

Despite the complex nature of the dilemmas being examined and the often painful nature of the factual backdrop, all of the authors in this edited collection do an exemplary job of outlining their arguments with clarity. Although the book does not shy away from some very technical discussions of both canon law and secular law, it is accessible to readers who do not necessarily have a strong legal background. In summary, this is an important work for any scholars in the field of law and religion, but it will certainly draw interest and achieve impact beyond that discipline.

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[doi:10.1017/S0956618X22000436](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0956618X22000436)

## **To Proclaim Afresh: Declaration and Oaths for Church of England Ministers**

THE FAITH AND ORDER COMMISSION OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
Church House Publishing, London, 2022, ix + 35 pp (paperback £6),  
ISBN: 978-1-78140-254-2

The Declaration of Assent and the Oaths of Allegiance and Canonical Obedience have a certain significance for all who are called to exercise ministry in the Church of England. Made and taken at ordinations, at consecrations and at the outset of a new ministry, they fundamentally express what it means to exercise ministry within the unique polity and legal framework of the Church of England. Yet, in spite of this significance, there is little modern-day commentary or analysis on what making the declaration and taking the oaths means theologically or in terms of the practical exercise of ministry.

This short booklet from the Faith and Order Commission of the Church of England is thus welcome. It is separated into three chapters: commentary and analysis of the declaration and oaths are found in the first two chapters respectively; the third examines the significance of these proclamations in a public, liturgical setting. The first chapter, on the Declaration of Assent, begins with a historical introduction, succinctly tracing its development back to the requirement to subscribe to the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion. There is then some helpful line-by-line commentary on the preface to the Declaration of Assent, which is rich in both its theology and ecclesiology. Many of the phrases found in the Declaration itself, such as ‘catholic creeds’ and ‘only the forms of service which are authorized or allowed by Canon’ are examined in this commentary on the preface, though the reader is left thinking whether a line-by-line commentary on the Declaration itself and the oaths would have enhanced

this publication further. The second chapter, on the oaths, does not have a specific historical introduction, but there is an insightful analysis of the relationship between allegiance and obedience. However, it would have benefited from an explanation of what in law an oath actually is. For both oaths there is a helpful discussion placing them in context, and it is valuable that each section deals with issues which can be problematic: in the commentary on the Oath Of Allegiance there are questions posed, such as ‘Can republicans minister in the Church of England?’, and in the chapter on canonical obedience there is a good evaluation of the limits of clerical obedience.

This is therefore a practical document for those about to be ordained or begin a new ministry. Furthermore, each chapter ends with a number of questions for discussion which makes it a useful teaching resource. The final chapter, on the Declaration of Assent as an ‘enacted performance’ both deals well with the significance of making the declaration during public worship and also serves as a reminder that, while new ministry means new relationships, there is constancy in the foundations of ministry within the Church of England.

*To Proclaim Afresh* should be read by everyone in ministry, and by those discerning such a call. Rich in theology and ecclesiology, and succinct and practical, it will assist all in deepening their understanding of what it means to minister in the Church of England.

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doi:10.1017/S0956618X22000448

## **The Development of the Canons: A Historical Study and Summary of the Church of England’s Canons 1969 to 2020**

Edited by GERALD BRAY

Latimer Publications, London, 2022, 214 pp (paperback £9.50),

ISBN: 978-1-906327-72-9

Canons do not form the entirety of the ecclesiastical law of the Church of England: statutes, statutory instruments, rubrics, case law, quasi-legislation and the mediaeval canon law are also important sources for ecclesiastical law. Nevertheless, for certain topics, such as liturgy and ministry, the Canons will usually be the first point of reference. In 1964 and 1969 a new body of Canons for the Church of England were promulgated by the convocations of Canterbury and York. These replaced the Canons of 1604, which were almost entirely repealed. From 1969, the power to legislate by canon has been transferred to the General Synod of the Church of England, which has continued