

October 2023



New Wheels for IREF

If you've been to India, you've experienced IREF's van firsthand! After serving us for years, it was time to retire it. Thanks to donations from our 2022 Golf Outing, Emmanuel and Josh Rebba were able to buy our new 17 passenger transit van in a nearby city!

This will be a huge blessing for ministry. Apart from using it to transport teams who visit IREF, the van will also help us reach remote villages for Gospel meetings,



healthcare clinics, and more. It will be another tool in spreading the Good News to people in rural India!

In preparation for our new van, we also remodeled the garage, creating a rainproof, rat proof, and kid proof space. We hope and pray this new van will serve IREF for years to come. Get ready for a brand-new experience when you visit India! Thank you to our 2022 Golf Outing participants whose generosity made this possible.



Join Us for Shine Illinois

It's not too late to register for Shine Illinois! We're excited to announce that Dee Rebba will be with us in-person this year. Join us for an incredible evening of inspiring stories, changed lives, and transformation that is only made possible through the power of Christ.

Shine Illinois will be October 24 from 6:30-8:30pm at Village Church of Gurnee. Be sure to grab your seat before they're all gone. Register at irefusa.org/shine.

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Student Spotlight

Narashimha and Pavan Kumar come from Markapuram, an impoverished rural village. Here, they have no electricity or water and minimal education. Everyone picks chili peppers for a living, and the women walk miles each day to fetch water. Yet, in this poor and uneducated village, word of an affordable boarding school has spread. Many in this village have broken the cycle of generational poverty by receiving an IREF education!

When Narashimha and Pavan's mother heard of IREF, she made the difficult decision to send them. Their village is twelve hours from the school, so their mother is not able to see them except for Christmas and summer break. Dee described the viewpoint of their mother in this way, "Their mother cares for them deeply. She is different from other field workers in that she sees the 'big picture' of what education can do. She misses them dearly and calls the campus often. But she knows her boys are cared for, safe, and are receiving a good education."

Currently, five children from Markapuram village study at IREF. Pavan wants to be a doctor and Narashimha wants to be a manager in the chili fields. Both boys

have one thing in common: they want to be able to provide financially for their mother. What a privilege it is to be in these children's lives.



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What's Happening in Manipur?

In the far northeast side of India sits Manipur state. Earlier this summer, it made national headlines as persecution against Christians reached new heights. Since May, over 180 Christians have been killed and roughly 65,000 have been displaced from their homes. Angry mobs of Hindu neighbors have destroyed the churches, homes, and lives of our brothers and sisters. Many Christians in Manipur feel that what's happened to them is an intentional, systematic genocide of Christians in India—starting with them.

At IREF, we heard about the atrocities happening in Manipur almost as soon as they began. Reports of pastors and their families being terrorized in the streets. Videos of our brothers and sisters being beaten, churches being burned, and whole families fleeing into the hills and forests. All of it sparked heartbreak and anger.



What's happening in this state is indicative of a greater shift happening in India as Hindu nationalists grasp for political power. We have no idea what the future will bring for Christians, but we are hopeful. As reports of violence and death in Manipur spread, so did stories of faith. Even in the face of incredible pain and trauma, we saw videos of Christians worshipping the Lord and encouraging each other as they hid in the forests.



Recently, Mungbee (pictured above with IREF Pastor Lawrence), a pastor from Manipur traveled to IREF. He and his wife and their two children fled to a military camp where they lived there for five days. They have no home to return to and no church to lead. Everything is destroyed.

While at IREF, he shared his story with the students and with our leadership team. Because of the Lord's faithfulness and your generosity, we were able to partner with Mungbee through a one-time gift that helped provide things like food, shelter, and safety for Mungbee's family and for his congregation.

We hope to continue to support the Church throughout India. Please pray for Mungbee, his family, and his church. Please pray that Christians in and around Manipur would be encouraged and protected.



Christmas at IREF is always a special time. Last year, we gave a gift to each of our 810 students. This year, we have almost 1,000 students, which means you can help us give 1,000 gifts! Be on the lookout for more information via social media and our website in the coming weeks.. Thank you in advance for making Christmas special for each of our students.

Stay Connected

Do you struggle to find us on social media? Due to persecution in India, our Facebook and Instagram pages are private. Join our group or follow us for updates and ways you can pray for the ministry and events occurring in India. Scan the QR code to the right to stay connected.



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Continued

India Rural
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