



Pushing boundaries

Taiwan is ahead of the game in many areas. They have just elected their first female President, and the blue shoe building is opening for business in February.

The shape of church

If you are like me you will be astonished to hear that the shoe building is a church, and the intention is that its design will attract more women. Is the church particularly lacking women? In the UK the reverse is more probably true! No, the answer lies in the anticipated function of the building: it is not for regular worship, just a wedding venue, complete with huge open-air stage and romantic sea views.

The purpose of church

I should have guessed. Church, in many people's minds, is a place to get



'hatched, matched and dispatched' - with the possible addition of Christmas romance and Easter drama. If you are lucky it is also a place with some aesthetic value, and hopefully good music too.

The definition of church

But, believe it or not, 'church' is not the building or the events which take place in it. The original word just means 'gathering': church is the people who meet together. There is a sense in which, like a family, you can belong to each other even if you rarely meet. But there is a sadness about families like that, and there is a sadness about people who think they belong to a church but only rarely meet, and only for what they can get out of it.

Your future in the church

Here is my challenge, for the cold, wet and windy month of February. If you regard yourself as belonging to a church, go to it this month. Meet with your 'brothers and sisters', and (most importantly) with your Father in heaven and his Son. If you don't have a church, look for a local one. See if you can find out what makes them a 'family'. If you are not sure where to try, feel free to contact me and I will make a suggestion. Push your boundaries: there may be more to church than you thought!

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