

RT REV GEORGE EDWARD "DAVID" PYTCHEs (K44-48)

He was born on 9 January 1931 and after attending the College went to Bristol University and then Tyndale Theological College. He became a Deacon in 1955, a Priest in 1956.

He was Assistant Curate at St Ebbe's in Oxford from 1955 to 1958, followed by Assistant Curate at Holy Trinity in Wallington from 1958 to 1959.



He and his wife Mary became missionaries in Chile, South America in 1959. He said "Going with so many assumptions from my village church background, to pioneer church planting in another culture in an urban situation really changed all my thinking. I had to ask myself what were we trying to plant -- an Anglican church? What are the values of Anglicanism outside of an English culture? It was a very disturbing time. So many things I believed were fundamental to my faith were accessories -- sometimes luxuries."

He and Mary had been in the mission field for ten years when they returned to England, spiritually exhausted from their work. "By 1969, I was going through a crisis because I found that the Christ I was preaching as the answer for others, I wasn't allowing to be the answer for my own life. I had been so zealous I had forgotten about love and didn't know it."

They were ready to leave mission work, but while in a church in the UK heard an unmistakable call to return to Chile. So, with four small daughters, they took a ship back to the mission field. In 1970 he was made an Assistant Bishop and in 1972 he was made Bishop of the Anglican diocese of Chile, Bolivia, and Peru.

Under his leadership, evangelism and church planting continued. He had to go back to the New Testament to discover how the church grew without central funds, very few scriptures available, no prayer books, hymn books or church buildings! It was a challenging time with frequent earthquakes, (one registering 9.5 on the Richter Scale) and political tensions in Chile that ultimately led to the overthrow of the Allende government when it was acting unconstitutionally and the Military were obliged to intervene in 1973.

In 1977, concerned about the education of their 4 children, they returned to England and he became Vicar of St Andrew's Chorleywood. It was a church that had already come into renewal. David could not really see how to integrate the gifts of the Spirit into the life of the church until he met John Wimber, who came with a team from California in 1981. He showed us that our Western world view was too rationalistic. Some remarkable healings occurred over that weekend. A lady received sight in a blind eye, and the news soon spread. Not only did the local church grow considerably but church leaders began visiting St. Andrew's from all over the country. At first 'day conferences' were organised for them and by 1989 week long 'residential conferences' at the Bath and West Showground were organised for leaders and their people, which were called 'New Wine'. These became very popular and eventually there were two separate week-long conferences with a total attendance of 20 - 22,000 people. Similar conferences were soon being organised across the world. A separate youth movement was started out of 'New Wine', called 'Soul Survivor' with four camping conferences and a total of 30,000 attendees - many young visitors becoming Christians, usually over a 1,000 converts each year.

NewWine
Local churches changing nations

The teaching on the Holy Spirit encouraged new initiatives resulting in many new churches across the UK - at least two with weekly congregations of over a 1,000. (Watford and Nottingham, which have also planted out new congregations into other towns and cities). At the beginning this drive for Church-planting was frowned upon by the Church of England establishment but latterly the official attitude has changed completely and Bishops are formally ordaining some of the new church leaders. The present Archbishop attended many of the 'New Wine' conferences as a local church leader and latterly he has returned to encourage his fellow leaders.

David retired in 1996, but continued teaching. He has both written many books on church leadership and the work of the Holy Spirit to encourage the new churches. They have four daughters and 12 grandchildren, and to date one great-grandchild.

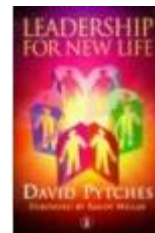
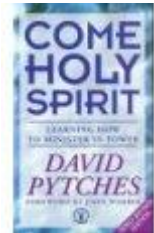
Since retiring from St Andrew's in 1996 he has continued his national and international ministry with *New Wine* and *Soul Survivor*, both of which he founded with his wife. He still travels widely to speak at churches and conferences around the world.

Along with Bishop FitzSimons Allison and four others, he participated in the controversial consecration in 2000, in Singapore, of two bishops opposed to the blessing of same-sex unions by the Episcopal Church USA.

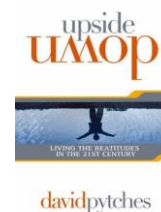
In 2006 he was one of the signatories to the "A Covenant for the Church of England", which sets out where orthodox Anglicans stand.

He is the author of many books, including his autobiography, *Living at the Edge*. Here are just a few :-

- Come Holy Spirit: Learning to Minister in Power (1985)
- Liturgy and Liberty (1989)
- Does God Speak Today? (1989)
- Some Said It Thundered: A Personal Encounter with the Kansas City Prophets (1990)
- What Is the New Age? (1990)
- Prophecy in the Local Church: A Practical Handbook and Historical Overview (1993)
- Going Empty Handed (1996)
- The Hot Line: How Can We Hear God Speak - Today? (1997)
- Leadership For New Life (1998)
- John Wimber: A Tribute by David Pytches (1998)
- Out of the Mouth of Babes (1999)
- Four Funerals and a Wedding (1999)
- Words of Knowledge (1999)
- Healing Ministry Training (1999)
- Healing Ministry and Pastoral Prayer Ministry: An Introduction for the Local Church (1999)
- Living at the Edge (2002)
- Burying the Bishop (2002)
- Family Matters (2002)
- Church Matters (2002)
- Can Anyone Be A Leader? (2004)



- Upside Down - Living The Beatitudes In The 21st Century (2007)
- What they say about Prayer (2010 – revised and reprinted in 2015)



His wife Mary is also an author in the field of Christian Counselling and has written 10 books, including *Yesterday's Child*, *A Child No More*, *Dying to Change*, *Who Am I*, and *Rising Above The Storms of Life*. She also conducts periodical full day "teach-ins" and weekend retreats.

He died on 21 November 2023 and the following obituary appeared in the Church Times :

DAVID PYTCHEs, founder of the New Wine network, was one of the Church of England's leading pioneers of Charismatic renewal and church-planting.

Born in Suffolk in 1931, the ninth of ten children, Pytches was part of a clerical dynasty. His father was an Evangelical clergyman, his mother was the daughter of a clergyman, and two of his brothers were later ordained. His great-uncle was the former Bishop of Calcutta and Dean of Durham James Welldon. After Framlingham College and National Service in the army, Pytches trained at Tyndale Hall, Bristol, and was ordained deacon in 1955 to a curacy at St Ebbe's, Oxford, a conservative Evangelical parish.

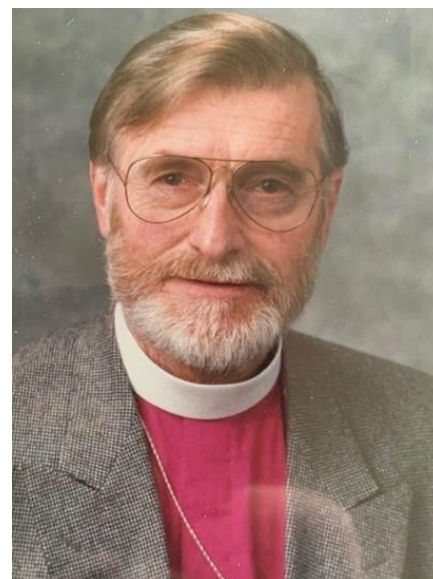
In 1959, Pytches and his wife, Mary, sailed for Chile with the South American Missionary Society (SAMS) to pioneer Anglican church-planting in Valparaíso. There, he made two discoveries that profoundly shaped his future ministry. First, he embraced missional flexibility even when it disrupted traditional Anglican ecclesiology.

*Next, he embraced the gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as miraculous healings, which Pytches previously believed to have died out with the apostles, but which were common among South American Pentecostals in the 1960s. Mary began to pray in tongues, after seeking to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Her husband was initially alarmed, but was soon persuaded to follow suit. In his autobiography, *Living at the Edge* (2002), he recalled: "It's quite a shock to suddenly wake up in bed with a Charismatic! I had been so opposed to all this for so long, and a loyal Bible-loving, card-carrying evangelical all my life."*

In 1970, aged just 39, Pytches was consecrated bishop for the suffragan see of Valparaíso. Three years later, Archbishop Michael Ramsey, as Metropolitan of the Southern Cone, promoted Pytches to be Bishop of Chile, Bolivia and Peru, a vast diocese covering 1.2 million square miles, 24 times the size of England.

It was a period of rapid church growth but deep political crisis, as Chile descended into paramilitary violence and civil unrest; and, during this time, the Pytches family feared for their lives. The Marxist government of Salvador Allende was toppled in September 1973 in a coup by General Augusto Pinochet, placing the churches in an invidious position. The politics were difficult to navigate, and Pytches found himself criticised on all sides.

In 1977, Pytches swapped the poverty of Chile for the leafy lanes of Hertfordshire, as Vicar of St Andrew's, Chorleywood. There, he sought to embed lessons from South American Anglicanism into the Church of England, with an added Californian twist. One of Pytches's friends and fellow Chilean church-planters, Eddie Gibbs,



introduced him to John Wimber, the Vineyard evangelist and former rock musician. Wimber's first visit to Chorleywood, with a team of American young people at Pentecost 1981, resulted in "holy chaos" and impromptu anointings, but was transformative for the congregation. Wimber's emphasis on miraculous "signs and wonders" in evangelism generated widespread excitement among Anglican Charismatics, and Pytches was one of his chief promoters in England.

*Pytches visited the Vineyard in California on numerous occasions, and his book *Come, Holy Spirit: Learning how to minister in power* (1985) repackaged Wimber's teaching for a wider audience. It was translated into Spanish, German, Swedish, Finnish, Arabic, Chinese, and Korean.*

*Next, Wimber introduced Pytches in 1988 to the so-called "Kansas City Prophets", a group who claimed dramatic encounters with God and special prophetic knowledge. Pytches visited them in Missouri, prior to their bursting upon the scene in England, and wrote up the story as *Some Said It Thundered* (1990), though the book received poor reviews for its uncritical tone.*

*Wimber also encouraged Pytches to expand his teaching ministry and contributed £3000 as seed money for the Kingdom Power Trust, which began by hosting leadership conferences and distributing Charismatic cassette tapes. In 1989, it launched *New Wine*, a Charismatic jamboree which soon grew into a massive annual event and gave birth to a vibrant renewal network. The parallel youth festival, *Soul Survivor*, ran from 1993 to 2019, but its leader, Mike Pilavachi, a former youth worker at St Andrew's, Chorleywood, later resigned after allegations of abuse.*

New Wine was pioneered by Pytches until 2001 and continues to attract thousands of people each year across numerous denominations, though its centre of gravity remains Anglican.

Another of Pytches's lifelong passions, honed in Chile, was church-planting. He advocated the formation of Charismatic congregations across parish boundaries, in defiance of the Canons of the Church of England. In 1992, with his friend Bishop Brian Skinner, Pytches launched the Federation of Independent Anglican Churches (FIAC), to link congregations outside parish structures, to the chagrin of Archbishop George Carey. It was a forerunner of fresh expressions of English Anglicanism, sitting loosely to diocesan authority, but was outpaced by the church-planting methodology of Holy Trinity, Brompton, which aimed instead to revitalise redundant churches with episcopal blessing.

Pytches retired from St Andrew's, Chorleywood, in 1996, but continued his worldwide peripatetic ministry. He was unafraid of controversy and, in 2000, participated in the consecration in Singapore of two bishops for the Anglican Mission in America, a conservative breakaway from the US Episcopal Church.

The Rt Revd George Edward David Pytches died on 21 November, aged 92. He is survived by Mary, to whom he was married for 65 years, their four daughters, and their families.