

Gospel and Law

Ascension Edition

Editor: Revd Dr Catherine Shelley
Circulation & events: Andrew Male

revdrcath@gmail.com
admin@ecclawsoc.org.uk



Editorial: Happy Ascension and hope that you've all had an enjoyable Easter tide. Well, what a wonderful conference that was.... Brief reports below and more detail in the Journal in due course. And a few more dates for diaries at the end as usual.

AGM Results:

Welcome to your new Chairman, Rev Canon John Rees and the new vice chair, the Worshipful Mark Hill QC and Darren Oliver as the new Treasurer. In addition, in a contested election, Mark Emerton and the Venerable Stuart Beake were re-elected to the committee and Venerable Simon Baker was elected for the first time. And the new Chair and Committee got down to business pretty quickly.



And Bishop Christopher says good-bye as our outgoing Chairman after 22 years service on the Committee, 13 as Chair of the Society



Set in the elegant surroundings of the Marriott Hotel fronting onto Cathedral Green and backing onto the Wharfeside district, the conference included examples of the comedic potential, as well as the serious business, of death. The opening dinner was graced with a delightful review of his acquaintance with the subject from the 'lead Bishop for death', Geoffrey Rowell. Saturday morning opened with Professor Douglas Davies, illustrating that it is possible to ask awkward questions about death, even if politicians avoid them. Rev Dr Sandra Millar from the Funerals Project challenged us with stats that show the Church of England remains a significant player in the funeral market, 1/3 of all funerals each week, but cannot afford to be complacent. Amongst other things Frank Cranmer considered cross border difficulties created by differences between England and Scotland's death and burial law. Disappointingly Rupert Bursell QC declined to use a skull to illustrate themes from Hamlet, Ophelia's suicide and burial but it was an entertaining talk all the same.

Panel of the morning's speakers...



Douglas Davies, Sandra Millar, Stuart Beake, Frank Cranmer and Rupert Bursell

Standing in for the late and lamented Andrew Johnson, former Registrar of Winchester and Salisbury, a crack team from Lee Bolton Mounier Williams shared the benefits of their experience over five different Dioceses. Their presentation covered, amongst other things, relaxing rules on monuments, building on churchyards, re-use of open churchyards and maintenance. Joseph Elders, from the Churches Building Council reviewed CBC's archaeological concerns, with monuments, natural features and ecology above ground and human remains, 'more than bones', below ground. Finally, Julia Rugg challenged the church to take a more active and national role in addressing the urgent need for more burial space, which on current projections could run out in as little as a decade or so. The talks provided much material for consideration in workshops and for Mark Hill's conference summary on Sunday morning. He called for facilitative not oppressive funeral law, retaining residential rights of burial as a Church of England hallmark, commended Grave Talk and funeral project initiatives. He concluded with a salutary anecdote about the wrong music at the crem, ('Smoke gets in your eyes' instead of 'Every time you say goodbye'!). As with all good funerals there was a thanksgiving for the life of the Society in the form of Bishop Christopher's poignantly valedictory keynote speech. Thankfully though the Society goes on and though no longer the Chair so does Bishop Christopher.

For those who want to read further the following suggestions and weblinks may be of interest:

- **Death, Ritual and Belief: The Rhetoric of Funerary Rites** by Douglas James Davies Continuum 2002
- **Emotion, Identity, and Religion: Hope, Reciprocity, and Otherness** by Douglas James Davies Oxford University Press 2011
- **Natural Burial: Traditional - Secular Spiritualities and Funeral Innovation** by Hannah Rumble and Douglas Davies – Continuum 2012
- <https://www.churchofengland.org/media-centre/news/2014/01/'grave-talk'-cofe-trial-project-on-discussing-funerals-and-death.aspx>



A farewell present to Bishop Christopher and Hilary, presented by Sheila Cameron QC

Dates and events:

Francis Taylor Building has great pleasure in inviting you to the annual Boydell Lecture

Church Buildings - a blessing or a burden? to be given by **The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Richard Chartres KCVO DD FSA** Bishop of London in the Inner Temple Hall on **Wednesday 20 May 2015**
1 CPD hour accredited

Registration: 6pm Lecture: 6.30pm Reception: 7.30pm

Admission is free but it is necessary to reserve a place in advance:

RSVP by 13 May 2015 to Erja Gunn 020 7427 1859 reception@ftb.eu.com

London Lectures 2015 at Winckworth Sherwood, Montague Close, London SE1 9BB

17th June - Aiden Hargreaves-Smith on the Diocese in Europe

14th October – Consideration of the House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests covering Episcopal Provision for all Integrities; the panel will include Rt Rev Christopher Lowson Bishop of Lincoln, Rev Paul Benfield and Rev Dr Catherine Shelley

Charles Mynors on the faculty jurisdiction in the light of the new Care of Churches (Amendment) Measure will be deferred to 2016

The Law and Religion Scholars Network Conference this year will be on Monday 11th May. There will also be an informal workshop held the day before on Sunday 10th May, in the afternoon at 2.30pm. The focus of the workshop will be your own current research in the field of law and religion. The workshop will take place at St Michael's College Cardiff and will be a separate event from LARSN. Whilst we hope that many people will opt to join us for both occasions, there will be no problem about choosing to attend one day or the other. More details will appear on the website (<http://www.law.cf.ac.uk/clr/networks/lrsn.html>) in due course. The call for LARSN papers will be opened in March as usual, but if you have any queries in the meantime please do get in touch (h.m.t.d.tennapel@law.leidenuniv.nl).

A reminder about the Inter Inn Mooting Competition:

The Societies' offer to sponsor the Inter Inn Student Mooting Competition for 2014 – 2015 with a prize of £500 has been welcomed. If this is a success it is hoped that the sponsorship may become established as a regular link for the Society with the Inns of Court and a valuable means of

introducing future members of the Bar to the relevance and interest of Ecclesiastical Law. The Inner Temple, which was the winner last year, will be organising this year's competition and the three moots will take place in that Inn. The semi finals will both take place on Tuesday 23 June, using one problem, and the Final on Monday 13 July with another problem. The aim is that, as well as providing moot problems on topics concerned with Law and Religion, the Society will nominate judges. Other members will be welcome to attend. Further information may be obtained from David Harte at <harte.david@gmail.com>)

Magna Carta events at the Temple Church – more information can be found at:

<http://www.templechurch.com/magna-carta-1215-2015-londons-temple-and-the-road-to-the-rule-of-law/>

The ELS Magna Carta Event will be on Monday 23rd November 2015. It begins at 6pm with Choral Evensong, includes an address by the Master of Temple Church and Magna Carta and concludes with drinks and canapés. Tickets are £50 (£90 non-members) and bookings are now open.

Magna Carta, Religion and the Rule of Law

Editors: [Robin Griffith-Jones](#), Temple Church and King's College London; [Mark Hill QC](#), Cardiff University **Contributors:** Robin Griffith-Jones, Mark Hill QC, Lord Judge of Draycote, John W. Baldwin, Margaret McGlynn, R. H. Helmholz, Sir John Baker QC, John Witte, Jr, David Little, Wael Hallaq, Ali Gomaa, Anver Emon, Sudipta Kaviraj, Norman Doe, Maleiha Malik, Sir Rabinder Singh, Javier Martínez-Torrón, Lord Sacks, Simon Lee, Lord Dyson

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