

The Windrush

The significant impact of the so-called “Windrush Generation” (those arriving in the UK between 1948 and 1971 from Caribbean countries of Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and other islands) and other Commonwealth nationals from Africa, India and Pakistan has played a major role in shaping and creating modern Britain. The phrase is a reference to the ship *MV Empire Windrush*, which arrived at Tilbury Docks, Essex, on 22nd June 1948, bringing workers to the UK as a response to our post-war labour shortages. The ship carried 492 passengers, many of them children.

They were not the first to arrive in Britain from these countries – the first Black people came several centuries ago! Caribbean and African Christians have been involved in making disciples and establishing churches in the UK since the Pentecostal movement was birthed in 1906. What kind of Christian impact has the Windrush Generation made?

Usually called Black-Majority Churches (BMCs), there are probably at least 75 different BMC denominations in the UK in 2018, totalling at least 4,200 churches, and some, like Dr Joe Aldred and Dr Babatunde Adedibu, would say that there could be 8,000 churches in 400 denominations! The largest (at least 5,000 members in 2017) of the 75 Pentecostal churches (not all necessarily BMC), given in UK Church Statistics, include:

Redeemed Christian Church of God [RCCG] (68,000)
Elim Pentecostal Church (68,000)
Assemblies of God (49,000)
New Testament Church of God and Associated churches (16,000)
Hillsong (14,000)
Kingsway International Christian Centre [KICC] (12,000 in Chatham alone)
Church of Pentecost (8,000)
Abundant Life Church (8,000)
Cherubim & Seraphim Church Council (7,000)
Ruach City Church (7,000)
Deeper Life Bible Church (6,000)
Mountain of Fire Ministries (5,500)
Potters House Christian Fellowship (5,000)
The Apostolic Church (5,000)



Pentecostal churches, mostly BMC, have doubled in membership over the last 21 years, from 202,000 in 1997 to 407,000 in 2018. What are the elements which have helped them grow so quickly?

An article by Rev Israel Olofinjana, Pastor of Woolwich Central Baptist Church in south-east London, suggested three things:

Large gatherings. BMC leaders are responsible for many of the largest churches in the UK. KICC has probably the largest congregation in Britain, with three services every Sunday, and bussing people from Chatham station in Kent to the church itself. The RCCG holds a prayer gathering, called Festival of Life, twice a year, attracting some 60,000 participants. It is said that Black people like a “successful” church, where “success” is implicitly defined as a growing church, often a larger church.

Church planting prioritised. The RCCG came to the UK in 1988 and has planted 800 churches in England alone, with a church in at least two-thirds, 64%, of our towns. Trinity Baptist Church in South Norwood, led by Rev Kingsley Appiagyei, has planted churches in three different countries in Europe, as well as a Children’s Home in Ghana. “We put mission before justice,” was how one BMC speaker put it.

Prayer emphasis. BMC churches often practise nights of prayer and fasting, bringing vibrant spirituality and confidence in the Scriptures to the fore. “Mission and prayer are understood by these churches as going together,” writes Mr Olofinjana.

BMC churches are now frequently involved in Churches Together in various towns throughout Britain, and are challenging other churches by the pattern of their ministry. How far are our established UK Christian churches open to this challenge?

SOURCES: Article in the May 2018 issue of AWMLink, Pages 5-7, sent by David Longley

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Third Edition of WCE

Plans are well under way to publish a third edition of the World Christian Encyclopaedia (WCE) in 2020 or 2021. The intention is to have another two volume publication with one volume listing all the countries in the world, giving updated data for each country for the years 1900, 1970, 2010, 2015, 2020 and 2050, with a second volume devoted to data about individual towns and cities, unreached peoples, languages, Bible translations etc. WCE3 will be published by the Edinburgh University Press.

The layout of the first volume at least has been completely revised with a much more open and clear structure to give greater ease of access to the material, and many full colour maps and diagrams. There will also be a 32-page introductory global summary, plus a “Christianity by Continent” section with just one page for each continent. A team of 10 people is working on it, and mentioned in passing that the “digit universe is growing exponentially” from 4.4 zibabytes in 2013 to an estimated 44 zb by 2020!

SOURCE: Albert Hickman and Bradley Coon, two of the WCE team, at the Lausanne Researchers’ Conference, May 2018.

A Christian Commonwealth

The Commonwealth Heads of Government met in London during April 2018. The Commonwealth comprises 53 members, most of which are countries which were part of the old British Empire. In those countries, Christianity is the largest religious community in 43 of them, Islam in 6, Hinduism in 2 and Buddhism in 2.

There is no state religion in 40 of the 53, but 8 are Christian (preferred or officially), 4 are Muslim (officially) and 1 is Buddhist (preferred). Singapore is the most diverse in Asia (34% Buddhist, 18% Christian and 14% Muslim), and Mozambique in Africa (57% Christian, 18% Muslim).

The total population of these 53 countries is 2.4 billion, a third, 32%, of the world’s population. The Commonwealth spans all 6 continents and while Christians may be the majority religious grouping, there is persecution of minorities in some of them.

SOURCE: Basic figures taken from the Pew Global Religious Futures Project, with research carried out by the Council of Christians and Jews, and reported in the Church of England Newspaper, 20th April, 2018, Page 9.

Humour

Sir Ken Dodd, the comedian, died on 11th March 2018, aged 90. Some of his jokes:

“The sooner you laugh at the jokes, the sooner you can go home. But they say the breakfast here is good.”

“An official told my big Auntie Nellie to come off the beach because the tide was waiting to come in.”

SOURCE: Obituary in The Economist, 30th March 2018, Page 90.

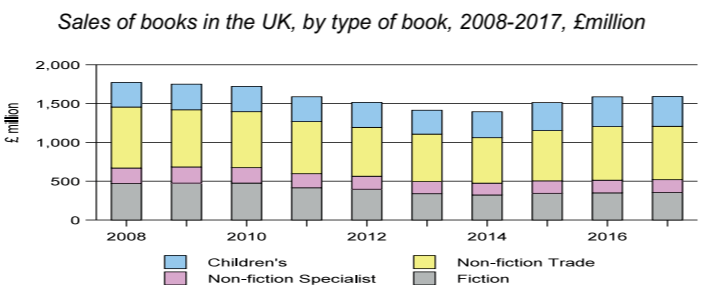
TEN YEARS OF BOOK SALES

In 2008 total UK sales of physical books was almost £1,800 million, an amount which has slowly decreased over the subsequent decade to almost £1,600 million in 2017, a 10% drop. The decrease was almost certainly because of the entry into the book market of a new form of book – the ebook, sold electronically for people to read on their tablet, smartphone or other like device. The categories most hit by the arrival of the ebook were Non-Fiction and Children’s books.

Of the 2017 total a third, 34%, of books sold were hard-back with an average price of £10.70; the rest (£1,100 million) were paperback with an average price of £7.60, an overall average of £8.20, up from £7.50 in 2008. However, 63% of publishers’ total income, on average, comes from printed books, and 32% from ebooks. Publishers reckoned on making about 8% profit on average from the books they sold in 1995; today it is probably about 10%, though the actual percentage will of course vary from one publisher to another.

In 2008, just over a quarter, 26%, of all books sold were Fiction, a sixth, 18% were Children’s and the remaining 56% were Non-fiction. Children’s non-fiction is included within the Children category, and so are Young Adult (YA) books. Adult Non-fiction is technically split between “Specialist” (largely information books such as travel, academic titles and so on) and “Trade” (social, literary, cultural, professional, biographical books and so on). In 2008, 80% of Non-fiction was in the Trade category, a proportion hardly changing as in 2017 it was 81%.

By 2017, the Fiction proportion had fallen to 22%, Children’s had increased to 24%, with Non-fiction being almost unchanged at 54%. The chart shows how the sales of books have varied over these 10 years.



In 2017 there were £22 million worth of religious books sold, some 2.5 million copies if their average price is the same as non-religious books.

International Researchers’ Conference

The eighth Lausanne International Researchers’ Network (LIRN) Conference was held in the Dimesse Sisters Conference Centre in Karen, Nairobi, Kenya between Monday 30th April and Friday 4th May 2018. It was attended by 93 people from 30 countries (including a couple from China), the largest gathering thus far seen for this particular Conference. It was organised by Larry Kraft, the new Lausanne Catalyst for Church Research, with the help of his wife Stephanie, who did all the administration, and a team from around the world. Larry took over the role of Lausanne Catalyst for Church Research in 2017 from Peter Brierley who had held that position (under different titles) since 1984; Peter is officially stepping down in 2019.

It was by far the best Conference of those yet held, its location and attendance perhaps reflecting the vibrancy of Sub-Saharan African Christianity. This Conference was the first in Africa, and we were joined by representatives from the Movement for African National Initiatives (MANI), Global CMIW and the Global Research Team “One Challenge” from OC International Ministries, for which Larry is the International Research Director.

The value of such gatherings is to form networks of researchers both in and across different countries, encouraging mentoring where appropriate, giving the opportunity of teaching research methodology to those unfamiliar with it all (these workshops were highly popular!), as well as being able to glimpse where God was working across the world. The major focus in this conference was on mission research rather than religious academic or national Christian research

This was 1.4% of the total sales of books in the UK in 2017. The largest growth area was in non-Christian books because the Oxford University Press published its translation of the Qur’an, which yielded more than £3 million in sales.

The top religious title in 2017 was the extremist self-published tome Mohammed’s Koran: Why Muslims kill for Islam, by English Defence League ex-leader Tommy Robinson and Peter McLaughlin, a former academic whose Muslim baiting views have seen him banned by Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. The book had sales of £101,000.

Information on Christian books is rarely published by Nielsen, the company from which the data used above comes. It is reported by some Christian publishers that sales of Christian fiction have increased in recent years and certainly the number of religious titles has much expanded: there were 11,200 religious titles published in 2013, the latest year for which such information was obtained, double the number published in 2007.

SPCK, the Christian publisher with which IVP merged in 2017, undertakes surveys of Christian reading habits, and in a recent Christian Research survey found that 82% of committed Christians had been helped by books on their faith journey, 58% said they had helped them live a better Christian life, 31% said they had been helped to share their faith, and 12% said books had helped them become a Christian.

However, Sam Richardson, Chief Executive of SPCK, has pointed out that of the eight bestselling Christian authors in 2016, all but one were men, all were white and all were over 65! Buyers of Christian non-fiction lag behind buyers of non-fiction generally especially when purchasers are aged between 17 and 34.

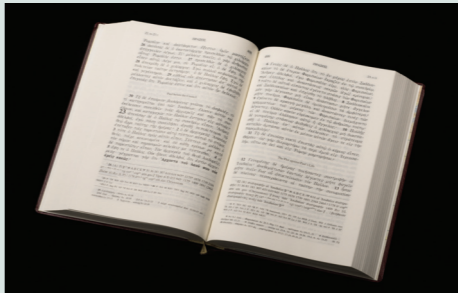
There is, however, much innovation happening in the world of books. A scan of the future by The Bookseller magazine called “FutureBook40” listed a number of new developments. These included the desire to include more BAME and more female authors, making books more interactive technologically, having more book subscription opportunities, re-energising of existing publishers, innovative book designs, increased author tours, short story prizes, crowdfunding to get selected books into schools, taking audio books to a 3D level perhaps through social media, more Literary Festivals activity, greater online publishing, wider availability of book reviews and so on. None of these are specifically Christian or emanate from Christian publishers, but such challenges may well also be applicable to the Christian scene.

SOURCE: Sales of books (£mn) by type Bookseller, 26th Jan 2018, Page 5; articles in issue of 2nd March 2018, Page 3, and 6th April, Pages 20,21; supplement for Futurebooks Conference, 1st Dec 2917, Page 4; article in Together, Nov-Dec 2017, Page 56.

as in previous conferences. Roughly half of those attending had not been to such a conference before; about a third of attendees were from Africa.

Shortly before it closed in 2016 Global Mapping International produced a paper identifying the Christian strength of each country in the world. Kenya came top of the list! Four-fifths, 81%, of its population say they are Christian, and the country is seeing new churches being started and existing congregations growing, especially in urban areas. It is also a key country in the Anglican GAFCON network, where the Kenyan Archbishop, the Most Rev Jackson Sapit, is one of 9 Primates on its administrative committee. So it was especially appropriate to hold such a Conference in Kenya.

Attending one of these Conferences is a great privilege and one hears a vast range of comments which one wants to follow up but cannot usually do so. Such comments include the fact that at the Calvary Temple in Hyderabad, the largest church in India, every member has a swipe card to record the frequency of their attendance! Or the comment that 80% of immigrants coming into Europe have a smartphone. The source and accuracy of such comments is unknown. The basic papers presented at the Conference sessions, however, provide identifiable observations, and they all may be downloaded from GlobalCMIW.org/lirn. This website also hosts all available papers from all previous Researchers’



REFLECTION

In a devotional address at the 2018 Lausanne Researchers’ Conference, Rev Reuben Ezemadu from Nigeria quoted Proverbs 27:23: “Know well the condition of your flocks; and give careful attention to your herds,” and proceeded to apply this principle to ministers looking after their church members. “Set your heart to nurture them for maximum output,” he said. He urged his listeners to be well enough acquainted to identify specific needs of their lives, and went on to illustrate that by using Scriptural principles.

He then referred to the feeding of the 5,000 by Jesus, where the crowd had been with Him all day, the disciples urging Him to dismiss the crowd so that they could go into nearby villages and get some food. But instead Jesus asked the disciples to find out how many loaves of bread they had (Mark 6:38). They had to do some research! When they came back with five loaves and two fish they knew it wasn’t enough, and simply had no thought or concept that what they had was, in the hands of God, more than sufficient.

Moses had the same problem. He was told to go to Pharaoh and ask him to release the Israelites out of Egypt. He asked a very natural question, “What if they do not believe me or listen to me?” God asked him, “What is that in your hand?” It was his staff which, to his utter amazement, became a snake in front of him. That staff in the hand of Moses became the staff of God. It parted the Red Sea, it made the waters close over again, when it was used to strike a rock out came water and when in time Aaron took it, it sprouted, budded, blossomed and produced almonds. In the hands of God, more than sufficient.

A desperate widow whose husband, one of the prophetic brotherhood, had passed away appealed desperately to Elisha. Her two children were about to be taken as slaves to make good a debt. “What do you have?” asked Elisha. “Nothing, but a flask of oil,” she replied. “Go and borrow jars and containers from all your neighbours, as many as you can,” he ordered, “then fill them from your flask.” She went inside her house with her two sons and filled every jar. “Then the oil stopped flowing” (2 Kings 4:6). “Sell the oil, pay off your creditor, and live on the remainder,” said Elisha. In the hands of God, more than sufficient.

What do we have? A loaf of bread, a staff, a jar of oil? An opportunity for the Kingdom, a book to write, some money in our wallet, a little food but insufficient to entertain a stranger, clothes too small to fit comfortably, unable to give our child a party, a homeless man on our doorstep, an ill relative needing care, a Facebook page to edit, a sermon to prepare but no creative thoughts? What actually do you have? In each of the above instances, each person used what they already had however seemingly insignificant, and found that in the hands of God, it was more than sufficient. Crucially, though, it was the obedience in using what they already had that engendered the miracle. May it be so for you also.

SNOWFLAKES

Drug Deaths. In 2016 nearly 64,000 Americans died from drug overdoses – roughly as many as were lost in the entire Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan wars combined. The US is the world’s richest country, yet its life expectancy declined in both 2015 and 2016.

SOURCE: Taken from Time, 5th March 2018, a special edition devoted entirely to “the opioid diaries.”

No Religion. This article in “Snowflakes” in the previous edition of FutureFirst was unintentionally misleading. A better phrasing of what it said would be as follows: “An analysis by the 2016 British Social Attitudes survey showed that for every 26 people brought up as Christian (45% of the population) who now had no religion, one person brought up with No Religion (19%) had come to Christ.” We are very grateful to Daren Allder, Worship Minister at St Mary of Bethany Church, Woking, for this clarification.

SOURCE: The ‘No Religion’ Population of Britain, Stephen Sullivant, Catholic Research Forum Reports, 3, Centre for Religion and Society, St Mary’s University, Twickenham.

Churchgoing in the UK. In 2015, 5.4% of the English population of 55.3 million went to church and 7.6% of the Scottish population of 5.4 million, firm figures from measured numbers. What of Wales? Perhaps 5.3% of their 3.1 million attended, and maybe 22.8% (3 times the Scottish figure) of N Ireland’s 1.9 million were churchgoers. If these figures are about correct then 6.1% of the UK’s 65.7 million people were churchgoers in 2015, a figure likely to be 5.7% by 2018, falling to 5.4% in 2020.

SOURCE: English and Scottish figures from UK Church Statistics No 3, 2018 Edition, Section 13; Welsh and N Ireland percentages estimated.

Revival? A report in The Federalist drew attention to the increase in churchgoing in Europe, especially Catholic churches, largely because of the huge numbers of immigrants. It also indicated growing numbers of Lutherans (as in the UK), as part of the immigrant churchgoing increase. In another study the Catholic Institute of Paris (ICP) stated that while

SOURCE: Samuel Kabreab, speaking at the Lausanne Researchers’ Conference, May 2018.

Age of Churches. About 10% of the churches in Scotland have started in the 21st century, a slightly higher proportion than in England, perhaps 7%. However, England has more older churches still in use than in Scotland, about double the percentage, 26% to 14%. Almost half of the churches in Scotland, 47%, were built in the 20th century, more than the third, 33%, in England, partly resulting from the damage suffered in WWII, not all of which were re-built.

SOURCES: http://thefederalist.com/2018/03/23/reports; academic survey by St Mary’s University, Twickenham and ICP reported in the Church of England Newspaper, 29th March 2018 Page 3.

Burials. In the UK the majority of people are cremated when they die, some 77% in 2016, a very slowly increasing percentage. Of those services, 63,000 or 16% were taken by Anglican clergy, and 9,000 or 2.4% by a Methodist minister. In some other countries the percentage cremated is much smaller, such as 50% in the United States, 40% in France and 22% in Italy, while in Japan the percentage is virtually 100%.

SOURCE: Report in The Economist, 14th April, 2018, Page 55; UK Church Statistics No 3, 2018 edition, Table 2.8.

Spanish Evangelicals. In the latest edition of the Spanish Churches’ Year Book it was reported that there were 512 towns in Spain with more than 5,000 people with no evangelical church and a further 914 towns with a population of between 2,000 and 5,000 population also without an evangelical church. In total there are 4,000 churches of all denominations

in Spain, but this is thought to exclude up to 500 new immigrant churches. The number of evangelicals in Spain is thought to be about 500,000 but the figure usually given by expatriates to put pressure on the government is 1.3 million.

SOURCE: Máximo Alvarez at Lausanne Researchers’ Conference, May 2018.

“The *God of the Bible* is no different from the gods or spiritual beings of other religions” was in the form of a question asked in a survey in São Paulo, Brazil, a city with a population of 21 million. 36% agreed strongly, 9% agreed, 4% didn’t know, 12% disagreed and 39% disagreed strongly. That is almost 50-50! Among Christians in São Paulo, 73% were willing to be known as an Evangelical, and 87% of those in Buenos Aires.

SOURCE: Richard Waldrep from the American Peoples’ Research in 2015, given at the Lausanne Researchers’ Conference, May 2018.

Christians in Ghana. A 1986 survey of churches in Ghana found that only 11% of the population attended church, and that some 7 million in the country were just nominal Christians. It found that there were 15,000 unchurched towns, and some 5 million people unreached, in a population then of about 19 million. There were 5 million Muslims. As a consequence of the survey some of the denominations restructured so that they could be more effective in their outreach.

SOURCE: Willie Botha of Inserv, Pretoria, South Africa, speaking at the Lausanne Researchers’ Conference, May 2018.

Disciple Making Movements (DMMs) since 2005 in 28 Sub-Saharan African and 5 Asian countries working through an organisation called New Generations had seen some 54,000 churches started, and 1.4 million conversions, about a third of whom were Muslims in these countries. Their primary method of operation was to look for Persons of Peace, and through these to start Discovery Bible Groups, and then through these to start churches.

SOURCE: Samuel Kabreab, speaking at the Lausanne Researchers’ Conference, May 2018.

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SOURCE: UK Church Statistics, Table 1.1.2 in Nos 2 and 3, and 12.17.1 in No 3.

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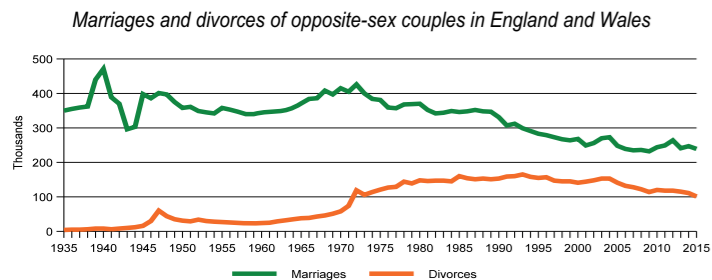
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MARRIAGE AND STAYING TOGETHER

The number of people marrying in England and Wales each year since 2005 has been just under a quarter of a million. Since two people are involved with every marriage, this means that about 4% of the unmarried population each year (2.2% of unmarried men and 1.9% of unmarried women) “tie the knot.”

Variations year on year are rarely significant. It is the long-term trend which is important and, as shown in the graph, the number of marriages has been reducing for the last 45 years, since the year 1970, and the number of divorces since 2005. In a population with relatively little change (few immigrants) the proportion of the population already married will rise. With increasing populations (as in England and Wales) that proportion tends to decrease.

There has however been a sea-change in culture with cohabiting couples now a major proportion of the marriageable population (who are not counted as married people). In more recent years also the change from opposite-sex couples to same-sex couples has become slightly more common.



Up until 2005 all married couples were opposite-sex unions. In December 2005 Civil Partnerships were allowed in law, and since March 2014 same-sex marriages have been legally allowed, and while some same-sex partnerships continue, most in this position prefer marriage to partnership. In 2015, the latest year for which data is available, there were 6,500 same-sex marriages (3,600 female and 2,900 male), and a further 9,200 same-sex partnerships converted their relationship into marriage.

About 63,000 of the 239,000 marriages in 2015 were religious marriages and of these just 44 were same-sex marriages (0.07% of religious marriages). This number of religious marriages was 8% less than the number in 2014 (68,000).

The number of divorces in 2015 was two-fifths, 41%, of the number of marriages in 2005, confirming the statement on the Office for national Statistics (ONS) website that just over two-fifths, 42%, of

African Church Growth

Half of the Christian growth in the world is in the continent of Africa! In 2018 the world had 2.5 billion Christians, growing at the rate of 29 million people a year. Africa had 630 million (25%), growing at 14 million a year. Europe had almost as many – 570 million (23%) – but only growing at 0.2 million a year and that largely because of all the immigrants arriving there. Asia had 420 million (17%), growing at 7 million a year, and the rest of the world had 890 million (35%), growing at 8 million a year. Africa is seeing half the world’s Christian increase!

The obvious question is, “Why?” Africa still has a high fertility rate. In 2018 it was 4.9 children per woman on average, while globally the figure is 2.5. Both figures have decreased quite drastically over the past 20 or 30 years, but the African rate is still twice as high as elsewhere. Consequently with gradually decreasing infant and child mortality rates due to slowly improving medical facilities and availability, there are a lot of children in Africa. The AIDS rate also remains high, so many of these children are orphans. Many inherit the cultural tradition of attending church, however, and continue to do so when they are teenagers and young people.

Many Africans are Christian (at least nominally). Some 60% of the African population are Christian, against only 33% globally. So Africa has twice as many Christians pro rata as elsewhere. As indicated elsewhere in this issue, African Christianity is also growing twice as fast as in the rest of the world.

Which groups are growing? Growth is seen across all denominations, though least among the Orthodox which have very few Evangelicals or Pentecostals among them. Pentecostals generally have doubled pro rata in the last 45 years – in 1970 14% of Africa’s Christians were Pentecostal; in 2015 35% were! Evangelicals, which are counted separately, likewise have virtually doubled, from 13% in 1970 to 23% by 2015. It is especially the Protestant denominations and the Anglicans which are growing most.

Which part of Africa is seeing the fastest growth? The UN Province of Eastern Africa which comprises 21 countries, the largest of which are Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda (60% of that Province’s population), has seen its proportion of Africa’s Christians grow from 41% of the total in 1970 to 45% by 2015, while Middle Africa and Southern Africa have smaller proportions now, and Western Africa only increased from 23% to 24%. Eastern Africa’s percentages may seem a small growth but they reflect a 5-fold increase from 55 million Christians in 1970 to 260 million in 2015! Anglicans

marriages will dissolve, half within the first 10 years.

It was thought some years ago that Christian marriages had much the same failure rate, but the latest research suggests it is considerably less; in other words, “religion” helps couples stay together. Supporting evidence for this comes from the United States where a 2016 Harvard research study found that regular church attendance lowered the risk of divorce by 47% (and depression by 29%). Research by the Barna Group and by Shaunti Feldhahn in the US also confirms these findings.

Research by the Marriage Foundation has found that the impact of divorce in the UK today is such that only half (50%) of teenagers by the time they are 15 years of age will be living with both their natural parents. If their parents were cohabiting rather than married far fewer (just 7%) will be with both their parents when they reach 15. Teenagers whose parents are married and living together have higher self-esteem than in broken families.

Research has also found that it tends to be higher wage-earners (earning £43,000 per annum or more) who are more likely to marry (87%), and stay together, whereas those of poorer circumstances (earning under £16,000) are much less likely to marry (24%) and separate. Presumably the cost of weddings, accommodation and children comes into this equation somewhere also.

Why do people divorce? Research carried out by Paul Amato and Spencer James for the Marriage Foundation studied 1,620 married men and women over a 20 year period. Those who ended up getting divorced found levels of happiness and satisfaction in their marriage dropped quickly, but for those who remained together most marriages started happy and stayed that way. A quarter (27%) say they “drifted apart.” Helping parents keep together is therefore something that Christian ministry could perhaps prioritise. A Relate survey last year found that money was “the main cause of arguments between couples” (26%), followed by misunderstanding (20%) and differing sex-drives (19%). Other factors relate to a couple’s education and age.

At the same time millennials (those mostly in their 30s) are both less likely to marry but also less likely to have an ongoing sex life. The “Next Steps” project of the Department for Education, managed by University College London, tracked 16,000 people born in 1989/90 since they were 14, and discovered that millennials are waiting longer to have sex compared with previous generations, with one in 20 (5%) still being a virgin in their mid-20s. Steve McKay, Professor in Social Research at Lincoln University, considers the percentage could be higher. Perhaps this is a welcome reaction to the sexual overload of this century.

SOURCES: Article in Ministry, March 2018, Page 16 citing hshp.harvard.edu/news/press-releases/religious; Office for National Statistics website; Our first five years, Marriage Foundation, February 2018; article in the Church of England Newspaper, 13th April, 2018, Page 4; article in the Church Times, 24th March, 2017, Page 4; article in The Daily Telegraph, 7th May, 2018; article by Shaunti Feldhahn, in Ministry, March 2018, Page 16; The Trends Redefining Romance Today, Barna Group, Feb 9th, 2017, Page 2.



are the fastest growing denomination in Eastern Africa.

Anglicans are also the fastest growing denomination in Kenya. A DAWN survey found in 2004 (the organisation unfortunately closed in 2007) that average Sunday church attendance in Kenya was 9%, though this excluded the Roman Catholics (about a fifth of all Christians). Attendance was highest in Nairobi where it was 16% in a population then of 2.7 million, across 900 churches. A Daystar University College survey of 1986 in Nairobi found a 12% attendance rate then (population 1.6 million) across 900 churches.

These two studies of Nairobi show that the average congregation had risen from 190 in 1986 to 380 in 2004, and while the number of churches had increased by 200, the number of people attending had gone up by almost 240,000, a quarter of a million! Hence the growth in Nairobi’s churches and, if true of elsewhere in Africa, is not just by the starting of new fellowships, but by seeing individual congregations actually increase as well. This is certainly true of Nairobi Baptist Church, pastored by Rev Tom Houston in the early 1970s when the congregation was in its hundreds which today is in the many thousands, and indeed in 5 figures.

In another town in Kenya, Kisumu, the third largest city (the second is Mombasa), the DAWN 2004 survey found 900 “Bible believing” churches, whereas in 2018 there were over 4,000 (including the Roman Catholics)! African church growth is seen therefore both in church planting and congregational building.

SOURCES: The Unfinished Task, A national survey of churches in Kenya, ACM - FTT Afriserve in partnership with DAWN Ministries, 2004; Nairobi Church

These may be helpful Books and reports received

Solidarity with the Poor? Positioning the Church of the Nazarene in England in 2003 and 2013, Michael Hirst, Social Policy Research Unit, University of York, mh1@york.ac.uk

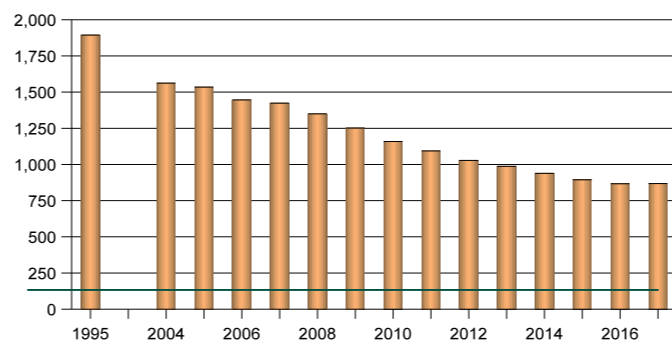
Aussies admire people who live out a genuine faith, Eternity News, by Tess Colgate, May 2017.

More Independent Bookshops

The number of Independent Bookshops, which will include some of the remaining Christian Bookshops, has increased for the first time in 22 years, by just 1 shop. In 2017 there were 868 independent bookshops; during the year 25 independent shops closed but 39 opened; however, 13 did not renew their membership of the Booksellers’ Association. The number has dropped from 1,894 shops in 1995 when the Net Book Agreement ended.

“Bookshops have become more and more creative, they hold more interesting events, make better partnerships in their communities and have essentially become more professional,” said Mr Nic Bottomley, owner of Mr B’S Emporium of Reading Delights in Bath. Christian bookshops have also found that in order to survive, they also have had to diversify, for example, having a coffee/cake/chat shop on the premises, arranging events with local churches, etc.

Number of Independent Bookshops which are members of the Booksellers’ Association



SOURCE: The Bookseller, 15th December 2017, Page 10; 23rd February 2018, Page 6.

Church of the Nazarene

The Church of the Nazarene is a holiness church within the Wesleyan tradition committed to identifying with the poor and marginalised. In the UK it is divided into two Districts, North and South, broadly England & Wales, and Scotland & N Ireland. In 2018 it had about 3,400 members in total across about 70 churches.

The Department for Communities and Local Government publish Indices of Deprivation and these were used in an analysis of Nazarene churches in the South District. The Indices are given for what are called “Lower layer Super Output Areas” (Lower SOAs) and there are 32,482 of these in England, from which are derived some 6,800 “Middle SOAs”. In 2013, half of the Nazarene churches, 51%, were in the most deprived, the lower 20% (or quintile), of these MSOAs, and the remaining half spread across the others.

Three-fifths, 60%, of the church’s membership were in these most deprived areas, a membership number which had grown between 2003 and 2013. Likewise a similar proportion of those attending worship, attending Sunday School or participating in the Youth Group were in such areas, indicating a strong desire to adhere to the basic principles of the Church.

Half (50%) of the lay office-holders had their home and church in a most deprived area, and so did over two-fifths, 43%, of ministerial staff in 2013. A further quarter of officer-holders, 25%, and a third of staff, 33%, had their church in a most deprived area, but their home elsewhere. A third, 36%, of lay officers lived less than a mile from their church.

The more deprived an area the more likely a church was located there. Despite an overall decline in membership numbers, those churches in the most deprived areas were likely to grow. The Nazarene churches are “reasonably accessible to those households from poor socio-economic backgrounds,” concluded the researcher, something which other denominations sometimes find hard to emulate. “A ministry of presence ... may be necessary to identify with and enter into solidarity with people in poverty.” Such an example may be relevant to all.

SOURCE: Solidarity with the Poor?, a research report by Michael Hirst, Social Policy Research Unit at the University of York.

Contemporary Fathers in the UK, Adrienne Burgess & Jeremy Davies, Fatherhood Institute, Nutfield Foundation, December 2017.

The Training of Theological Leadership: A Major Factor of Nominalism in our Churches? Dr Manfred Kohl, Nova Scotia, Second Lausanne Consultation on Nominalism, Rome, March 2018.

Christian Nominalism: A Missiological Analysis, Dr Bosela Eale, Second Lausanne Consultation on Nominalism, Rome, March 2018.



Providing Facts for Forward Planning

SNIPPETS

1) Three-quarters, 77%, of children never read a book with other people, such as parents or carers, outside school.

2) “Worldwide it takes five years on average for half of those displaced by conflict to return home after a war,” says the UN.

3) International research on the percentage of students cheating in tests found the UK was fourth from last with 14% (beaten by Canada, South Korea and Sweden) but better than Germany or the US where half cheat.

4) The national average gender pay gap (for full and part-time workers) is 18.4% for median earnings (= half larger, half smaller), in companies with more than 250 employees in 2018.

5) Three-fifths, 60%, of households with children in Britain have two working parents in 2017; half of these are full-time, half part-time.

6) 89% of Christians donate to their church. Of these 80% also give to charity and 9% don’t. Of the 11% not giving to their church, 7% give to charity and 4% give to neither.

7) The number of people listening to Premier Radio regularly has risen to 1.2 million in the early months of 2018.

SOURCES: 1) National Literacy Trust study of nearly 50,000 UK pupils, reported in The Bookseller, 9th March, 2018, Page 14; 2) Article in The Economist, 31st March 2018, Page 49; 3) Research by University College London and others reported in the Daily Telegraph, 7th May 2018, Page 2; 4) As used by the Office for National Statistics, figures published for the first time on 4th April; 5) First statement from an article in The Economist, 4th May, 20-18, Page 25, second from Cash or carry? Report by the Fatherhood Institute, Dec 2017; 6) Christian Opinion Poll of just under 600 Christians reported in the Church Times, 13th April, 2018, Page 16; 7) ComRes survey reported in Christianity, May 2018, Page 12.

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MARITAL MAYHEM

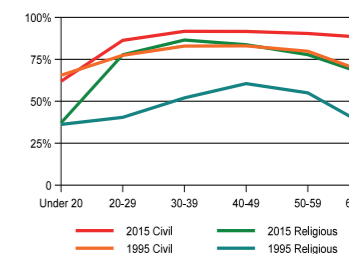
numerical terms, down three-fifths, 61%), reflects the ageing factor in some of these denominations, especially Methodists and the URC, as fewer older people get married.

However, the fact that these percentages have not varied substantially means that the smaller number of religious marriages now taking place simply mirrors the smaller number of marriages generally, as the chart in another article in this issue shows. The proportion cohabiting instead has increased.

Do religious couples cohabit before marriage? Yes, cohabiting prior to marriage is now extremely common for both civil and religious couples. American research found 65% agreed it was a good idea to live with one another before getting married (88% non-Christian, 41% practising Christian, but only 6% evangelicals).

Seven-eighths, 88%, had previously cohabited when they married in 2015, according to ONS figures (90% civil marriages, 81% religious marriages). Cohabitation preceded marriage for 80% of civil marriages in 1995. The overall percentage for religious marriages, however, is increasing rapidly: it was 44% in 1995, 56% in 2000, 64% in 2005, and 76% in 2010, the increase being especially seen by those marrying in their 20s or 30s. As the graph shows, cohabiting prior to marriage is now extremely common, civil or religious.

Percentage cohabiting before marriage, civil and religious, 1995 and 2015

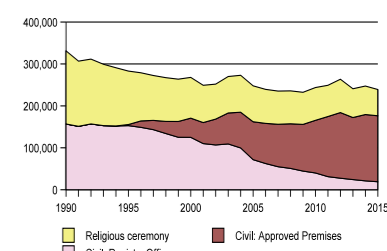


In 2015, half the population, 51%, was living alone (39% who had never married, but may have cohabited for a while, and 12% who did marry, but are now widowed or divorced). Of the other 49% of the population, 39% are married and living as a couple, while

the other 10% are cohabiting, 8% of whom had never married before, and 2% who were previously married. ONS marital status projections expect the percentage who are cohabiting to reach 22% of the population aged 30 to 44 by 2033 and 15% of the population aged 45 to 64. Such is the popularity of this form of living together.

For those who do choose a religious wedding ceremony of some kind, whether cohabiting or not, the places chosen for the ceremony are shown in the chart. In 1990 there were more religious ceremonies than Registry Office (civil) ceremonies but that has steadily changed especially after the introduction in 1995 of civil ceremonies being allowed in Approved Premises. There were again more religious ceremonies than Registry Office ceremonies in 2005 because the latter are rapidly declining in number. In 2000, just over a third, 36% of all marriages had a religious ceremony; in 2015 it was a quarter, 26%. A religious ceremony is defined as taking place in a religious building (which could include a mosque, temple, synagogue, etc).

Number of marriages by type of ceremony, 1990 to 2015



While the total number of marriages is decreasing, that is not happening uniformly across the UK. It is happening least in 12 Boroughs in the west of London (Brent, Camden, City of London, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hounslow, Kensington and Chelsea, Merton, Richmond upon Thames, Wandsworth and Westminster) and Newham in the east.

SOURCES: Marriage Statistics, Office for National Statistics, Tables 1, 9a and 11, released 23rd February 2018; Number of religious marriages by type of ceremony for opposite-sex couples, ONS, released 13th April, 2018; ONS marital status projections, 2011; Society Now, Issue 30, Winter 2018, Page 16; People and Places, Danny Dorling and Bethan Thomas, Policy Press, 2016, Page 43; trends Redefining Romance Today, Barna Group, 9th Feb., 2017, Page 4.