Bournville, Stirchley, Cotteridge & Kings Norton

Points

The bi-monthly mini-magazine of Churches Together in Birmingham 30

Going Hybrid

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Hybrids – Winners and Losers

I first came across the word hybrid when I was a small boy. My Dad grew roses - hybrid Ts and floribundas. He taught me how to look after and prune them, and now I grow roses, too. Perhaps the most famous and certainly my favourite is: Rosa 'Madame A. Meilland' - better known as Peace. It has beautiful big yellow blooms with edges tinged with pink. It never, never fails - definitely a winner.

From the sublime to the ridiculous: Inventions fascinate me. Here are just a few of my favourite combination (hybrid) inventions mostly from the Victorian era. The Victorians were prolific inventors, but not all ideas proved successful:

Rocking chair that includes a bellows to blow cool air over the rockers face (1869).

Combined hat and umbrella (1880).

A candle with a match embedded in each end to make lighting easier (1883).

Combined grater, slicer, and mouse and fly trap for grocers (1897).

Pedal-powered abrasive roller to eliminate five o'clock shadow (1900).

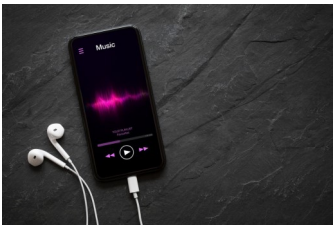
Target for urinals – serves a useful, but 'delicate' purpose (1977).

Time has confined these to the rubbish bin of failure.

When we were first married in the 70s, we had a second-hand twin tub washing machine. When this broke, we invested in an automatic machine. What a revelation – put in the dirty clothes, add detergent, press a button, and an hour later out came clean, damp, cloths ready for the washing line, or tumble dryer. No more tangled clothes to be manhandled into the spin dryer - One of the most useful, and successful hybrids of the 20th century.

In the 80s, you didn't just have a record player, you had a Hi-Fi system. That consisted of separate units, typically: Vinyl disc player, amplifier, tuner (radio), cassette player, speakers and, of course, a big collection of LPs. The argument was: If a unit broke or became outdated, it could be replaced. And that's exactly what happened. In the 90s, in came the CD and out went vinyl (to return c2020). So, I added a CD player. My system was/is about the size of medium sized fridge, but still in use.

Once again things changed: Music is available on my smart phone. I subscribe to a music streaming channel and can find almost anything I want at the touch of a button, and similarly with radio programmes. With a small connector, costing just £15, I was able to link my old system to our wireless network. In this case, a system comprising, separate, interconnected, units was the right choice.

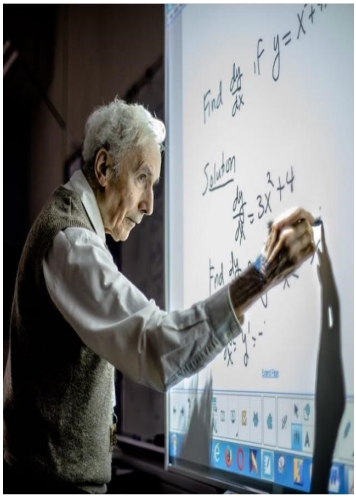


Currently, the most popular use of the word Hybrid relates to the various types of electric/petrol cars available. A complexity of issues determine the eventual winners and losers, including: technology, infrastructure, cost, ecology, and time.

So, there you have it: Hybrid – some of my winners and losers. Returning to where I began and my very favourite Hybrid - Rosa 'Madame A. Meilland' - Peace.

Mowgli

Reverse Mentoring



In Business there is always talk about mentoring. This is when a youngster in their twenties learns the ropes from a much more experienced person and it helps develop their career.

But many years ago a business man called Jack Welch came up with the concept of ‘Reverse Mentoring’.

This is where older people over fifty spend time with younger people under thirty. But it is the younger person who is educating the older person. So what can we learn from these whippersnappers? Well, the main influence is technology. What do you know about Snap Chat, TikTok and Instagram. How do you use social media or mobile banking?

Spend one hour each month being educated by a youngster.

These conversations will develop into world views and insights into how the world is changing and especially products and services and marketplaces.

You should be connecting with somebody who is significantly younger than you. Maybe you are already a young person, maybe you’re in your twenties or early thirties. This is still for you. There is still a generation gap between you as a young person and today’s teenagers and young adults. This isn’t limited to older people

Why don’t you try it and see what it does for you?

Syncretism

Syncretism is basically a morphing of religious practice for the benefit of everyone. It reminded me of an important event that happened to our British predecessors

The Celtic Church, the early Christian church in the British Isles, was founded somewhere in the British Isles in about the 3rd century. Highly ascetic in character, it contributed to the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons in the 7th century and survived in Wales until the 11th century and in Scotland and Ireland until the 12th century.

Lindisfarne

Northumbria, which was mainly Northumberland and large parts of Yorkshire, had been slowly converting to the Christian faith throughout the 620s. Missionaries from Rome and from the Celtic tradition were shaping religious beliefs throughout the kingdom. However, the two had very different practices and these differences caused conflict and confusion.

In 664 a meeting was held by the Christian Church of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria to decide whether to follow Celtic or Roman usages. This marked a vital turning point in the development of the Christian church in England.

Whitby

One of the greatest differences between the two practices was the way they calculated the date of Easter. This date has always been movable to enable it to occur on a Sunday. The two different methods of calculation meant that between the two different practices the date of Easter could be up to four weeks apart.

In 664, The King of Northumbria, King Oswiu called the Synod of Whitby to resolve the problem.

The King listened to both sides of the debate from representatives of the Celtic and Roman Christian faiths; Bishop Wilfrid, the abbot of Ripon, presented the case for the Romans and Bishop Colman of

Lindisfarne presented for the Celts.

The debate rang long between the assembled clerics. The two sides were driven by two main arguments: the Wilfred argued for celebrating Easter on the 14th day of the first lunar month of the Jewish year, which, according to John 19:14, was the day of the crucifixion.

Bishop Colman disagreed, contending that English Christians shouldn't rely on the Jewish calendar as was decreed in Rome in the year 325 at the First Council of Nicaea.

To settle the matter, King Oswiu asked: "Who is the gatekeeper of heaven?" The clerics could agree on this; " St Peter". Bishop Wilfred claimed authority from St Peter and supported the Roman date calculation. So, the King deferred to Wilfred. Bishop Colman, who claimed authority from Apostle John, was overruled.

This ruling in decision of the Roman Christian faith turned the tides in British religion. York replaced Lindisfarne as the episcopal centre of the Northumbrian kingdom and those who did not accept the Roman ways withdrew.

The synod of Whitby was an important step in the Romanisation of British religion.

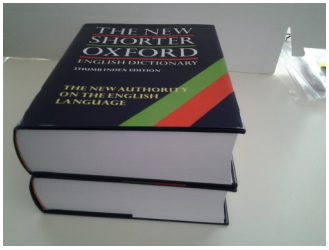
Yet, We think of the Celtic sites of Lindisfarne, Iona, Glendalough and Lough Derg with great reverence. Places of quiet and reflection. Perhaps the spirit of Celtic Christianity is still present. John Slevin

Glendalough Monastery

Lough Derg

We are all Hybrid

On the shelves above and beside my desk, within easy reach, I have a number of reference books to do with writing. These include standard dictionaries, but also dictionaries of ‘phrase and fable’, of ‘curious and interesting words’, of ‘myth and legend’ of ‘classical and literary allusion’ etc. In trying to remember the origins of the word ‘hybrid’, I flicked through a few of these (resisting Google!), but it wasn’t until I picked up the ‘New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary’ which actually comes in two huge volumes and weighs in at half a stone, that I found a definition relating to people.



Here hybrid refers to ‘a person of mixed descent’. Now that would seem to be all of us, wouldn’t it? None of us is somehow ‘pure’. Everyone is descended from immigrants of some variety. None of us emerged / grew up / died in exactly the same place. From our experience of the last two years, we know what it is like to live in a bubble. It’s not very comfortable or very inspiring. All of us are hybrids of our parents. Our children are hybrids of us. We recognise some of ourselves, but not all of us in our siblings.

A positive hybrid society is one which is stronger and shows understanding of others. Hybrid plants are those grown from the seed produced by cross-pollinating two distinct parent plants of different varieties. This process of controlled pollination creates a new, third variety that will hopefully have a combination of the desirable traits of each of the parent plants. When planting food

crops we are beginning to learn that huge swathes of identical produce are not good for a healthy environment and that it is much better to understand and practice companion planting. Tomatoes thrive with nasturtiums, cabbages do better interspersed with radishes, broad beans are healthier with marigolds nearby.

Marc Hamer, in his book 'Seed to Dust' writes "A Sikh once told me that everyone was a flower in the Lord God's garden – all the individuals, the colours and races, tribes and religions.... I don't believe in any kind of God, but if there is such a beast he doesn't live in the sky, but underground and pushes all the wonderful things out of the soil for us to admire, pushes us out into the world, then takes us back to join the earth."

Churches (and political parties!) all work better when our communities are welcome hybrids of a range of people and ideas. It doesn't make life easier necessarily..... but it does make it better.

Helen Gale

Farewell and Goodbye

After nine years as Senior Minister at Rowheath Pavilion Church Rev Mat Wilson is moving on to pastures new. Mat's last service will be on Sunday 10 July. CTB30 have appreciated his help and encouragement in particular producing Carols on the Green during the two lockdown years.

We wish Mat every success and blessing in his new ministry.

My Favourite Bible Passage

John 7.53 – 8.11

For me it has to be the woman taken in adultery:

Pieter Bruegel The Elder

Jesus in the middle of teaching in the temple and a group of scribes and pharisees confront him with a woman taken in adultery. Once again, these legalistic people are trying to trick him into contradicting himself by saying that the law does not always have to be obeyed.

I am entranced by this moment, knowing how easily I can be disconcerted. I imagine the excited crowd - the desperate woman – the self-important men.

Jesus takes his time – denies them eye contact, bending down to draw on the ground. It would be a sandy floor.

He outlines a prayer symbol on the ground.

Then he asks them to tell him what he already knows – that the punishment for this offence is death by stoning. They know about his many healings, his care for the poor, his ability to drive out evil spirits. I imagine his physical presence glowing with energy.

He rises up to deliver the punch line. “Let whoever is without sin throw the first stone.”

They are made to confront their own imperfection. It’s a great moment. I wonder how it would have been to be sitting there watching.

Gradually the crowd drifts away, the oldest first – amazing the younger ones there - but most of us of advanced years will know our failings all too well.

At last only the woman and Jesus remain, she trembling with awe at what has happened. “Are you still here? Did they not condemn you? Well then neither do I” Imagine that! She knows she has done wrong but the teacher does not condemn. “Go then” he says “and don’t do it again” I would have been barely able to move.

Claire Bowen

Save The Parish

"There can be no excuse for the increase in bishops from 26 to 112 over the last 200 years, while the number of parish priests has been falling from 25,000 to fewer than 7,000."

(Donald Clarke, retired Finance director of 3i and Kent parish treasurer)

"The C of E is ignoring the evidence (including its own official growth policy, 'From Anecdote to Evidence', which makes it clear that amalgamating parishes drives decline) that growth come from paying parish priests to serve real people in real places. Instead, it is trying to impose a top-heavy bureaucratic structure that saps talent and money away from the local to the centre. This must be resisted before it is too late."

(Angela Tilby, Canon Emeritus Christ Church Oxford, Honorary Canon Portsmouth Cathedral, church Times columnist)

"The 42 dioceses employ over 3,000 people in their head offices. Many are paid more (some much more) than clergy in the front line. Several dioceses actually employ MORE people in their head office than there are stipendiary priests in their parishes (which they claim to oversee; in reality, they interfere, with endless paperwork, and, year on year, they gradually plunder parish assets to fund the bloated diocese). This has to stop. A major rebalancing is needed between the beleaguered parishes and the dioceses which are sucking the life out of them."

(Admiral sir James Burnell-Nugent KCB CBE, former Second Sea Lord and Commander of the Fleet, Devon churchwarden, STP Steering Committee member)

On Tuesday 3 august 2021, a gathering was held in St Bartholomew the Great, London's oldest parish church, to launch a campaign to "Save the Parish". Over 100 people signed up online to attend, and thousands have since watched the broadcast on the campaign's website at **www.savetheparish.com**.

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The event was hosted by the Revd Marcus Walker, Rector of St Bartholomew the Great, who issued a rallying cry in the pages of the *Spectator* magazine on 6 Feb 2021. His title was "The misguided priorities of church authorities" and the key section read as follows:

"This is your church. This is not the Archbishop of Canterbury's, nor the House of Bishops', nor the clergy's, not even the General Synod's. It belongs, in the broad sense to the people of England, regardless of your faith or lack of it, which is why parliament is still it ultimate decision-making body, and very specifically to the laity of the Church of England. You have a say". (Read the full article at **bit.ly/3KzUiA5**)

Article extract from Kings Norton Parish Magazine, May 2022.

Photo courtesy of Birmingham Live

Foodbank

In May

We gave out 9,600kg of food to 895 people

We received in donations 9.030kg

Urgently Needed

Tinned tomatoes, pasta sauce, cereal (not greater than 500g), tinned fish (tuna, mackerel, sardines, salmon), tinned fruit in juice (not prunes or grapefruit); crisps; rice (500g), toilet roll, strong carrier bags

Low in stock

Tinned potatoes, tinned spaghetti, squash, long-life fruit juice, UHT semi-skimmed milk, dog/cat food, instant hot-chocolate (not cocoa powder), instant coffee (not decaffeinated), porridge (not greater than 500g), ready-made custard (tinned/carton); UHT whole milk, tinned rice pudding, tinned meat (ham, corned beef, pork sandwich, pulled pork, chicken), teabags (40's or 80's), jam/honey, biscuits, chocolate and snack bars, liquid/bar soap, laundry power/liquid (not family sized), gender neutral shower-gel, gender neutral shampoo, sugar (500g), toothpaste, single or duo wrapped toothbrushes

Well Stocked:

. Pasta shapes, dry spaghetti, baked beans, tinned/packet vegetarian meals, tinned/packet soup, tinned vegetables, noodles, instant potato, nappies all sizes, baby food and baby care items, gender neutral roll-on deodorants, sanitary pads, baby wipes, washing-up liquid.

Please do not donate:

Decaffeinated drinks or fruits infusions, Bottled water, Large bottles of lemonade or coke, Any foods containing alcohol, Cooking ingredients, Fresh produce including vegetables, eggs and bread. Non-dairy items or gluten free items, Coffee beans, Large boxes of teabags (120's or larger), Very large boxes of cereal or porridge, Loose tea, Cocoa powder, Tampons, Make up, hair accessories, perfume or after-shave.

Thank you helpers

Click on the different links below to find out what's happening in your church

(Crl + click on link)

https://www.facebook.com/rowheath.pavilion/

https://ssjandh.org

https://bournvilleparishchurch.org.uk/

https://www.facebook.com/BournvilleParishChurchStFrancisOfAssisi/

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https://www.birminghammethodistcircuit.org.uk/church-page/st-andrews-b30

https://www.weoleyhillchurch.org.uk/links.php

https://www.birminghamvineyard.com/

https://www.facebook.com/vineyardbham/

https://b30.foodbank.org.uk/

https://www.birminghamchurches.org.uk/news/

https://ctb30.org.uk/

CHURCH CONTACTS

For further details of worship and/or activities at any of the churches please contact the people below:

- St. Andrew's Methodist Church
  Revd. Farai Mapamula - 427 1747
- Bournville United Reformed Church
  Revd Leonora Jagessar - 472 0730
- Society of Friends, Bournville
  Claire Bowman - 07753 635438
  Room Hire, 471 2155
  annegiles57@gmail.com
- St. Francis Church, Bournville
  Rev Canon Richard Wharton - 472 7215
- Rowheath Pavilion Church
  Revd Matt Wilson - 433 3912
  Office - 458 1711.
- Society of Friends, Cotteridge
  Chris Martin - 475 2088
- The Cotteridge Church
  Revd. Mike Claridge - 433 5176
  Revd. Roger Collins - 459 4009
  or Church Office - 433 5518
- Ascension Stirchley
  Revd. Catherine Grylls - 443 1371
- Catholic Church of Ss Joseph and Helen
- Catholic Church of St Paul's
  Father David Barry - 458 1236

"Points" is published by Churches Together in Birmingham 30 for the exchange of ideas and news. Opinions do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the churches as a group or individually.

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Next Issue's Focus will be

War and Peace

Deadline for articles: 17 July