

## FCI SECRETARY'S REPORT TO AGM, OCTOBER 2019

The 26<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Church in India was held on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2018, at Indian YMCA with 50 people in attendance, including a mixed age group. There were more children present than in former years.

Revd Inderjit Bhogal cancelled as the preacher just the day before due to a sudden tragic family bereavement. Fortunately, the chair was able to arrange for Revd Dr Raja Singh Elias, General Secretary of the Indian Evangelical Mission, and a CNI presbyter, who was in UK at the time to give the sermon and his word was much appreciated. Revd Canon Dr Andrew Wingate was the Celebrant. Rt. Revd. John Perumbalath, recently consecrated Bishop of Bradwell, also attended the day.

An Afternoon Panel Discussion with four young leaders on 'Cross-Cultural Experiences of Young Leaders in Church and Society' took place in the afternoon. The four panelists were Revd Tabitha Rao, Mrs Denita Anand, Mr Akshay John and Mr Manuel Jebakumar and Bishop John Perambalath facilitated what proved to be a stimulating and encouraging session.

During the past year there have been two meetings of the Management Committee – 9<sup>th</sup> November 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019.

The committee are hoping to arrange future education Seminars, possibly on the theme, 'Hindu Nationality and Christian Minority' and possibly in Birmingham. The possibility of another Partnership Day if organised in partnership with other churches or agencies who are members of the South Asia Forum is also to be explored. The committee is also considering whether there can be an FCI meeting with CSI and CNI bishops and their spouses at the Lambeth Conference in July 2020 again in cooperation with the South Asia Forum.

Some members of the committee are also working on writing a short history of the FCI in the context of ecumenical relationships with the Indian churches.

Revd Canon Dr Andrew Wingate represented FCI at the South Asia Ecumenical Forum in February 2019 in Chennai hosted by the CSI as he was already in India during this time.

Services of thanksgiving for CSI and CNI were held on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2019, at High Cross All Saints Church, Leicester and at Effingham, South Leicestershire organised by two FCI committee members: Revd Dr Andrew Wingate and Revd Dr Israel Selvanayagam. However, these were promoted locally rather than nationally, but it is hoped that such services can be a regular occurrence.

The Management Committee have undertaken work on the Constitution and initially in the area of terms of Executive Officers and membership of the FCI Management Committee and implementing decisions of the AGM. These proposals are presented at this AGM. It is

recognised that a wider review or other amendments may be needed in the future. We are especially thankful for the advice and work of Revd Anand Asir and Revd Dr Gordon Shaw in this matter.

The new Data Policy in relation to the GDPR is now finalised and implemented in line with legal requirements and this is now on the FCI website. We are thankful for Revd William Allberry for his work on this.

With respect to the European links to FCI raised at the last AGM, the committee has discussed this further and decided to try and ascertain if European partners was originally included when FCI was formed. The chair sent an information email about this FCI Day to various non-members including some European churches. The committee recognises that the South Asia Forum is the primary ecumenical forum for such European churches with CSI and CNI links.

The committee are very sorry for the delay in producing this year's issues of Pilgrim magazine as the Editor has experienced health and other constraints, but he is fully expecting they will be ready very soon. We are thankful for all the hard work being done by Revd Chellaian on the forthcoming issues despite the difficulties he has faced. There will not now be a separate Silver Jubilee issue, and material for this will be included in forthcoming issues.

We are also very grateful for the work of Rev William Allberry as Membership, Database and Gift Aid Secretary. He reports that FCI currently has a membership of 197 – 47 Life Members, 143 Subscribing Members and 7 Group Members. Since the last FCI Day we have 5 new members but unfortunately, we have lost 14 members – 6 have died, 7 have resigned (mostly due to old age or ill health) and one group has ceased to exist.

Mr Oswin Peter continues to maintain the FCI website and we are grateful for his work in this regard.

I express my thanks to the Chair – Revd Adrian Watkins, and the Treasurer – Revd Jessie Anand and to all the other members of the Management Committee for their support. The whole committee is especially thankful to Revd Dr Gordon Shaw who has completed his term of office and now wishes to retire from the Management Committee. He has provided much helpful guidance and wisdom during the past years.

**Mrs Margaret Marshall, FCI Secretary**  
**October 2019**