Chichester Diocesan Evangelical Fellowship

**Chairman’s Report 2011-12**

In my report last year I reiterated the four-fold purpose for the existence of the CDEF and asked three questions about its future pattern of working. They were, respectively:

*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 2012:*

* Should we set up a CDEF website and newsletter, with news from evangelical parishes across the diocese, reports from CEEC, updates from those involved in diocesan affairs, etc.?
* The cost and nature of membership: this has remained unchanged at £5 per annum for many years, and amounts pretty much to being on a mailing list for the events the CDEF is organising. Should we extend this and consider a modest increase to enable this to happen?
* What pattern of meetings should we hold each year? In the past there tended to be a midweek day conference (which attracted mainly clergy and retired people, and focused on ministry related issues), plus a Saturday morning conference (which brought in more lay people, and sought to provide bible teaching on a wide range of issues). This is the pattern we have returned to this year. Should we keep to it? When is the best time of year to hold each event?

This report seeks to show how we have tried to address these issues over the past year.

Much of the work of the CDEF in the last 12 months has been focussed on the selection and arrival of the new Bishop of Chichester. In the autumn a good number of its members were represented on the Vacancy-in-See committee, working closely together to prepare for its work and meetings. As a result, half of the diocesan reps on the Crown Nominations Commission were from our tradition, including the Chair and Vice-Chair of the CDEF. The part that evangelicals play in the life of the diocese was clearly recognised at all stages in the process. Some of the officers of the CDEF will be having an initial meeting with Bishop Martin next month.

Also behind the scenes, we have been encouraging people to stand for election to Diocesan Synod, and currently to its Boards, Councils and Committees. How effective this work has been will only be known when the results of the elections are announced.

During the year a small website has been set up; this can be found at [www.chichesterdef.org.uk](http://www.chichesterdef.org.uk). It is early days in its growth, but we hope it will become a useful source of communication among our members. Feedback and material for inclusion on it would be welcome.

As the Treasurer will report, our funds remain adequate for our needs, so we have decided to keep the subscription fee at the same (low!) level for the time being. Few other organisations have maintained the same figure unchanged for so long.

We were encouraged by the number of (mainly lay) people who came to the meeting we held in May at St Andrew’s, Furnace Green to hear Andy Hickford speak so well on *Retail Therapy*. But we have to recognise that the average age of those at this gathering was high; we have some way to go in engaging effectively with the next generation of evangelical Anglicans. This is an issue that we will need to give considerable attention to over the next year.

Finally, Mike Streeter has decided not to stand again for election to the CDEF committee. He has also decided to come off both Diocesan Synod and the Bishop’s Council. It was the unanimous feeling of the CDEF committee that we should recognise the huge contribution Mike has made over the last 20 years to the cause of the Gospel, both locally and nationally. As the Vice Chairman of the CDEF, on the Diocesan Synod and Bishop’s Council and in General Synod he has consistently and graciously flown the flag for a lively faith and the extension of God’s Kingdom. We will be presenting him with a suitable token of our gratitude on behalf of all the evangelicals in the diocese.

*Jeremy Taylor* October 2012

**Chairman**