

2023 Medical Team

After an absence of three years, a team from the UK will be flying out to India to carry out much-needed medical work amongst IREF's pupils, students, staff members and villagers. They will be joined by colleagues from the USA.

The seven-strong UK team will be leaving Scotland on Sunday 8th January and will return on Saturday 21st January. The team's visit will coincide with IREF's annual Youth Conference, which is taking place from 12th-15th January. The team expect to carry out medical work in Repalle during their first week in India and do some village work during their second week.

Thanks to the generosity of supporters, almost £23,000 has been raised to cover the cost of the team's international flights, visas, internal travel and accommodation costs, with a generous amount left over to provide a gift to IREF's General Fund. Thank you!

But the door is still open for further gifts, which can be made in one of three ways:

- by electronic transfer into our IREF(UK) bank account: Bank of Scotland a/c 00451308; sort code, 80-08-25;
- by cheque, to our Honorary Treasurer, Stewart Shaw: 62 Holmhead Road, Cumnock, KA18 1UA Scotland;
- via Stewardship, who will reclaim Gift Aid for us if you are a taxpayer; go to:
www.stewardship.org.uk/pages/IREFUK2023trip.

Most importantly, the team will value your prayers; they have asked for:

- smooth travel arrangements and trouble-free entry into the country;
- a good team spirit to develop between the UK and USA personnel;
- skilful medical input;
- health and safety for the team members at all times;
- God to empower those speaking at the Youth Conference;
- God to be glorified through many coming to a living faith in Jesus and being built up as his disciples.

IREF's New Year Celebrations

IREF celebrated the transition into 2023 with a candlelight service. Staff and students gathered in the Repalle church building to enjoy singing, testimonies,

and a message from John Rebba. From Revelation 3.20, John encouraged the IREF community to open their hearts afresh to the Lord Jesus Christ.



IREF children eagerly collecting their Verse-for-the-Year promise cards

The New Year celebration also included fireworks outside the church and a cake to sweeten the entrance into 2023!



On New Year's Day, Emmanuel Rebba highlighted

Seven Blessings from God at the Sunday service, while John Rebba and Pastor Lawrence travelled two hours to an IREF village church to baptise new believers. What a wonderful way to start the New Year!



Prayer answered after 27 years!

“Never underestimate the prayers of a mother.”

In Chennupalli Varipalem, a mother prayed for her children’s salvation for 27 years. For decades, it seemed those prayers went unanswered. But last November, during a 40-day period of fasting and prayer at the local IREF village church, all three of her children were saved!

All three of her children were high caste, wealthy Hindus. Two years ago, her daughter (pictured below) spent 100,000 rupees to build a Hindu temple in their community.



Their decision to follow Christ and be baptised will come at a cost. They will lose friends, respect in the community, and work opportunities. But when it comes to following Jesus, the gains – both in this age and in the age to come – greatly outweigh the costs!

Dee Rebba and Pastor Lawrence visited Chennupalli Varipalem to encourage the new believers and join the baptism service. The village church was packed! It is clearly evident that God’s Spirit is working in the village of Chennupalli Varipalem.

The pastor of the Chennupalli Varipalem, Devasahayam, is being sponsored from the UK. If you would like further information about sponsoring an Indian pastor, for as little as £1.30 a day, please download a leaflet from our website: www.iref.co.uk/support/give/

Nursing Capping Ceremony

Back in November, IREF celebrated the enrolment of 50 nursing students with a capping ceremony. The capping ceremony marks the students’ pledge to be a ‘care taker’. Due to restrictions imposed in 2021 due to the Covid-19 virus, IREF’s 2nd-year nursing students had missed their capping ceremony at the start of their course – hence the double celebration.



Three nursing students are currently being sponsored from the UK, but there is plenty of scope for more to be supported! Details are given on our website.

Global Prayer Meetings

Don’t forget you can join IREF’s Global Prayer Meetings via Zoom on the first Saturday of each month, at 2.30pm GMT. The link for them is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3027444064>

Some Prayer Points:

- Pray for the Medical Team and Youth Conference.
- Pray for on-going staffing needs to be met.
- Pray for the village pastors and Bible Ladies as they seek to evangelise and disciple their local communities.
- Pray for the protection and resilience of Christian believers in the face of new waves of persecution.

Thank you for your ongoing prayers and support, which are much appreciated!

David Hunt [Chairman of IREF(UK)]