

FCI SECRETARY'S REPORT 2016

The meetings during the past year were the FCI Annual Day held on 3rd October and the Management Committee meetings in November and May.

The Annual Day for 2015 was held in the Indian YMCA Student Hostel. It was attended by over 50 members and friends. The Eucharist followed an Indian liturgy and the Celebrant was Revd. Fiona Brampton, Bishop's Advisor for World Mission, Diocese of Ely and also representing the CSI Vellore-Cambridgeshire Ecumenical Link Partnership. An excellent and challenging sermon was preached by Ven. Dr. John Perumbalath, Archdeacon of Barking in the Diocese of Chelmsford. The offering amounting to £625 was for "The Cathedral Relief Service" of the CNI Diocese of Calcutta. At the Annual General Meeting held after an Indian curry lunch, Revd Jessie Anand was elected to serve for a second term as chair. Revd Mark Woodrow was elected as Treasurer and Revd Chellaian Lawrence as Pilgrim Editor. The AGM was followed by an Indian dance performed by Ms Vasantha Gnanadoss. Dr Daleep Mukarji then facilitated a session in which Mrs Margaret Marshall, Synod Clerk of the URC West Midlands Synod spoke on "A Partnership Experience with Indian Churches". The URC West Midlands Synod had a partnership link with the CNI Diocese of Durgapur over 12 years and more recently connections to the Diocese of Amritsar.

During the year two issues of Pilgrim have been produced to a high standard and we are grateful to Revd Chellaian Lawrence for his excellent work. I am sure we have all appreciated the quality of presentation, layout, news and colourful pictures as well as the stimulating articles. It remains a financial challenge to produce these two editions each year, but the committee is clear that we should aim to do so for as long as possible.

On 1-3 March the South Asia Ecumenical Forums meeting was held at the headquarters of the Protestant Church of the Netherlands and ICCO-Kerkinactie in Utrecht. I was privileged to be able to represent FCI at these annual meetings which bring together European partners, link relationships and friends of the CSI and CNI as well as Church of Pakistan and Church of Bangladesh. The financial contribution from CMS towards my travel and accommodation made this participation possible. In addition our Committee member Steve Pearce was also present in his capacity as chair of the CSI-CNI Relations Forum and representing the Methodist Church. The General Secretaries of the CSI and CNI were present as was the Moderator of the Church of Pakistan. The theme of the three days was **"Promoting Peace, Preventing Radicalisation: The Church's Role"**. Various presentations were given including perspectives from the Church of North India, Church of South India, Church of Pakistan and Church of Bangladesh. Two key recommendations of the workshops

and discussions the meeting were the need for “internal cleansing of our own house” and “redefining or reformulating the church’s prophetic mission of peace”.

Due to various factors the organisation of the next St Thomas Unity Lecture has been delayed, but it is provisionally planned to have the first in London on Saturday 19th November at All Saints Church, Battersea from 4.30pm to 7.30pm. Professor Daniel Jeyaraj will deliver the lectures on the theme of Christian Presence and Witness in Contemporary India: Challenges and Opportunities. Once dates and venues are finalised for the year 2017 and publicised the Committee hopes that as many members and friends as possible will attend.

Three new members (one single and two joint) have joined this year. We now have 208 individual members: 71 single plus 70 joint subscribing members, plus 67 life members. In addition there are 6 group members. There are a further five single members who are two or three years behind with their subscriptions and if these are not received are expected to be removed from the list of members. During the past year, eight members have died, a further three members’ *Pilgrims* have been returned which may indicate they have died. Three members have resigned due to age and poor health. The Management Committee and FCI as a whole is particularly grateful to Revd William Allberry, Database, Membership and Gift Aid Secretary for his extensive and detailed work.

The Management Committee is also grateful for Mr Oswin Peter, Webmaster, for his work in updating the FCI website during the year despite a close family bereavement. We welcome receiving contributions or news from members for the website.

As was also reported last year, there has again been little progress on the progressing ideas for a wider membership of FCI following an earlier consultation with members. The situation is essentially unchanged from last year although the committee has again discussed the matter. In case any changes are proposed the membership will be informed. I conclude by thanking Revd Jessie Anand and the whole Management Committee for their support and guidance during the past year.

Revd Adrian Watkins, FCI Secretary

1st October 2016