

June 2023



## India Rural Evangelical Fellowship

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**Summer Village Meetings** IREF is continuing its village Gospel meetings in areas where it has a local church community. Just recently IREF gathered in the village of Ullipalem. This is one of the villages where IREF holds a child development center (CDC). We want to thank our UK partners who have helped to support this program. It is because of their ongoing prayer and partnership that IREF is able to share the hope of Christ to kids in this particular impoverished area.

Typically the host church provides a meal to all who attend the village Gospel meetings. The congregation helps with the meal preparation and cooking. What is most encouraging in this case is that the children who have gone through the CDC program were the volunteers in prepping, cooking and serving. They have become the servant leaders of the IREF Ullipalem church. For us to see these children grow and take the lead in the church is one of the goals of the IREF CDC programs. Not only that, some of the other CDC students who are presently in different villages for their summer holidays came back to Ullipalem for the IREF village Gospel meetings. Our desire is that generations of young people will come to know Christ, have guidance in their education and become the influencers of their communities.

With the CDC attendees' enthusiasm for developing the church we look forward to seeing these kids (not so much kids anymore) again as we continue to partner to spread the Good News of Jesus in the area of Ullipalem.



**With half day school days** and the school year coming to a close, IREF staff and student has been keen on utilizing the time to pour into the ministry of IREF with painting projects. During COVID, IREF staff was able to update the look of the campus with new, bright paint colors. By God's grace and provision, IREF was able to re-open its facilities but that still left a few painting projects pending. In less than a week and a half, IREF staff and students worked hard to paint 4 buildings - the IREF Church, the Nursing college (all 3 floors in one day), and the two dormitory buildings (inside and out). 50 individuals had a part in being a vessel for God's use for IREF. Those who were inexperienced painters were eager to take up a brush or a roller to paint. It was thrilling to see how some students, when given a chance to make a difference - were able to use their skills to glorify the Lord. Their communication and team work was fascinating to watch. They began take up leadership on what needed

to be done and create a plan of action. Without humble hearts and willing attitudes, IREF staff would not be able to finish these projects and prepare for new the academic school year.

As Pastor Lawrence said, "we could hire the work out, but we will receive God's blessing if we do the work ourselves."

God's Work. God's Blessing. God's Ministry.



## Prayer & Praise

- Please pray for IREF students as many returned to idol-worshipping villages and families for the summer holiday and need your prayers as they stand firm for Christ.
- Pray for IREF staff as they recruit for student admissions for the new academic school year.
- Please continue praying for a movement that results in great unity among the global Christian community. Pray as IREF evangelists and Bible ladies concentrate





June 2023  
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**Student Spotlight** Meet Raju. Raju came to IREF four years ago as a twelve-year-old. Previously, he attended the local government school where he walked to and from school. Unfortunately, he would often get into fights with other village students. His uneducated mother struggled to find a good boarding school that they could afford. As a single mother living on daily wages from fieldwork, she was not able to feed Raju more than a meal or two per day and she certainly could not afford a quality education.

Raju's mother was introduced to IREF through a Pastor's Conference in their small village seven hours north of IREF. Raju has thrived at IREF. He looks physically different as he receives proper nourishment, and he has a plan for his life.

Raju's only sibling, his sister, was married as a fifteen-year-old girl. Raju will be the first in his family to receive a full education. His plans include finishing his studies at IREF and then becoming a police officer. According to Raju, his upbringing has determined his career choice, "I see so much evil in rural villages. People are gambling, drinking, hurting the weak, and abusing their families. I want to become a police officer to help bring justice for the helpless and poor."

Raju has learned discipline while at IREF. He arrived as a hot-headed kid, looking to fight anyone that gave him an odd look. Now, Raju is a young man of integrity, discipline, and character. We are cheering on Raju as he continues his education at IREF!



**SAVE THE DATE** for the 11th annual IREF Illinois Golf Outing on Saturday, August 12th at Bonnie Brook Golf Course. The Golf Outing is scramble format and shotgun tee times. Register online at [irefusa.org/golf](http://irefusa.org/golf) or by emailing [golfouting@irefusa.org](mailto:golfouting@irefusa.org). Tee times are filling up so register today!

Early bird discount is available until July 1st.

The Hole-in-One contest will be back this year! The first golfer to get a hole-in-one on the specified par 3 hole will win a \$25,000 cash prize.

The event on August 12th will be golf only. Details regarding the Shine Dinner event will be released soon.



**Vacation Bible School** Before the IREF students returned to their home villages for summer break, IREF held Vacation Bible School in hopes that the last lessons students learn before break are lasting through their summer holidays. Natalie Rebba and Parvati led the VBS program. They did an excellent job keeping every student engaged. This year's theme was based on Matthew 7:14, "For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few."



The theme was chosen with the hope that students will choose the narrow way. Please pray that the IREF students stick to Biblical teaching and not stray from the Gospel. May these lessons make an impact on them as they enter back into rural India.

The way of the Lord is hard for many of these kids, but through the impact of IREF, they have a foundation to bring the Good News of Jesus to their homes, to their families, and to their communities.

