

Christ Church United Reformed Church, Rayleigh.

Environmental Policy

This policy is an agreed statement of the Christ Church United Reformed Church Rayleigh's stance towards the environment in which it operates.

It is the cornerstone of our intent, as a body of people committed to caring for God's creation and seeking God's justice, to live lightly upon the Earth in all of our operations

As a United Reformed Church, we affirm that care for creation, a just sharing of the world's resources, and a concern for the environment are fundamental Gospel commitments and central to our missional Discipleship.

We believe that God the Trinity is the transcendent and immanent source, sustenance, and salvation of all Creation.

We believe that we are an integral part of God's creation and that God commands us to act justly and in righteousness not only towards all humanity but to all creation.

We acknowledge that human activity has significantly contributed to the degradation of the Earth through both the climate emergency and the loss of biodiversity and that this is not the will of God. We believe that this limits the attainment of the fullness of life that God wills for all creation and is a sin for which we should seek forgiveness. We also recognise that this damage to the environment impacts heavily upon the poor and future generations and is part of the intrinsic injustice to which we bear witness.

We recognise the importance of the 2015 Paris agreement and the discussions at the COP26 meeting in 2021 under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its aim of keeping temperature increases below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

The United Reformed Church (as a denomination) 'will be a Church that has taken significant steps to safeguard the integrity of Creation, to sustain and renew the life of the Earth' and states that 'Our churches, reflecting faith in God the creator and sustainer of life in all its fullness, must discover the radical voice of care for the Earth that is supported by the way we live.'

As a church and congregation, we will:

- Continue to maintain our Eco-Church Bronze award and strive to achieve Silver.
- Strive to lower our carbon footprint each year.
- Endeavour to make our buildings and land environmentally friendly and reduce the impact on our environment and make this a prime consideration in any

changes or improvements that we make.

- Reduce, where practicable, car and air travel and be encouraged to use transport with minimum impact - to walk, cycle, use buses and trains, car-share and use electric and other energy-efficient vehicles where possible.
- To continually review ways to reduce the environmental cost of the energy we consume.
- To regularly monitor the amount of energy consumed on the premises and ensure that all the major users are made aware of the hourly cost of using the premises.
- Because the nature of our governance places responsibility on all our members, they should look out for energy consumption that is wasteful, such as lights being left on and the boiler providing heat when not needed.
- We should be ever alert to avoid the waste of resources by balancing the need to use a particular resource with its environmental cost and sustainability. For the physical waste that is produced, full use should be made of the local authority's waste recycling facilities.
- Aim to remove all investments in fossil fuel companies.
- Campaign at a local and/or national level for policies that care for the environment.

Approved by Church Meeting on

For review on