

EDITORIAL

WILL ADAM

Welcome to a new volume of the *Ecclesiastical Law Journal*, the twenty-third since its foundation in 1987 at the same time as the formation of the Ecclesiastical Law Society. Once again this issue has been affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, notably in the absence of the usual slate of synod reports that are usually published in January. A number of regular synodical meetings have been cancelled, reduced in scope or postponed. Churches, along with state legislative bodies in the UK and elsewhere, have made provision for a certain amount of business to be transacted online as a way of keeping the wheels of democracy turning in difficult times.

I am delighted that, despite this significant omission, there is plenty of material to fill the pages of this issue, once again showing the breadth of interest in the field of law and religion and its worldwide scope. Bruce Kaye and Rashri Baboolal Frank, from Australia and South Africa respectively, provide analysis in their articles of the different ways in which churches in former colonies have developed through and after the colonial era. Judith Hahn reviews the very recent pronouncement of the Catholic Church's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on baptismal validity and, at the other end of life, Ian Blaney gives a comprehensive evaluation of the Church of England's law on the care of human remains. In a very topical article, Jacqueline Humphreys examines how the Church of England might turn its stated environmental aspirations into reality.

The *Journal*, which has its roots in the Church of England and the Anglican canonical tradition has long sought to bring in voices from around the Church. In the next instalment of his series of biographical studies of clerical jurists of years past, Norman Doe shows that links between the Church of England's canonists and other churches go back further than one might have thought. This year's subject, William Beveridge, was a Restoration ecclesiastical dignitary whose work on the early history of Eastern canon law had a surprising influence on the development of the study of Eastern Orthodox canon law in the Christian East itself.

After a number of years of involvement with the *Journal*, beginning as a contributor to the case notes and ending up as Editor, I have decided that the time has come to stand down. I am delighted that the trustees of the Ecclesiastical Law Society have appointed Ben Harrison to succeed me. Ben is a barrister in private practice and takes up the role of Assistant Editor immediately. Over

the course of this volume I will hand over the reins. We also welcomed a number of new members of the Editorial Board at its meeting in November 2020.

2020 has been a memorable year, if a traumatic one for many. I know that I speak for many of our readers when I say that we look forward to 2021 as a year of hope and a year of peace.