

we can make a difference ...



Together

February 2009

News for church representatives from your local area co-ordinator

India: great country, great need

My field trip to see leprosy first-hand

I've now seen for myself some of the great work The Leprosy Mission is doing – and what a wonderful experience it was!

In November I had the privilege of my first field trip to India. The whole time was spent in Uttar Pradesh, India's mid-northern state that borders Nepal, and my travelling companion was Allister du Plessis, area co-ordinator for the West Central area.

We first spent a few days in Delhi, where among other things we saw the impressive work in education, training and resourcing at the South Asia regional office. We then headed south-east on the overnight sleeper train and arrived at The Leprosy Mission's hospital in Naini. Here, as everywhere we visited, the staff work

with great dedication and personal sacrifice, both in the hospital and the community, to bring hope and help to those who otherwise would have neither.

All the staff in Naini deserve our admiration, but Drs Premal and Loretta Das stand out for their leadership and their remarkable efforts in treating patients and training other doctors from across India in leprosy treatment. Premal's father and grandfather worked for the Mission so, for him, as he said, it's almost a family business!

Then we were off again along the roughest road I've ever travelled, feeling, as Allister well described it, like washing that had been through the spin cycle! But it was worth it to be in Faizabad, which is not just a hospital, but also a training centre



My first encounter with a leprosy patient and treatment

where up to 100 young boys and girls are trained in vocational skills. This is life-changing work on an impressive scale.

We saw so much more good work and people, but sadly we were soon back in Delhi and then the UK – from shirt-sleeve weather to a hailstorm! But what a great experience India was, one that made us realise more than ever what a difference The Leprosy Mission is making, and how vital it is that we continue our efforts to support the work. India is counting on us!

See overleaf for how you could make a life-changing trip to visit The Leprosy Mission in India



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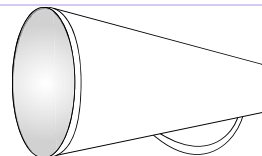
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Our vision: a world without leprosy

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Fundraising project 2009

As our fundraising project in Wales this year we're seeking to raise £8,500 for medical equipment for Faizabad hospital in India.

Faizabad was one of the hospitals I visited when in India recently, and it made me realise again how blessed we are in the UK to have state-of-the-art medical equipment when we need it. The situation is very different in Faizabad, where staff have to serve their patients with often the most basic tools.

Talking to the medical director in Faizabad, Dr Timothy Maximus, and other medical staff, it became clear that the provision of some important medical equipment would help them provide a much better service.

They need:

- A blood analyzer to help in the speedy diagnosis of leprosy and other diseases
- Computer equipment to speed up information recording and sharing
- Physiotherapy equipment to get



Lab technician examining blood samples in Faizabad

patients mobile quickly and effectively after surgery

The total cost for this equipment is £8,500 and we are going to try to raise this amount in Wales this year.

Please make this project known in your church or group, and perhaps discuss ways of contributing to the total through fundraising events. Last year was a great success (see below) and I'm confident we'll do well again this year.

We are also running four major fundraising events in Wales this year which I hope you'll make widely known and be able to support.

We have **three sponsored Walks of Hope**, one each in north, mid and south Wales.

The North Wales walk

is again around Betws-y-Coed and is on 25 April (not 2 May). **Mid-Wales** will start in Llandrindod Wells on 11 July and **South Wales** will be an easy walk (not Pen-y-Fan!) in the Brecon Beacons on 27 June. North and Mid-Wales both start at 10 am and South Wales at 11 am. Please see my webpage www.leprosymission.org.uk/contact_us/local_area_events/wales for full details (and to download sponsor forms) or simply contact me (details overleaf).

Later in the year we can also look forward to a concert with the Cambrensis choir and orchestra in St Mark's, Gabalfa, Cardiff, on 17 October.

I'm sure you'll spread the word about these events and give them your full support.

Supporters' trip to India

A great opportunity is taking shape for supporters of The Leprosy Mission to visit our work in India. If you'd like to see leprosy work and some of India's great cultural treasures for yourself, this could be for you, so read on.

The proposed guided trip will be in late 2009 or early 2010, and the itinerary will be something like this:

- Fly into Delhi and visit The Leprosy Mission's Shahdara hospital and a socio-economic project run in the city
- Sightsee in Delhi and visit the Taj Mahal
- Travel to Faizabad hospital and vocational training centre and see socio-economic projects in the surrounding countryside
- Fly back to Delhi via Lucknow for further sightseeing and shopping

The total estimated cost at this stage is around £1,000.

This is a new development in The Leprosy Mission's work and could be the start of regular trips abroad to forge closer links between supporters and churches and our work overseas.

If you are interested in the trip, or just want to know more, we would like to hear from you as soon as possible. Please contact Helen Huthwaite at our head office in Peterborough. The address and phone number are overleaf (bottom right). Alternatively you can email helenh@tlmew.org.uk

Outstanding result for 2008 project

Last year we set ourselves the task of raising £7,000 for Belgaum Leprosy Hospital in south-west India.

The hospital needs to expand due to

overwhelming demand on its services, at a cost of £100,000.

Well, the final figure is now in for our fundraising in 2008, and the total is not

£7,000 but **£11,191.80!**

This is just amazing, and is going to make a huge difference in Belgaum.

Well done and thank you so much!

Watch out for The Leprosy Mission's new Gifts for Life leaflet, coming soon

Gifts for Life, which range from a child's education to a hospital bed, can be the perfect way to channel your donations or those of your church or group. They also make excellent alternative gifts. Contact me for more information.

