

HOPE BEYOND THE WALLS OF THIS WORLD

BRIGHT HOPE NEWS



Tim Keller wrote that the Church of God exists "...neither to dominate nor withdraw from society but to provoke and yet serve. It means learning how to set forth gospel truths in an uncompromising way but also in a manner that directly answers people's most poignant questions in a disarming and compelling way. It means offering people a meaning in life that suffering can't take away. An identity so rooted in God's love that provides a hope beyond the walls of this world..."

This practical wisdom was evident in the lives of our Indian partners when we visited them in October. Time and again we saw and heard stories of hope, often in the most unexpected places. One of our partners, "T Raja" and his wife Devi, lead a ministry called the Home of Hope. This facility provides care and accommodation for around 800 men, women and children who all lived without hope on the streets of Bangalore. Through the tireless support of Raja, Devi, and their staff, they provide hope to every person they meet. Whether someone is nursed back to health, or dies with dignity, they point to "hope beyond the walls of this world."

While visiting the Home of Hope in October, we met one such lady, Sabina (not her real name). Sabina came to the Home of Hope after her whole family died in quick succession and she found herself living on the streets for three months. Alone, pregnant, deeply confused, and without anywhere to go, some people in the community cared enough to bring her to the Home of Hope. She was 8½ months pregnant when she arrived, but she was in such a distressed state that she denied she was even pregnant, believing instead that her stomach was full of water.

The team at the Home of Hope cared for Sabina, showing her love, and providing the family she had lost. Seven months ago, Raja had the privilege of delivering Sabina's baby girl, and now they both live with Raja and Devi in their home. This woman, literally abandoned without hope on the streets of Bangalore, now sat in front of us engaging in lively discussion. Joking, smiling, eating chocolate, and finally experiencing hope and a home again. This is possible because T Raja, Devi, and a community of Christ followers, have determined to live for the flourishing of all people. Deeply illustrating through their actions, words, and ongoing commitment, that there is an eternal hope beyond the walls of this world.

India is a vast nation – in population, geography, culture, and religious deities. But only Christ has the power to meet the deepest needs of 1.4 billion souls. Only Christ has the power to set the lonely in an eternal family, in an everlasting home. Galatians 4:4-5 says: "But when the right time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent Him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that He could adopt us as His very own children."

As we come to Christmas this year, may we be reminded again that God sent His Son Jesus so that we could become His children. To show us that there is hope beyond the walls of this world for all those that would believe.

James and Nicky Rees-Thomas

India Partnership Facilitators

Is it now trite to express surprise at the fact we are at the end of another year? Regardless, that sure did come around quick!

As always, we look forward in January to bringing our team together for our annual Gathering, which is the only time our whole team comes together each year.

Earlier this year we instituted a new strategy for the future that looks at how BHW will continue to develop new partners and care for our existing ones over the next five to ten years. Part of our realisation in this was the need for more wonderful Partnership Facilitators on our team.

Thankfully, even before we realised our need here, God has blessed us with an unprecedented number of people keen to join our team. That is particularly encouraging as our team members don't get paid, cover their own travel costs, and often have to go to some quite precarious places!

In January, just before our wider team Gathering, we are hosting our first ever New Partnership Facilitator Summit. We'll have quite a few folks in Christchurch, and a few more joining from other countries, to talk about what it means to help develop BHW partners.

We are really excited about this event, and the number of amazing people considering joining our team. We hope to introduce some of them soon.



Auiqa has nearly finished her radiology degree and will qualify as a doctor in one year. When she has completed her studies, she wants to start a medical centre with some of the other medical students from the scholarship programme in Youhanabad. If she did not have access to the scholarship provided by EGM, she is adamant that she would already be married with children. Her family situation is very hard. Her father converted to Christianity from Sikhism, and he was the only one in his family. There were no other sons and in 2018 her father died. Since then, they have lived with the grandfather who gives them a hard time. The rest of the family are very cruel to her mother and the four children.

Auiqa’s mother works in another house and does sewing, which she is very good at. Auiqa has a younger sister and brother, and another brother who has created many issues for them. He is currently in jail for drugs and gang-related activity. The gangs have constantly threatened the family and the police have raided the house several times. It became so bad that EGM decided to relocate them out of the Youhanabad community for their safety. They were under threat of rape and ongoing persecution, much of it because they are Christians. Their life has been incredibly difficult since their father’s death but, thanks to EGM, they now feel safe in their new location and have hope for the future due to Auiqa’s access to tertiary training and the subsequent employment opportunities this gives her.

Read more at <https://www.brighthopeworld.com/partnerships.asp?pid=240>.

BRIGHT HOPE WORLD OFFICE CHRISTMAS CLOSURE DATES

The Bright Hope World office will be closed from Thursday 21st December and will reopen on Tuesday 9th January. The last La Mai coffee orders for 2023 need to be in by lunchtime on Monday 18th December in order to be sent before Christmas. Normal coffee ordering will resume on the 9th of January 2024. Any standing orders that are due during this period will be sent out prior to Christmas.



1. Pray for T Raja, Devi, and the team at Home of Hope in Bangalore India as they work tirelessly to care for people and share the ‘hope beyond the walls of this world’. Pray also for Sabina and the other residents who are often learning about hope and love for the first time.
2. Pray for Auiqa and all the other students being given hope for the future thanks to the scholarship fund.
3. Pray for God’s protection for Christians in Pakistan as they face rising levels of persecution.
4. Pray for all our partners over the upcoming weeks as the Christmas period can often add a lot of extra stress and pressure to already difficult situations.
5. Pray for our events in January – particularly the first ever New Partnership Facilitator Summit. Pray also for a refreshing and encouraging time for our team.

