



Editorial

This issue of *Theology in Scotland* for spring 2016 contains four papers covering a diverse range of issues.

The comments of the Fraser Prize Reading Panel form a preface to John Starr's winning essay. By way of summary however, in "A theology of daughterhood: The challenges of modern biology to theology today", Dr Starr examines one significant consequence of an ageing population, and the impact of this on care of the elderly. As a contribution to the discussion, Starr's paper explores the biblical theme of daughterhood as a way of understanding the changing relationships of children to elderly parents in society in general.

In his paper "Taking Darwin seriously", given at the Scottish Church Theology Society conference earlier this year, Neil Spurway interprets the creation narratives in the Book of Genesis from a scientific perspective. He examines the biblical material alongside the development of theories of evolution, beginning with an historical survey of early geological theories. In a wide-ranging discussion, Professor Spurway includes both a critique of Richard Dawkins and an account of Darwin's theoretical development of evolution as a mechanism functioning through the adaptability of individuals to their environment. He invites us to 'savour Kingsley's alternative – a living, immanent, ever-working God'. Professor Spurway then introduces us to the work of Sarah Coakley who offers a critique of 'flat plane thinking'; the argument of Conway Morris that there is an argument for deep design at work in creation; Teilhard de Chardin on evolution as an expression of psycho-physical energy; and the work of Austin Farrer and John Haught. He concludes the lecture with a quote from Joseph Fortier, who writes, 'Darwinian evolution challenges Christian thought to question its ideas of perfection and power derived from Greek philosophy and instead return to its core faith in God's suffering love, as revealed by Jesus'.

In the classic tradition of the exploratory essay, George Gammack examines the theme of *community* in his paper "Tabernacles of the Spirit". He details varied aspects of the creation of community among

those who are retired. The paper explores the relationship between persons and community in later years. In the course of this we are introduced to the work of several authors: Lambourne, Niebuhr, Heaney, Sennett, Gregor Smith and others. In this case, the notes following the essay constitute an important adjunct to the paper, forming a useful introduction to the wider literature.

In “Tak the hand” David Scott discusses the theology and rites of ordination of the Scottish Reformed tradition and goes on to reflect on more specific aspects of ministry. Beginning with Thomas Dozeman’s definition of Scriptural holiness, as *either* the dynamic force of the numinous *or* the ritual resource of the sacred sphere (these are ultimately incompatible), Scott then turns to a critical review of the terminology of ministry in the contemporary Church of Scotland. He analyses, in turn, the terms *growth*, *success*, and *fulfilment* in current discussion. Turning to the history of liturgy, Scott examines the rites of ordination according to Knox’s liturgy, along with Calvin’s understanding of the rite. What emerges from this historical survey is that the laying on of hands in ordination which set the minister apart was not part of the original liturgy in Scotland. Instead ministers were welcomed by colleagues who came forward to ‘*tak the hand*’ of the ordinand. The paper raises, reflectively, a number of matters relevant to ministry today.

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Editor