

Christ Church United Reformed Church  
**NEWSLETTER**



**July 2020**

# Getting in contact

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## **Minister**

Revd Mark Meatcher 020 8374 0509

## **Secretary**

Rosemary Milns 020 8363 6571

## **Treasurer & Property Committee**

David Fisher 020 8482 4610

## **Bookings Secretary**

Pamela Mansley 07936 798 722

## **Newsletter & website**

Tom Boorman 07903 605 545

## **Serving Elders**

Tom Boorman 07903 605 545

Pamela Fisher 07775 505 999

Stephen Gilbert 020 8363 0031

Rosemary Milns 020 8363 6571

## **Youth organisations**

### **Boys' Brigade - Anchors**

Sue Bullock 07961 504 123

### **Boys' Brigade - Juniors, Company Section & Seniors**

Tom Boorman 07903 605 545

### **Girlguiding - Rainbows, Brownies, Guides & Rangers**

Vicki Stratton-Stubbs 07968 483 609

### **Adventurers (Junior Church)**

Rosemary Milns 020 8363 6571

## **Other activities**

### **Friendship Club**

Sylvia Coombs 020 8363 3543

### **Worship Group**

Rosemary Milns 020 8363 6571

## **Website**

[www.ccurc.org.uk](http://www.ccurc.org.uk)

## **Email**

[mail@ccurc.org.uk](mailto:mail@ccurc.org.uk)

## **Facebook**

[@ccurcenfield](https://www.facebook.com/ccurcenfield)

## **Twitter**

[@ccurc](https://twitter.com/ccurc)

# Pastoral Letter July 2020

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## Protestant?

*"God has shown you, O mortal, what is good.*

*And what does the Lord require of you?*

*To act justly and to love mercy*

*and to walk humbly with your God."* (Micah 6:8)

When our roots come from protesting why is it that sometimes we seem to struggle with protests today?

The #BlackLivesMatter protests that have spread across the world in recent weeks have been a cause of concern for many, resulted in rioting and looting in some places and criminal damage to buildings and property in others.

Other protests, perhaps like those related to climate change, maybe even some of the marches about Brexit (remember that?), and other actions that have been taken, sometimes make us wonder about what is the best way to protest, what is the best way to make your voice heard.

Martin Luther-King seems to have advocated non-violent protests, as did Mahatma Gandhi, but what about Malcolm X?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (have you ever read any of his writings?), a Lutheran pastor, was involved in a plot to kill Hitler - was that wrong?

We were recently asked by Reform magazine to review a new book: "12 Rules for Christian Activists", which gave us the opportunity to think further about social action, and what steps may be appropriate for us to take in getting involved in trying to change the normal in our world.

The book contained many different examples, not so much of protest marches, but of opportunities that people, faced with

many different situations of injustice such as poor housing, had found themselves challenged by, and, in most cases, were unsure about how to respond, how to act.

Taking a step forward and being prepared to ask questions about an issue of injustice appeared to be one of the key factors in making change happen. The stories in the book of organisations that have grown up as a response were an encouragement to learn about.

In one of the church elders meetings recently we talked about the situation with regard to the homeless in Enfield; how, during the pandemic “we” have been able to find a (temporary) solution to homelessness/street dwellers, and whether we, in the church, should be putting pressure on the local authority and the government to ensure this continued post pandemic.

### **Is this one of those things that we should be asking a question about?**

If we ask questions do we begin to be seen to be protesting?

Is that a problem for us?

Many of Jesus’ words were words that challenged the normal way of things:

“let he who is without sin cast the first stone” (John 8:7)

“Do you see all these great buildings?” replied Jesus. ‘Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.’” (Mark 13:2)

“Take away the stone.” (John 11:39)

If we are following a God who asks such questions, who challenges the normal, then should we expect to be doing

anything different. Were the disciples not warned:

*"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. Remember what I told you: "A servant is not greater than his master." If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me." (John 15:18-21)*

Is this an epoch in history when we are called once more to be known by our name, the protestants? Are there questions we need to be asking, ourselves, our communities, our country?

Mark and Melanie

## Coronavirus update

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At the time of writing, the government has just made announcements concerning the possible reopening of places of worship from July.

The Leadership Teams at the Enfield URCs are considering plans as to when, and how, the churches can reopen for worship. As it stands our building remains closed but as soon as this changes we will communicate plans with everyone.

The Enfield URCs continue to provide online worship and fellowship for people to follow whilst at home. You can sign up to receive emails at <http://eepurl.com/dHm8TH>

Arrangements have also been made to hold a Forest Church event at the Scout Field on the edge of the Paulin Ground (Ford's Grove, Winchmore Hill). This will be on Sunday 12th July at 3:30pm and there is plenty of open space.

# Covid-19 and Cyclone Amphan

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## **Report on the Appeal from Cathedral Relief Services**

Thanks to your generosity, of URCs in Enfield have been able to contribute a remarkable £1,000\* to this appeal. Of the revised £4,000 target for 2020, we have now raised nearly £3,500 in total, which is split between Cathedral Relief Service in Kolkata, and the Marshal Duar Hostel and KSN Hospital in the Bankura region of West Bengal. This is an amazing achievement. Thank you.

Rig David, Director of Cathedral Relief Service writes:  
“We thank you immensely for your ongoing support and donations given to the COVID appeal. With the funds you have sent, we have been able to provide 3000 and more families with food and medical supplies, many of which are communities in the CRS slums and villages, and in parishes under the Diocese of Calcutta.”

There are now other agencies supplying food, and the Government is distributing cooked food in the streets, so there is no further need for CRS and the Diocese to continue with the food aid programme. Their intention is now to turn to the next urgent need, which is the relief of communities hard hit by the cyclone.

They have identified nine places where help is most needed. These are impoverished communities where the dwellings are poorly constructed, very often with roofs of mud covered with straw. As a result of the cyclone, 1,150 families have been made partially or completely homeless. There is more detail of the devastation caused by the cyclone on the website at:  
<http://www.cathedralreliefservice.net/news/stories/>

The planned programme is to support the families by supplying materials with which to repair their homes, and also to provide basic cooking utensils. The budgeted cost of this

programme is approximately £9,500. The cost of the programme to supply food and medicines was £11,500, and so the overall total is £21,000.

Through your generosity, we have so far raised £14,500. CRS therefore needs a further £6,500 to complete the planned relief programme.

The final stage will be rehabilitation. Rig describes a general sense of hopelessness, particularly among women and children. Men, who have worked as migrant labourers, are returning home with no work and no means to support their families. CRS will therefore concentrate on extending the women's empowerment programme, so that women can acquire skills with which to earn money. Two new training centres have already been set up with the aid of the Diocese, with CRS providing the training for the women. Another priority will be to get children back into schools as soon as they can be reopened. These are of course all core activities of CRS which will be met from their regular funding. Thank you all once again for your generous support for this appeal.

*\*£750 included in these figures, £250 'in transit at time of writing'*

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## India Appeal

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### **Out of India? (Part Three)**

Arriving at Sarenga we found ourselves installed in one of the accommodation units we had not stayed in before (we're gradually working our way round the estate!). This gave us some peace and tranquility as we were able to watch the birds and the butterflies undisturbed.

Our time at the hospital on this occasion was disturbed by the concerns about what was happening in the UK with the coronavirus outbreak which meant that our days were rather unsettled.

The news that India was getting was worrying and people from the UK were perceived as potential carriers of the virus. We therefore ended up reported as being “white and suspicious” and were beginning to cause concern in the local community. After receiving advice from the Bishop of Kolkata, the staff team at Sarenga and trying to get advice from the British Consulate and our insurers (without a great deal of success!) we made the decision that we needed to return to England sooner than we had wanted to...and booked a flight out of India minutes before Prime Minister Modi announced the country was going to shut down on the Sunday (our flight was booked for Saturday morning!).

All was not doom and gloom while we were at Sarenga though. We managed to visit a village to see some of the work that the health visitor had been engaged with, working with the local community. We led morning prayers every day that we were there and were able to do some teaching with some of the nurse trainees. They seem to really enjoy the drama that we got them to put together, which meant that a Bible story hopefully came to life for them.



We were able to check some of the work that Chris Marlow had helped the hospital to sort out when we were last at Sarenga (a fire alarm has been installed!) and view and discuss with the hospital their project plans.

We hope that in the time we were there we were able to be a little encouragement to the staff team in one way or another.

Mark and Melanie

Photos by Revd Melanie Smith

# My Christian Testimony

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*Doreen Wren was a teacher that Mark had when he was in Primary School (a long time ago now). She recently died and one of her sons sent through a copy of Doreen's "Christian Testimony". It is a fascinating read, as I am sure you will discover. Some of her story Mark remembers very clearly.*

## **MY CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY - by Doreen Wren**

I had always thought of myself as a Christian. I followed the usual pattern - baptism, confirmation, followed by teacher training at a Church of England training college.

We had four boys who were also baptised. I felt that confirmation was a decision for them, so only the two youngest opted for it – probably because they were members of the church choir. St Paul's I believe was a typical one of its day - formal.

The vicar was a bachelor and didn't expect children to make any noise during the service, so church was boring for the boys but they preferred it to Sunday school.

One day while I was sitting in church I can remember thinking:  
"There must be something more than this."

So this is the story of how I discovered that there was.

First of all was the sadness when my younger sister took an overdose at the age of thirty-nine leaving three children. I had to deal with the remorse without help.

Then came a mother's worst nightmare. On Christmas Eve 1978 our youngest son Peter, aged fourteen, was cycling to the midnight service at St. Paul's Church, Sarisbury Green, where he was a choirboy and due to read the lesson that

night. He was knocked off his bicycle by a car driven by a young man reputedly on drink and drugs. Peter was just getting up when he was hit by an oncoming car and killed. The first young man drove off and was never found by the police.

Paul came home and told us that Peter was not in church. John, my husband, immediately drove off to look for him while I sent Paul to a neighbour's house to ring the hospitals. Our phone was out of action but we had the key to our neighbour's house while they were away.

My husband came home with a policewoman and said "Peter is dead".

(Those words have echoed in my head all through the years.)

I remember shrieking out "NO" and the doctor, brought by the police, wanted to give me an injection to make me sleep. When I declined he said "Then there was no point in calling me out was there". I meekly gave in.

The next day we went to the hospital to see Peter and were told that there was no one there to authorise it! Then there was a post mortem so we did not see him.

During the ensuing days I felt a strong sensation of the compassion of God. I felt He was sad too.

It was only by the grace of God that I never felt any anger in spite of what counsellors expect. The grief was too great for any other emotion. It was my first experience of the closeness of God.

Our eldest son Christopher was serving a cadetship in the Merchant Navy. The ship was lying off Hamburg and we were constantly re-assured by the company that he would be home for the funeral and we were further saddened when they refused to release him in time.

Looking back on that terrible night I realised that God had been there with me.

I had been so tired at the end of term that I had decided for the first time not to go to the midnight service. I had gone to bed before the boys were due to leave. Not being able to sleep I came downstairs and apologised to the boys for my irritability. I said "I'm so sorry I've been so grotty all day." Peter said "No you haven't". I said "Yes I have, I am so tired". Peter put his arms around me and said, "It's alright, we understand". Those were our last words. I believe that God prompted me to come downstairs and apologise. He understood how I would feel otherwise.

It was about a year later that a new vicar, Roger Moseley, was appointed. He brought a completely new ethos to St Paul's. We learned not only about the work of the Holy Spirit but also of a personal relationship with Jesus. House groups were started and we were able to share things at a deeper level than was possible before Roger came. I began to know more about being a Christian.

Our next shock was when we received a phone call from the Foreign Office to say that our eldest son, Chris, was in jail in Portugal. He had become a yacht skipper and had accepted employment to take a group of holidaymakers that were from Wolverhampton to the Mediterranean. It wasn't long before he found out that they were drug-smuggling. After horrendous experiences which involved being drugged with sleeping tablets, almost to the point of death, being threatened at gunpoint and having to sail through the Med with no wet weather kit and very little food - in October.

I will not tell the complicated story here but suffice it to say that the outcome was jail and he was not allowed to speak to Customs.

For the next few months we were in turmoil. My husband

wrote to everyone he could think of who might give us some support. I found out that the President of Portugal had two sons so I wrote to him.

One day I was sitting by the fire and crying in desperation. I called out to God and said "I don't know who to contact now, so it is over to you God". Almost immediately the phone rang and a voice said "I am the Research Assistant of the Euro M.P. I am not ringing in my official capacity you understand. I am ringing you as a mum to tell you what I would do next".

I was amazed and said "I have just been praying about this".

She replied "I was working on something else and the Lord told me to pick up the phone to you". So I had reached another Christian. What she told me became irrelevant because the message I received from the Lord was not to worry as He had got it in hand. I was ecstatic and wouldn't stop singing. After that my prayers were for patience.

Chris was not a Christian and we had been praying for him for some time. I remember John, my husband, saying "If he becomes a Christian it will be a miracle."

We used to visit the jail once a month and the people at church collected £400 to help with expenses. Among the things which we took in was a copy of Selwyn Hughes' 'Every Day with Jesus'. I felt he might read it if there was nothing else. He told us later that he was feeling very bitter about being locked up when he had done nothing to deserve it. He was sure he would be released eventually but would always feel this bitterness.

While he was reading 'Every Day with Jesus' he felt something come right through him, draining all the bitterness out and leaving him feeling 'invincible'. I said that it was the work of the Holy Spirit. After this experience he was known as the most cheerful prisoner in the jail.

After five months imprisonment he was out on bail for four months.

Since then he has still worked as a skipper but as a volunteer on Christian boats.

My more recent experience of God's love was brought about by the persistent prayers of several of my church friends. I had suffered from depression for many years and had been prescribed different anti-depressants. One day when I was out walking I felt a cloud lift off my head. The world seemed brighter and the colours more intense. My depression was gone.

For weeks I felt as if I was walking in 'green pastures' and sang all day long. In spite of one or two people saying "it will come back" and "it always happens when people give up anti-depressants", I am still singing hymns and have taken no pills for fifteen months (at the time of writing).

I praise the Lord every day and never cease to feel overwhelmed by His kindness and love.

## **Eco Tip**

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For our churches working towards our Eco Church Awards, one of the key elements is engaging with our local communities. This is particularly tricky at the moment, yet Enfield Climate Action Group ([www.encaf.org](http://www.encaf.org)) is setting up a Faith Community and Climate Change working group. Please contact Melanie if you'd like to find out how you can be involved with this.

# Enfield Churches Debt Centre

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*Below is a letter from Revd Mark Meatcher, Chair of Enfield Churches Debt Centre, to church leaders in Enfield.*

Dear colleague,

## **Enfield Churches Debt Centre**

Several people from a wide variety of churches in the Enfield area have been working together with Christians Against Poverty (CAP) over the last couple of years to work out ways in which we may be able to progress to set up a Debt Advice Centre in Enfield organised using the CAP model.

Fundraising for this commenced last year (2019) and we are well on our way to being able to cover the ongoing financial cost of operating this, gaining financial commitments from several churches - eleven churches have made commitments so far.

Sadly, the UK personal debt situation has placed significant pressure on CAP over recent months, added to which the coronavirus situation has also led to further difficulties in progressing our aims and objectives, which means that it is unlikely that the Enfield Churches Debt Centre will be fully operational until 2021.

I write though to explain where we are now at and to encourage you to consider whether you and your congregation might be able to consider how you can help with this initiative, either through your prayers, through the provision of personnel or through financial support.

We are now setting up a Charitable Incorporated Organisation ("CIO") with initial trustees coming from six different denominations and hope to have a bank account available for

donations shortly. We would then be looking to advertise for a Debt Centre Manager towards the end of 2020 and be seeking Befrienders in early 2021 in order that training can be offered and the Debt Centre be operational as soon as it can be.

We hope to organise a launch event for the Debt Centre in the autumn, although this will very much depend on where we are with the current pandemic by then - watch this space for developments and information.

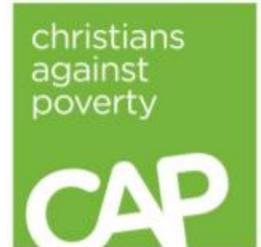
I attach a copy of our brieflet (*text reproduced below*) explaining a little further about what we're looking for in terms of support at present and would be delighted to hear from you if you think you may be able to support what we're doing in any way that you feel able to.

In Christ Jesus,

Revd Mark Meatcher  
Chair of Enfield Churches Debt Centre

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**Enfield Churches Debt Centre**

Christians Against Poverty exist because nobody should be held hostage by debt and poverty. But the truth is that they are rife in the UK. In a society where people live behind closed doors, thousands are desperately poor. Unable to feed their children, incapable of paying to heat their homes in winter, the grip of poverty is relentless. It breaks families apart and drives many to think that suicide is the only solution.



UK poverty is real, with millions locked in its miserable grip. That's why CAP is aiming for 1,000 CAP centres covering the UK, each bringing life changing freedom and good news to people in desperate need. Always through the church.

As churches in Enfield, we hope to make a difference by establishing the Enfield Churches Debt Centre. CAP will provide us with all the training and support to enable us to deliver a professional debt counselling tool that's proven to help some of the most vulnerable in society.

Working through a local Centre Manager and a network of volunteer Christian befrienders, CAP does all the debt counselling centrally, allowing the Centre Manager to focus on supporting the clients spiritually and practically. This means we won't have to worry about all the financial and legal knowledge, as highly trained caseworkers at head office will take care of all that for us.

Opening a CAP Debt Centre requires your commitment:

- ☐ Pray: that this work will prosper
- ☐ Befrienders: finding volunteers to accompany the Centre Manager in home visits, sharing our faith in an appropriate way
- ☐ Financial Support: we need at least £25,000 per annum to employ a CAP Centre Manager and contribute towards CAP's central costs so we are looking for regular giving commitments from churches and individuals

If you're interested in finding out more and to discuss how you and your church will help, please contact:

Revd Mark Meatcher, Chair Enfield Churches Debt Centre  
revd.meatcher@gmail.com 020 8374 0509

always hope.

**CHANGING LIVES**



# Prayer diary July 2020

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**1st** - Pray for an end to the Coronavirus pandemic.

**2nd** - Pray for God's guidance in any decisions that are being made relating to the reopening of church buildings.

**3rd** - Pray for key workers.

**4th** - Pray for today's virtual Bible Study Group meeting, taking place on Zoom.

**5th** - Pray for those who are leading our online worship this week.

**6th** - Pray for an end to injustices around the world.

**7th** - Pray for teachers.

**8th** - Pray for the work of the wider United Reformed Church.

**9th** - Give thanks to God for his unending love for us.

**10th** - Pray for the work of Christian charities around the world.

**11th** - Pray for those who suffer persecution for their faith.

**12th** - Pray for today's Forest Church event at the Scout Field in Winchmore Hill.

**13th** - Pray for those who are facing financial difficulties.

**14th** - Pray for Mark and Melanie, two years on from their inductions today.

**15th** - Pray for the work of the emergency services.

**16th** - Pray for the projects being supported by the India Appeal.

**17th** - Pray for friends and families.

**18th** - Pray for today's virtual Bible Study Group meeting, taking place on Zoom.

**19th** - Pray for today's time of worship.

**20th** - Pray for our friends from the other United Reformed Churches in Enfield.

**21st** - Pray for the children and young people in our church fellowship at the end of this most unusual of school years.

**22nd** - Pray for anyone you know who is suffering from sickness or ill health.

**23rd** - Pray for the government.

**24th** - Pray for our elders.

**25th** - Pray for those for whom the current circumstances have meant a long period of isolation.

**26th** - Pray for today's time of worship and those who are leading it.

**27th** - Pray for your own personal faith.

**28th** - Pray for God's guidance in your own life.

**29th** - Pray for the work of Enfield Council.

**30th** - Pray for the NHS.

**31st** - Pray for the local community around Christ Church.

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## August 2020 newsletter

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Given the current circumstances, we have decided to publish separate **July** and **August** newsletters to help us continue to keep in touch.

The **August 2020** newsletter will be published on **Sunday 26th July**. Items intended for inclusion in this issue should be with the Editor, Tom Boorman, by Sunday 19th July. Any late submissions may be held over to the following issue.

Please contact Tom with any items to be included in future issues. Items can be received either in paper form at Sunday worship, by email to **mail@ccurc.org.uk** or by phone on **07903 605 545**.

The newsletter is usually published monthly (except for combined issues in July & August and December & January). Back issues dating back to 2007 can be found on our website. Please note that views expressed are not necessarily the views of the whole fellowship, nor are they representative of church policy.

# Church diary July 2020

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*Plans are being considered as to when, and how, the church can reopen. Any decisions affecting the below will be communicated.*

Saturday 4th July 10:30am  
Bible Study Group  
'Virtual' session using Zoom - contact Mark for details

**Sunday 5th July**  
**Enfield URCs online worship**  
**Sign up to receive details at <http://eepurl.com/dHm8TH>**  
**or contact Mark for a printed copy**

**Sunday 12th July**  
**Enfield URCs online worship**  
**Sign up to receive details at <http://eepurl.com/dHm8TH>**  
**or contact Mark for a printed copy**

Sunday 12th July 3:30pm  
Forest Church (Enfield URCs event)  
*This will take place at the Scout Field on Ford's Grove, Winchmore Hill, with plenty of open space available.*

Saturday 18th July 10:30am  
Bible Study Group  
'Virtual' session using Zoom - contact Mark for details

**Sunday 19th July**  
**Enfield URCs online worship**  
**Sign up to receive details at <http://eepurl.com/dHm8TH>**  
**or contact Mark for a printed copy**

**Sunday 26th July**  
**Enfield URCs online worship**  
**Sign up to receive details at <http://eepurl.com/dHm8TH>**  
**or contact Mark for a printed copy**

# Regular activities at Christ Church

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## SUNDAY

11:15am

Morning worship  
(Holy Communion - first Sunday)  
(Family Parade Service - third Sunday)  
(regular service - other Sundays)

11:15am

Adventurers (children aged 3 upwards)

## MONDAY

2:15pm

Friendship Club (once monthly - see diary)

6:00pm to 7:30pm

Boys' Brigade Anchors (boys aged 5 to 8)

6:00pm to 7:30pm

Boys' Brigade Juniors (boys aged 8 to 11)

7:30pm to 9:15pm

Boys' Brigade Company Section (boys aged 11 to 15)

7:30pm to 9:15pm

Boys' Brigade Seniors (boys aged 15 to 18)

## FRIDAY

5:00pm to 6:15pm

Rainbows (girls aged 5 to 7)

6:00pm to 7:30pm

Brownies (girls aged 7 to 10)

7:30pm to 9:00pm

Guides (girls aged 10 to 14)

7:30pm to 9:00pm

Rangers (girls aged 14 to 20)

## SATURDAY

9:00am to 10:30am

Breakfast Bible Study Group  
(twice monthly - see diary)

**Please be aware  
that all church  
services and  
activities are  
currently  
suspended until  
further notice.**

For details of other special events and activities please see the diary.



**Christ Church**  
**United Reformed Church**



**Christ Church URC** is a part of the **North Enfield Group of URCs**  
and the **North West Enfield Group of Churches.**

Motto: "Enter to worship, depart to serve."

Mission statement: Christ Church URC aims to provide through its worship, work, witness and mission an effective contribution to the spiritual and social welfare of the Church family and the wider community.

Address: Christ Church URC, Chase Side, Enfield, EN2 6NJ

Cover image by Federico Respini on Unsplash