

FCI SECRETARY'S REPORT 2014

Last year our FCI Annual Day had to be held in All Saints Church, Battersea as our usual venue, Indian YMCA Student Hostel was not available. We had a most enjoyable day and we were very grateful to Revd Anand Asir and our Chair, Jessie for their kindness and the hard work needed to make the day a success. The Eucharist was held in the morning with Revd William Allberry celebrating and the Very Revd David Monteith, Dean of Leicester preaching. We were very pleased to have our patron, Dr Daleep Mukarji chairing the afternoon session when Christine Elliott (Director of World Church Programmes for Churches Together in Britain and Northern Ireland) spoke on 'Experience of Partnership' and answered questions.

Partnership has been an important theme this year and in March a Day Conference on Living Partnership was held in Birmingham, with the planning group convened by FCI Vice Chair, Revd Adrian Watkins, with help from the Chair, Jessie, along with CSI/CNI Indian Relations Forum and supported by mission agencies, CMS,US,PWM and Methodist Church, URC and Church of Scotland. The day was very successful with discussions about the reality of living partnership in its different aspects, including an awareness of the importance of friendship and personal relationships among the partners, but a few more participants would have helped financially. Now the oft repeated question is 'When is the next Partnership Day?'

Revd Joshva Raja, editor of Pilgrim, has produced two excellent issues, the latest one in June and, for many members who are finding it increasingly difficult to attend FCI Day, this is their main link with FCI. The present format was first introduced by Revd Dr Timothy Mark and, as mentioned earlier, it was with great sadness that we heard of his death in April. We are so pleased that Joshva is maintaining the high standard set by his predecessor.

By the end of 2013, three officers of FCI had resigned, the treasurer, Revd Suresh Kumar, the membership secretary, Mrs Margaret Smith and Revd Roy Smith who was database manager and webmaster. We are very grateful to them all for their work for FCI and it was a hard job to replace them. Unfortunately, with no treasurer to write cheques, it becomes difficult to pay for printing Pilgrim and hiring the hall for the partnership conference or any other expenses. We were lucky that, by Jessie's good efforts and many visits to FCI's bank, we gained a possible new treasurer, Mr James Duthie. Duthie has been doing the work of treasurer and we request that his appointment be confirmed for one year. We are thankful for his stepping in to the gap. It was also due to Jessie's endeavours that we have a new membership secretary, Revd William Allberry, who will also manage the database, and a new webmaster, Mr Oswin Peter.

At the last management committee meeting, after being presented with figures for current membership of FCI, a discussion on the future of FCI began. We have all spent time in the last two years' AGMs, discussing whether to widen FCI's remit (widening friendship) but there has been little progress. Now we need to look seriously at the

possible future of FCI. A letter was sent out earlier in the year and some members sent in suggestions, which we propose considering, starting today.

At the AGM in 2013 I was re elected for one year only and I am happy to say that a new secretary has been nominated, so, along with the education secretary, the vacancies will be filled. In the Management Committee's initial discussion, it was suggested that if we could not fill the vacancies, we should consider closing FCI. However that is not now an immediate consideration but it is the duty of all to think about the future. If any members have energy and enthusiasm and relevant ideas not already suggested, then they should please offer their services for the good of FCI.

Angela Wingate

4 October 2014