

Church Without Walls

Issue 17 July 26th 2020



Click here to join us for worship
at 10.30 on Sunday morning



This week
please pray for
the people living in
Balderstone Road



A free phone line of hymns,
reflections and prayers

Are you in need of some daily hope
during this lockdown?
There is a FREE telephone line set up by
the Church of England where you can
hear comforting hymns, daily prayers and
reflections.
Pass this number on to anyone you know
who might appreciate this

0800 804 8044



Email Dave for a zoom invitation to
Compline at 8pm on Monday – Thursday
vicardave@ststephenspreston.org.uk

Pandita Ramabai:

an unsung hero of Bible translation.

Pandita Ramabai was born in India in 1858 into a Marathi speaking family, belonging to the priestly Brahmin caste. As a youngster, Ramabai helped bring in money by reciting the Hindu Scriptures in Sanskrit.

During the great famine of 1876–78, both her parents died from starvation. Living with her older brother, she became well known for her extraordinary intellectual abilities and teaching skill. It was at this time that the University of Calcutta gave her the title *Pandita*, 'wise teacher', the first woman to be so honoured. Even so she sensed increasing hopelessness at the place of women in Hinduism.

Following the deaths of her brother and her husband, the longing for social reform that would improve the lot of women in areas such as child marriage and literacy and education grew ever stronger in Ramabai. She learnt English, started to write, and met, amongst others, theologian Nehemiah Goreh, who helped her to an understanding of the Christian faith.

In 1889, she founded the Mukti Mission for destitute orphans, widows and single mothers, offering a Christian welcome to all, irrespective of caste, gender or wealth. It remains open to this day.

In 1905 she was led to start a prayer circle. One of the consequences of this was a conviction of the power of the Scriptures in the language of ordinary people.

And so she turned to Bible translation. She learnt Hebrew and Greek and worked on a translation into Marathi. Her translation had a specific audience: uneducated women of lower castes.

Ramabai died in 1922, just as she completed the final checking of her translation.

Read more about Pandita Ramabai on the Wycliffe Bible Translators website [here](#)



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The Church in Vietnam

Meet Ngoc*, a courageous Vietnamese Pastor who has lived through intense persecution from government, but still leads a thriving church. Here he explains what life was like as a young Christian and how things are for Christians in Vietnam now...

"In the 70s, after the war, the government did not want the church to grow. They tried everything to stop Christianity. The government was scared that they might lose control of everything – particularly because Westerners brought Christianity to the country. They imprisoned Christian pastors and church leaders for at least two years. Others, including myself, were sent to re-education camps several times. We were considered a threat to the Communist government.



"But as persecution became worse, the church also became stronger. The church kept on growing, and Christians were sharing the gospel boldly. Because we must be careful when we gather for a fellowship, the church became flexible. We changed the schedule from time to time. Sometimes we meet early in the morning or late at night.

"... A believer who was a former government official for 18 years passed away. The government wouldn't let the people in his village attend his funeral because he is a Christian... We decided to bury him at the public cemetery, but the village chief stopped us from using the road. Instead, he made us go to the forest where we had to make our own path until we reached the cemetery..."

In the few months that Vietnam was put in lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many of Ngoc's church members lost their jobs and their source of money for food for their families. Many of the congregation are poor and struggling due to the crisis. But official help didn't come. When the local authorities learned that they are Christians, they were removed from the list of those who were supposed to receive rations from the government.

But despite this, during the quarantine period, Ngoc's church had an average of 10 converts every week!

For more information see the [OpenDoors website](#)

**Name changed for security reasons*

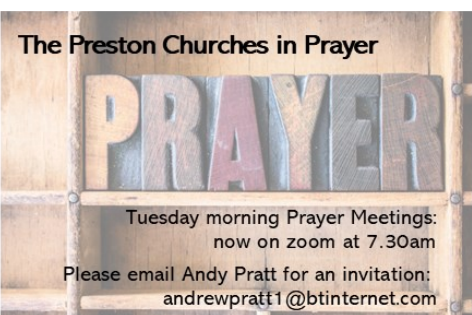


Keswick Convention will be online this coming week (27th-31st July)

Click here for more details on the [Daily Programme](#)

- 09:00 Prayer (Tuesday—Friday)
- 10:00 Bible Readings by Christopher Ash on 'Hope in Jesus' from the Psalms
- 11:00 Coffee Break
- 11:15 Seminar / Keswick 4 Kids / Keswick Youth
- 12:00 Count Everybody In - a devotion for adults with learning disabilities
- 20:00 Evening Celebration: Various Speakers
- 20:00 Keswick Youth

[See the website for details of these and other events taking place across the week](#)



Don't forget you can now give a one-off donation, or set up regular giving via the website. All the information you need is here

