

EDITORIAL

This brief editorial is being written in the midst of some personal chaos. I am coming towards the end of one ministry and am just a couple of weeks away from being inducted to a new charge, a church plant in St Andrews. But my wife and I are still trying to arrange temporary accommodation there until a permanent home is ready, and we are also struggling to find suitable premises to hold services. However, the prospect of a new congregation is hugely exciting, and it is a real privilege to be invited to take this on, even if it means becoming an assistant minister for a while! If you are ever in St Andrews...

Obviously this changes all kinds of things, and I mention it only because it has implications for *SBET*. It has been pointed out to me that in the earliest years of a church plant, the Free Church normally requires the minister to give up external commitments, 'so that he may devote his whole time' to the new work. In trying to respect the undoubted wisdom of that legislation, but also to be fair to *SBET*, all concerned have agreed that I co-edit the *Bulletin* with someone else. We are delighted that Alistair Wilson of the Highland Theological College has agreed to become Editor from this issue, and he and I have been left to divide up the various editorial tasks and committee responsibilities in a way that suits us both.

It is also a privilege to introduce the rest of the new team. Bob Fyall joins the Editorial Board in his capacity as the Director of Rutherford House. He has a hard act to follow, but in the kind providence of God the House has found the ideal successor to David Searle. Readers of the *Bulletin* will already know the names of Iain D. Campbell and Lynn Quigley, and they are now responsible for our Book Reviews. Two young biblical scholars have agreed to lend their expertise to the Board: Nathan Macdonald lectures in Old Testament at St Andrews, and Simon Gathercole lectures in New Testament at Aberdeen. Simon is also our new Chairman. At the time of writing, only Bob and I cannot be described as twenty-something or thirty-something, so remember us both as we offer the wisdom of the years for the guidance of the young. We are in the process of approaching other scholars who will serve as Consulting Editors.

I am sure you will benefit from this issue. It is important to note the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of Jonathan Edwards, surely America's profoundest theologian, and so we include an article on Edwards

which draws lessons for today. The other four articles are based on papers given at the 2003 Conference of the Scottish Evangelical Theology Society, and they are a good sample of the quality and variety on offer there each year. Please note the advert for the 2004 Conference on the back of this issue, and make every effort to be there if you can. *SETS* provides perhaps a unique opportunity in Scotland to bridge church and academy, and these conferences have proved enormously stimulating over the years.

In the next issue, we hope to have two articles from leading systematic theologians, one on 'The New Perspective on Paul' and the other on 'Open Theism' (another paper from the 2003 Conference). Future issues will carry articles from biblical specialists, on 'Matthew's Wisdom Christology' for example, and we have some broader biblical-theological work promised, on subjects as diverse as 'Land' and 'Mission'. There are also articles being written on Scottish theologians, including George Smeaton, Fraser of Brea and Samuel Rutherford. Plenty to be going on with there!

I need to close with a correction. IVP(UK) have pointed out an error in the last issue, in footnote 30 on page 42, in the article on 'Open Theism'. They ask us to be careful to distinguish between IVP in this country, based in Leicester, and IVP in the USA, based in Downers Grove. *The Openness of God* was published by IVP(USA), but not by IVP(UK). *God's Lesser Glory* by Bruce Ware was published by IVP(UK), but not by IVP(USA). The two publishers do sometimes co-publish individual titles and multi-volume series, but they did not co-publish either of these books and we were wrong to accuse them of inconsistency. I take personal responsibility for this editorial oversight, and offer my sincere apologies.