



***Fraser Prize essay 2013***

***Topic: Does the church in Scotland still need theology?***

Entries were assessed by a Reading Panel drawn from the journal *Theology in Scotland* and the Scottish Church Theology Society.

The views of the Fraser Prize Reading Panel:

**Liam Fraser**

This is an outstanding essay which fulfils the brief and offers a mature, nuanced and publishable piece of writing. Fraser's approach is to stand back and question the question, investigating what the church in Scotland is like now, and also what theology has become and might become within it. He argues that theology is indeed still needed, but only if philosophically-informed.

Fraser writes with great clarity and leads the reader deftly through his argument. He is aware of both the historical background to the church in Scotland's situation, and also the contemporary context and its debates. He uses two relevant examples to demonstrate his argument and how progress might be made in the church. His essay is indeed about the church in Scotland, its life and mission.

Fraser is also creative and constructive. He is respectful of the different stances taken by groups in the church, but shows how dialogue could take new forms if the deeper, philosophical questions about their assumptions were examined. While Fraser does not mention the Roman Catholic church, that does not invalidate his argument, in that one could locate this church amongst the views he examines.

In the judgment of the Reading Panel this essay fulfils the brief of the Fraser Prize and corresponds to the vision of theology Dr Ian Fraser has upheld.

*The Fraser Prize Reading Panel, Spring 2014*