



IREF (UK) News Letter – July 2013

INDIA 2014 – UK Team

Personnel from the UK are planning join friends from the USA to form a team to visit Repalle next January. It is always a great privilege to witness the remarkable work that the Lord is doing in India, and so the team members are already looking forward to their forthcoming visit. Those who have so far indicated an interest in being part of the team are as follows:

*Jason Leitch; Aileen and Stuart Bell;
Stewart Shaw; Gordon Elliott;
Yvonne Baulk; and Jonathon Shaw.*

We are looking for a few others to be part of team. So, if you have medical skills, or if you know of others with such skills who may be interested in being part of the team, please contact the UK team leader, Jason Leitch. The team needs doctors, nurses, and dentists, in particular.

The team will provide healthcare for all the children and young adults in IREF's care. This usually includes skin disease treatments, the extraction of bad teeth, and the provision of numerous pairs of spectacles. The overseas teams from the UK and USA are often the only healthcare that the IREF children and young people will receive during their early years, unless they face emergencies.

Please begin to pray for the team now. If you are able to help with their financial costs, visit www.justgiving.com/iref or text 'IREF12 £10' to 70070.

Christianity Explored in Telegu

Christianity Explored Ministries is currently equipping churches and organisations to love, live, and tell the good news of Jesus. The *Christianity Explored* course is being used in about 85 countries and is available in more than 20 major translations.

Craig Dyer, one of IREF(UK)'s trustees, is the Training Director for CEM. He writes, "*I am thrilled that IREF (UK) is helping support a Telegu translation of the latest CE materials. This will sit alongside the Hindi translation, which was launched in 2008. The timing of this new initiative coincides with plans to grow the usage of CE across India. Early in May, we held meetings with senior representatives of the Delhi Bible Institute, which produced the Hindi translation, to discuss upgrading the current Hindi range to the latest version; the production of a Tamil translation; and strategic opportunities to make these resources known in*

India. Two Scottish CE Advocates recently visited Kerala to train pastors and theological students in using the English version of CE. I was also able to meet with leaders of Sathyam Ministries of Kerala to discuss implementing the course there. At present, there are unofficial translations of the 2nd Edition of CE materials in Tamil and Telegu, which are being used by the Presbyterian Church of South India on Sri Lanka."

Please pray for Craig's involvement in this new initiative for IREF(UK). Pray too for Emmanuel Rebba and others in India who are involved in translating the course material and producing it in Telegu.

Back to School

The summer vacation in India has drawn to an end. As pupils and students entered IREF's compound for the new academic year, either as returning students or for the first time, the grim reality of their home situations frequently came to light. Many of IREF's pupils and students come from a background of acute poverty.

IREF's teachers are committed to providing the best possible education to those from the neediest of backgrounds. The education provided through IREF is vital for the future wellbeing of these young people. It is often said that *knowledge is power*. Through the education that so many young people receive through IREF's teaching staff, they are empowered to seize hitherto undreamt of employment opportunities. But even more importantly, they are able to lay a sound foundation for the rest of their lives, through coming to a living faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

Government school teachers in India received a significant pay rise last year. This led many of IREF's teachers to consider career moves, so that they could make better provision for their families. As the demand for teachers grows in India and salaries increase, IREF needs help in keeping their dedicated teachers working at Repalle.

We are currently sponsoring eight teachers from the UK, but we would like to increase this number substantially. Sponsorship begins at only £3 a week. Please encourage people you know to take up this privilege and joy. A *Teacher Sponsorship Form* can be downloaded from our website [www.iref.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/7.-Teachers-sponsorship-form-Oct11.pdf] or forwarded by post.

Summer Gospel Meetings

During the summer months in India, IREF's evangelists conduct open-air meetings in various rural villages as a follow up to the main Gospel Meetings held in February. The summer meetings are held to encourage believers to keep walking well with the Lord and to enable new Christians to be strengthened and nourished from God's Word. The Gospel Meetings are vital to every believer's growth, as the struggle to break free Hindu roots is always intense. The summer meetings also provide an opportunity for IREF to expand its work.

In May, IREF was invited (for the first time) to conduct Gospel Meetings over three days in Machilipatnam, a village two hours away from Repalle. Over 10,000 people attended each night! Many people came forward in response to the Gospel invitation as they began to hunger for a new life through Jesus Christ as their Lord and saviour.

It is vital for new believers, not only to hear God's Word, but also to experience his power. Pray that they will not get pulled back into their old, oppressive lives without Christ. Please pray too for IREF's evangelists as they persistently pray and minister to these new believers.



Understanding the culture

With more than 1.1 billion inhabitants, India is quickly becoming a global economic front-runner. And yet a vast number of Indians still live under the oppression of a 3,000 year old system of injustice: the caste system. Although it is now technically illegal to discriminate on the basis of caste, the oppression of India's lower caste people continues unabated across the country. Hungry subsistence farmers are forced to obey the whims of corrupt landlords. In rural areas, Dalits (formerly known as 'Untouchables') are still forced to do dirty and humiliating jobs.

IREF is doing all it can to combat this on-going injustice as it seeks to bring the values of the God's kingdom to the lower castes of India. IREF's evangelists and Bible Ladies are dedicated to shining light into the darkness of oppression that still remains in many rural areas.

IREF's founder, Prasada Rao Rebba, was an evangelist in the truest sense of that word – a bringer

of good news. He walked from village to village telling all who would listen to him about his new-found hope in Jesus Christ. He carried a message that was in stark contrast to the discrimination that took place within the prevailing culture. No longer did people have to be defined by the caste into which they were born; no longer did they have to resign themselves to their lowly lot in life, to their status as the "bottom rungs" of the social ladder. Prasada Rao carried a message of freedom, hope and unity in Christ. For people to be told that they are all equal in the eyes of God is a novel notion for so many Indians.

With their new-found faith, Christians begin to look at their culture in a new light. They may still be discriminated against by those who are not believers on the basis of their caste. But they are now free from any sense of shame. Seeds of truth, liberty and hope are being scattered far and wide through IREF. From these seeds, a bumper harvest is sure to grow!

FIRE RELIEF

Earlier in the year, a fire broke out in the village of Bodagunta. The fire occurred due to an electrical short-circuit. All the villagers' belongings, including clothes and food, were burned. 41 families lost their homes. The local pastor called Emmanuel Rebba and urgently requested IREF to help these victims. IREF staff members rushed to the village and supplied relief materials to the victims.



Many are believers who attend the IREF Gospel meetings every year. All the victims are praising God for the help they have received and convey their thanks for the generous help provided in their time of need.



Thank you for your on-going support for the Lord's work in India! Please forward this newsletter to others, to encourage our supporter base to grow.

David Hunt

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