

The Chennai Church Development Project

For the Restoration and Development of the Church Building in Chennai.

The original church building, constructed in 1813 and still being used by the congregation this century. The building had deteriorated seriously through age and extremes of weather, a process which was hastened by the worst monsoon rains in living memory in December 2005.

An appeal was launched in February 2006 to raise funds urgently needed to rebuild the church. (The prospectus issued at that time is available. Contributions to the funding of the new building came from Chennai's partner churches in Glasgow and Edinburgh, from congregations and friends across the United Kingdom, from Unitarian Universalists in the United States, Canada, Australia and Europe, and from fellow Unitarian friends in Meghalaya. In the UK 29 Unitarian churches and 4 district associations responded to the appeal launched in 2006, and a large number of Unitarian individuals and friends contributed, either directly or through their churches.

The new building of the Chennai Unitarian Christian Church was opened on 25 January 2009 amid scenes of joyful celebration. Warm messages of greeting and fellowship were received by the church from its Unitarian friends across the globe. The ceremony was attended by Rev Carleywell Lyngdoh, Executive Secretary of the Indian Council of Unitarian Churches, representatives from Unitarian churches in Meghalaya, Hyderabad, Assam, and Erode, and Jon Bagust and Mike West from the Edinburgh Unitarian church.

The appeal funds sent to the Chennai congregation for the new building (a total of £27,100) were put to exceptionally good use, and the result is a beautiful modern church and first floor hall with many fine features.





This new building will enable our friends in south India to continue the valuable service they are giving to inner city Chennai, and also to the nearby village of Ammanambakkam. Their social outreach programme benefits the local underprivileged people and the children who attend the Unitarian schools at the church in Chennai, and the Dalit (untouchable caste) village of Ammanambakkam.

A smaller second phase of the building project is planned to provide second floor accommodation for the church's outreach work in due course. This isolated Unitarian community depends on our support. As we have no paid staff and no expenses, every pound you contribute will be used directly on this project.

Please support this further appeal as generously as you are able. As a Unitarian hymn says, 'Our world is one world, its ways of wealth affect us all'.

In the words of the Tamil poet Tiru Valluvar, "There is nothing more glorious than to persist in the advance of the community." and these words accurately sum up the aims of the Chennai church. Be assured, your donation today will be most warmly welcomed, and received with deep and sincere gratitude.