

A Great Trailblazer Has Gone Home: A Tribute to Sister Violet Kiteley

On Thanksgiving Day 2015, one of the great women pioneers, Sister Violet Kiteley, made her entrance into heaven at 90 years of age.

Sister was an extraordinary pioneer and a trailblazer. When I received the call that she had gone on to be with the Lord, I told her son, David, "Well, of course she went home on a significant day! She never did anything less than powerful and dramatic in the spirit!"

Kiteley grew up in Canada and received her call to ministry when she was baptized in water at 12 years of age. After that, Sister Aimee Semple-McPherson, (founder of the Foursquare Denomination), gave her a prophecy that she was called to be a minister, preach the gospel and pastor churches. This was quite unusual for women at that time and she not only went on to pastor, but showed the way for many other women in leadership.

Sister Kiteley, who was then 19, had planned to go to Sierra Leon, West Africa, as a missionary with her husband, Raymond, but he died tragically in a fiery airplane crash when he was in the Royal Canadian Air Force. At that time she was seven months pregnant with her son, David.

She bravely went on to plant a church known as Revival Tabernacle in a rural suburb of Vancouver, Canada. In that location, she was one of the leaders who pioneered the message of laying on of hands and prophetic presbyteries. Sixty years later, this church still exists.

After that time, she moved to Oakland, California, along with

her elderly parents and son, David, who was then 19-years-old. Imagine this move during the height of the civil rights movement, the hippie era and the Jesus Movement of the mid-1960s!

There she founded Shiloh Church, which became a haven for the fiery young people saved during that era.

Shiloh became a forerunner in a new sound of worship that influenced the starting of the International Worship Symposiums where thousands of people came hungry to hear the new sounds that God was releasing in that generation. The hippies she led to the Lord gave up their old ways of drugs and stealing and became the leaders for a new generation of worshippers, and we are reaping the fruit of it today every Sunday.

Fifty years later, the church has members from over 40 nations of the world. In addition, she pioneered Shiloh Bible College, which has existed for 35 years and now has extension campuses around the world.

Her ministry will be carried on through her son, Dr. David Kiteley; daughter-in-law, Rev. Marilyn Kiteley; grandson, Patrick, and his wife, Marlena; and grandchildren.

Sister Violet Kiteley's motto for her 70 years of full-time ministry was, "As long as the Lord is glorified, the servant is satisfied!" As we celebrate her life, there are many around the world who with one voice can say that the Lord was, indeed, glorified through her life and ministry, and we know that the her Savior's words to her were, "Welcome home, my daughter, my good and faithful servant."

"Sister Violet Kiteley was one of the greatest women pioneers that I have ever met," said Bishop Bill Hamon. "I was deeply touched by her both on a personal level and one that I could look up to as a forerunner. She will be greatly missed and was a treasure for the body of Christ."