



## Editorial

When I was invited to take on the editorship of this journal, I enquired about the target readership. I was informed (half-seriously?) that the original intention was to fill the gap between *Scottish Journal of Theology* and *Life and Work* – a large enough target to aim at! My own interpretation of this has been to provide a platform for practitioners in ministry to reflect theologically upon work in which they have been deeply involved – but also to encourage publication papers by scholars in the early years of their research. If the first paper in this issue falls into the latter category, all the other papers in this issue certainly have been hammered out on the anvil of the practice of ministry.

The work of John McLeod Campbell continues to have a fascination for contemporary Scottish theology, and, following upon the recent paper by Paul Nimmo, Stephen Cowley explores the relationship between philosophy and theology in the work of McLeod Campbell. Undoubtedly this nineteenth century scholar presented a fresh interpretation of Calvinism. While it is generally recognised that his theology of the atonement grew out of his pastoral experience, in this paper Cowley places McLeod Campbell in a Scottish philosophical tradition which found its fulfilment in the work of John Macmurray.

Sometimes the encounter with a previously unfamiliar writer provides a background and/or new context for reflecting upon work with which one is only too familiar. In reflecting upon the writing of the French ethicist France Quéré, David Sinclair finds an approach to theological ethics which provides a vehicle for reflecting upon the work of the Church of Scotland's recently formed Church and Society Council. George Gammack's paper finds its context in his ministry in Whitfield parish in Dundee. His theology is not that of abstract ideas but grows out of ministry in which human need is great and material resources limited. In contrast, Colinton parish in Edinburgh is rich in material resources yet raises issues which are relevant throughout the Kirk – and more widely. In an age when institutional religion is in numerical decline, why DO parents seek baptism for their children? Finally Elizabeth Henderson examines how death is portrayed in TV 'soaps'

and explores the implications of this for funeral practices. All of these papers reflect a particular way of doing theology, an approach which starts from experience and/or practice and seeks ways of relating that experience and/or practice to the theological tradition. In so far as McLeod Campbell's theology of the atonement came out of his pastoral experience in a Scottish parish, perhaps continuing reflection upon his work is not out of place in this collection of papers

*David Lyall*