

August 2021

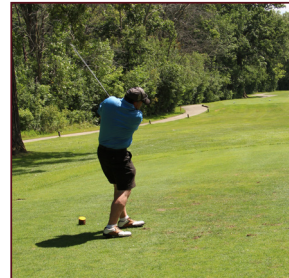


## Annual Golf Outing Returns!

India Rural Evangelical Fellowship is thrilled to announce that the IREF Golf Outing is returning to Bonnie Brooke Golf Course this fall on Saturday, October 9! This year's Golf Outing is shotgun format. Package includes green fees, cart, lunch on the go, and dinner at the clubhouse. Registration begins at 9:30am with a 10:00am tee time.

The Golf Outing will be followed with a banquet dinner and IREF presentation. Emmanuel and Dee Rebba will be joining us virtually as they share what God is doing in India. This is a great opportunity to hear more about IREF and to introduce your friends to the ministry.

Register today at [www.irefgolfouting.eventbrite.com](http://www.irefgolfouting.eventbrite.com)  
Questions? Email us at [info@irefusa.org](mailto:info@irefusa.org)



## CONDUIT OF HOPE to Women in Rural India

Last month, IREF-USA Assistant Director, Shara Atkinson, brought a group of women together from Destin, FL for an event called "Global Sisterhood". The purpose of the event was to make a difference in the lives of the nursing students at IREF. It was wonderful time filled with laughter and tears. Guests wrote cards of encouragement to each of the nursing students. Everyone in attendance was inspired by heartfelt stories from Laurel Vermillion & Hannah Vermillion who have visited IREF.

Shara was thrilled with the response for Global Sisterhood. "At IREF, you see young women are given safety from early pre-arranged marriages, their given a college education, and the opportunity to pursue their occupational dreams! Through Global Sisterhood, woman were invited to make a difference in the lives of IREF's nursing students." This difference was tangible. In addition to writing over 80 cards of encouragement, over \$10,000 was donated towards educational costs for nursing students!



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## Prayer & Praise

- The government has given permission for Jr College students to school. 1-10 grade students are currently scheduled to return on August 16. As the government will soon open admission for all students, IREF is using this time to give parents of prospective new students a tour of the campus, so they are assured of their children's safety at IREF. Please be praying for the students as they return to IREF - more specially that God would bring them into a spiritually-centered place with Him after so much time away from IREF.
- Covid-19 continues to spread at a rapid rate in India, with over 32 million confirmed cases. Christians in India are often last in line for essential Covid-19 food and aid because of their faith. Proper treatment has remained a consistent concern for many due to minimal access to healthcare. Please continue to pray as IREF moves to address urgent needs in surrounding villages.





## Student Testimonials - Bhavani Duppati

A little over 2 years ago, Bhavani enrolled in IREF's Jr College program hoping for an education that would lead to a stable life as well as a way to eventually be the breadwinner for her family. Bhavani is now a 1st year Nursing student at IREF's Nursing College.

When she was about 3 years old, her father jumped into a water-well killing himself. Bhavani's mother worked hard, manual labor jobs to provide for Bhavani and her older sister, Malleswari. The work was hard, the pay not enough. Bhavani's mother, Lakshmi, ceased to think about the well-being and future of her children.

Bhavani's mother was repeatedly told by her extended family to "get the girls married if she was so worried about them. At least the girls would have someone to take care of them." With limited options, her mother listened and arranged for Malleswari to get married after she finished her 10th class education, while Bhavani was in 7th class at the time. A few years later, when Bhavani finished her 10th grade, she began to think her sister's fate was also her own as the suggested marriage whispers began again. Standing up to her family, she told her mother she wanted to continue her schooling.

Her mother desired for Bhavani to be in a safe, secure environment where the education was good and she was to be well cared-for if she was going to send Bhavani to pursue higher education. After traveling for 6 hours, Bhavani and her mother mistakenly arrived at IREF, rather than the intended all-girls Jr College, located literally next to IREF's campus. While they had made an error in going to the "wrong" college, God had directed them to IREF. Bhavani and her mother toured IREF's campus, inquired about the Jr College and despite being Hindus, they knew IREF was the right place for Bhavani to be safe and receive a good education. Little did they know how much God was working.

Initially, homesickness set in for Bhavani. She disliked devotions, church, and anything and everything Bible-oriented. As she continued to settle in at IREF, God began to soften her heart. Bhavani witnessed the change in other students who came from similar socio-economic and religious backgrounds. The Lord's voice spoke through the messages at church, and she began to recognize the power of Jesus' name and the desperate need for Salvation. The Scripture that changed her life comes from Luke 5:1-11 – it is the story of Peter, James and John leaving everything to follow Christ Jesus. Bhavani gave her life to Christ through being baptized. She began helping during baptism services, on-campus prayer sessions, devotions and other Gospel-oriented programs.

Bhavani kept her new faith in Christ a secret until her mother came to visit her. Timidly, Bhavani began to tell her how the God of the Bible was molding her heart and how His truth and love was changing her. Her mother strongly voiced her displeasure in Bhavani's being baptized and for "turning her back on Hinduism."

A month after Bhavani's public confession of faith, her mother became paralyzed. The blame was immediately placed on Bhavani and her new found belief in the "Christian" God. With a deep seeking and pleading Bhavani started praying for healing. As sad as Bhavani was, she was also fully active on the prayer team and she was confident that God would hear her prayers. As her spiritual sisters gathered around to pray with her, a particular Scripture came to mind as she prayed for her mother – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18: *"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."* (ESV translation) God graciously answered Bhavani's prayers – the paralysis went away with no side effects.

"Through what God's Word says for us in how to pray, I was fully-expecting for God to work and bring healing," Bhavani mentioned in talking about her mother's sudden illness. As Bhavani grows in her faith, the Holy Spirit has been working in her mother's life. She has stopped her Hindu worship and other spiritual rituals. While this is a small step, for Bhavani it shows that God is at work in her mother's life. The seeds of faith have been planted and Bhavani is seeing those seeds taking root in her mother's life.

Bhavani's mother realized the importance of education and the benefit for Bhavani in studying to become a Nurse. We are glad to have Bhavani at IREF for her Nursing Program education, to learn more about the saving grace of Jesus Christ and to be a light and example to her classmates on a daily basis. Please pray that the Lord will continue to help her grow in her faith and that her mother will give her life to Christ.



August 2021  
continued...

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