oconomowoc officially opened in the Nature Hill Intermediate School auditorium on Feb. 17. Wolfe stresses that the gospel message is far more compelling than his stereotypical addiction recovery tale.

"It is not a story of addiction, but one of redemption," Wolfe stresses. "I'm a proponent of Jesus, not just sobriety."