

Chairman's Report 2012-13

In each of my reports as CDEF Chairman I have reiterated the four-fold purpose for the existence of the CDEF; this remains:

To promote evangelical ministry in the parishes of the diocese by:

- Representing the views of evangelicals to the bishop and the diocesan staff;
- Making sure that there are evangelicals proposed for elections to General Synod and to the committees of the Diocesan Synod;
- Through its local and central meetings, clergy and laity meeting together to encourage one another and to consider issues of importance;
- Providing a safe place for dialogue between evangelicals of different traditions, so that we may hold together on essentials.

In the last year we have carried these objectives out in a number of ways:

In the first months of Bishop Martin's ministry as our bishop, we have arranged three meetings with him. Firstly, the CDEF officers met him in November 2012 to introduce ourselves (in this context), and to explain how the Fellowship has developed and some of our key concerns. Then in April this year we arranged an afternoon meeting between the Bishop and two dozen leaders from evangelical parishes across the diocese. This gave us a chance to explore a wide range of concerns and was a very positive and profitable time. And then thirdly we have arranged today's conference with the Bishop as the speaker. We are grateful for the time and interest Bishop Martin has committed to working with us at each of these meetings.

In both the two bye-elections to clergy places on General Synod held in the last few months members of the CDEF were elected: John Chitham and Richard Poole. I understand that there will shortly be a bye-election for a lay vacancy on General Synod, and I hope we will be able to encourage a strong candidate or two to stand. Looking ahead towards what will be a very significant 'general election' to General Synod in 2015, I would encourage parishes to be ensuring that they have full and strong lay representation on their Deanery Synods as this forms the electorate for these elections. I will be writing to all incumbents on our list of members about this in more detail shortly.

We worked hard to encourage to people to stand for the various Boards and Committees of the diocese in the process that took place in Autumn 2012. A number of key vacancies were filled from members of the CDEF, particularly on the Bishop's Council.

Looking forward, please pray regularly for the process that will lead to appointment of the next Bishop of Lewes. We have been encouraged that Bishop Martin has invited two people to 'represent the interest of the CDEF' on the small advisory group he has set up to assist him in this matter; they are Stan Tomalin and Jacob Vince.

I was invited to be part of a small group in the diocese that has been working on the revision of the training course for Lay Ministers of Communion, and ended up as the writer of the new course and

the 'trainer of the trainers' in the programme currently being rolled out across the diocese. The new course is much shorter (2 hours rather than 8!), and much more focussed on biblical material. Initial reactions have been positive; I hope that a good number of potential tutors will put themselves forward from CDEF parishes so that the intention that pairs of tutors delivering the course in each deanery can indeed reflect different traditions.

Our plans for 2014 are focussed round the following five areas: we have set-up small sub-groups to work on each one:

- Another quiet day along the lines of the successful event held in July
- A Saturday morning session in March focussed towards lay people (details available)
- A weekday meeting focussed on those in stipendiary ministry
- An invited consultation on sexuality and gender to follow up the Pilling Report to GS
- A pattern of personally welcoming new evangelicals coming into the Diocese by members of the committee

Our website (www.chichesterdef.org.uk) has continued to be a means of communication to our membership and the wider world. I am delighted to say that Martin King is taking over the role of webmaster! He would be pleased to receive your comments and suggestions on how we should develop it. His email address is vicar@rudgwick.net.

Following the elections at the AGM in 2012 we decided co-opt a number of people the committee to improve representation from the east of the diocese (Tim Voltzenlogel) and of women (Jill Preece and Gill Edmondson). We are still keen to lower the average of the committee and to ensure good representation from a range of 'types' of evangelical. We were delighted that our vice-chairman, Alastair Cutting, was appointed from April onwards to be the Archdeacon of Lewisham and Greenwich, though we have missed him very much here!

I am grateful for the all the support and hard work that members of the committee have shown over the last year.

Jeremy Taylor
Chairman

October 2013