

EDITORIAL

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The arrival of a new occupant in the editorial chair could indicate a time of sweeping change. However, a glance at the cast of characters on the inside front cover of this issue of the *Ecclesiastical Law Journal* will reveal the same familiar names, albeit in a different order. Mark Hill continues his involvement with the *Journal* as Consultant Editor; Ruth Arlow, Frank Cranmer and David Harte continue to hold responsibility for different parts of the content. The subject matter continues to be broad, dealing not only with the law of the Church of England and the Anglican Communion but showing a truly international and inter-faith breadth. The ambition of the editorial board remains: that the *Ecclesiastical Law Journal* be the leading journal in the field and the first choice for authors seeking to publish important new work in the area of law and religion.

There will, of course, be more subtle changes. No longer will editorials be penned from exotic locations and wafted to the copy-editor by gentle tropical breezes. Instead they will almost certainly be typed in the study of a North London vicarage. The fact that the new editor is in holy orders is on the one hand inconsequential, but that it is noteworthy at all says something about Anglican canon law. In the Anglican Communion the task of legislating for the Church and administering the law of the Church is a task shared between clergy and laity. At the recent Colloquium of Anglican and Roman Catholic Canon Lawyers in Rome this newly installed editor (the only cleric on the Anglican delegation) was charged with seeking out information about training in canon law in the Anglican Communion.¹ Looking at the content of training courses for Anglican clergy proved largely fruitless: instruction in canon law is rarely provided in formal, examined courses and, if it is, it is invariably optional. One conclusion to draw from this is that the number of trained canon lawyers in the Anglican Communion should be negligible. However, another, and more accurate, conclusion is that to look for Anglican canonists only among the clergy is to look in the wrong place. For centuries the churches

1 For a report of the proceedings of the Colloquium see, in this issue, F Gavin, 'The Fourteenth Colloquium of Anglican and Roman Catholic Canon Lawyers', (2013) 15 *Ecc LJ* 356–358. A version of Professor Norman Doe's paper exploring these issues is reproduced below: N Doe 'The Teaching of Church Law: An Ecumenical Exploration Worldwide', (2013) 15 *Ecc LJ* 267–292.

of the Anglican Communion have formulated, legislated, administered and enforced canon law, but the principal actors have been lay lawyers, trained in the general law of the jurisdiction, rather than clergy.

The Ecclesiastical Law Society has a healthy balance of members, lay and ordained, with interest and expertise in the law as it affects the Church. As such it reflects something of the nature of Anglicanism, where clergy and laity work together for the good of the Church and the spread of the gospel.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the first two editors of this *Journal* have been laymen – lawyers and ecclesiastical judges of distinction. They leave big shoes to fill. As Mark Hill lays down the burden of editorship, tribute must be paid to him for his expertise in and ambition for the study of law and religion and for this *Journal* in particular. Mark has acquired a wholly deserved international profile in the field and the high regard in which this *Journal* is held is testimony to his tireless efforts. However, the concluding tribute to Mark must come from his predecessor, Michael Goodman, founding editor of the *Journal*, in an extract from a letter from the one to the other:

... as your immediate and, indeed, your only predecessor as Editor, I should like to record my admiration and gratitude for the way in which the *Journal* has developed under your wise and far-seeing leadership. It has become a highly respected publication, dealing with the practice of ecclesiastical law throughout the Anglican Communion and beyond, as evidenced by the list of the current members of the Editorial Board at the beginning of the latest issue of the *Journal*. You have also introduced a lightness of touch and humour to the *Journal's* pages which I have no doubt have been thoroughly appreciated by its readers. If you have found your years as Editor as enjoyable and satisfying as I found mine, you will be richly rewarded.

This is, of course, a hard act to follow, but a privilege indeed.