

# India Project

## Information Packet

**Location:** Thanjavur, India

**Project Dates:** October 18-29, 2017

**Optional Excursion Dates:** October 29-31, 2017

**Participation Fee:** \$1,100

\$950 for children 12 and under on start of project

**Optional Excursion Fee:** \$350

*Flight to Tiruchirappalli, India is not included in the participation fee*



## Maranatha in India

Maranatha has been working in India since 1998. So far, more than 1,600 projects, which include churches and schools, have been completed. Yet even after completing so many projects, the need for places of worship and education continues to grow—thanks to the spread of the Gospel message.

India has a desperate need for schools, as many children and young people have no access to education. Through the support of generous donors, Maranatha has been constructing large campuses in rural parts of India. Volunteers have built both One-Day School campuses and Education and Evangelism Centers, which consist of six to ten classrooms and a large multi-purpose room. These structures provide Christian education to countless students each year. And through the children, many families come to know of Christ's love.

## Project Overview

Volunteers on this project will construct a large school facility for the E.D. Thomas Memorial Seventh-day Adventist School in southern India. The school is located on approximately 50 acres of a mango plantation, filled with beautiful trees near the town of Thanjavur in the state of Tamil Nadu. It was started in 1953 with just eight students and has since grown to a full elementary and secondary boarding school with up to 1,000 students annually.

Recently, enrollment has started to decline due to poor infrastructure. The dorms and classrooms are leaking, and there is no place on campus that can accommodate the entire school body for assemblies. The local Adventist conference has reached out to Maranatha to build an Education and Evangelism Center for the school. This large building includes a gymnasium that can be used for assemblies and community events. It will also include new classrooms for the elementary students. The structure is built with insulated panel sheeting walls.

In addition, the group will conduct outreach, such as children's ministry programs and health education, in the local community.

## Project Schedule

**Wednesday, October 18**  
Arrival in Tiruchirappalli

**Thursday – Friday, October 19-20**  
Work days

**Saturday, October 21**  
Worship with the Local congregation

**Sunday - Friday, October 22-27**  
Work days

**Saturday, October 28**  
Worship with the Local congregation

**Sunday, October 29**  
Departure from Tiruchirappalli or continue on optional excursion.

## OPTIONAL EXCURSION

**Sunday, October 29**  
Travel to Delhi

**Monday, October 30**  
Travel to Agra, Tour Agra Fort and Taj Mahal

**Tuesday, October 31**  
Travel to Delhi, local sightseeing, evening departures from Delhi.

## Accommodations

Volunteers will stay at the Lakshmi Hotel in Thanjavur, approximately 25 minutes from the E.D. Thomas School. The rooms are very comfortable with a mixture of twin and queen beds. You can expect double occupancy rooms with private bathrooms. All bedding and towels are provided; however, washcloths are not commonly provided in India, so you should plan on bringing your own. The hotel has hot water and air conditioning. Wi-Fi is available, but can be intermittent and slow. The groups will have meals at the hotel where skilled Maranatha cooks will oversee all the meals. Together, the group will travel to the school by private transportation.

Volunteers should plan on staying in double occupancy rooms with a roommate. If you would like to room with someone in particular, please let us know. During the project, there may be some single occupancy rooms available for an extra cost of \$250 per person. If you are interested in a single occupancy room, please email [volunteer@maranatha.org](mailto:volunteer@maranatha.org) or call (916) 774-7700.

For more information about the Lakshmi Hotel visit <http://www.lakshmihotel.in>

### Optional Excursion: Taj Mahal: \$350

At the end of the project, October 29-31, volunteers can choose to extend their stay by joining an optional excursion to Delhi and Agra.

On the 29th, volunteers will take a flight from Tiruchirappalli to Delhi and spend the night. The following morning, the group will travel to Agra, where volunteers will visit the famous Taj Mahal, a stunning marble mausoleum considered one of the world's architectural masterpieces. Mughal emperor Shah Jahan built the Taj Mahal as a memorial to his wife, and the tour guide will share information about the life of the emperor and the construction of the beautiful building. In addition to the Taj Mahal, Agra is also home to Agra Fort, a large complex that housed and protected many generations of royalty and foreign leaders. That night there will be shopping opportunities in Agra. On Tuesday morning, volunteers will have a sunrise tour of the Taj Mahal before returning to Delhi and seeing some of the local sights. Volunteers will be taken to the Delhi airport that night for flights home.

This excursion has an additional fee of \$350 per person, which includes housing, food, ground transportation in Delhi and Agra, insurance, all tours and entrance fees, and an English-speaking guide. Single Occupancy is available at an additional cost of \$70 per person. It does not include air transportation from Tiruchirappalli to Delhi. You will need to book a specific flight from Tiruchirappalli to Delhi. Flight information available below in the travel section.

## Leadership

### Sheena Smith | Project Coordinator

Sheena joins the group from British Columbia, Canada, where she and her husband reside and she works as a Graduate Architect and Project Manager. She currently manages healthcare construction projects for the B.C. Northern Health Authority. She is no stranger to travel; originally from Bermuda, she has lived abroad in several countries including Hungary, South Korea, and the United States. When not traveling or serving internationally, she loves meeting new people, studying the Bible, and being in nature. Sheena first joined Maranatha in 2012 as the leader of a group to Ecuador, and this last year she fell in love with India after serving in Mizoram. On this project, she is looking forward to working in Southern India and answering the call to build an EEC that will facilitate the education of hundreds of students who will have the opportunity to learn about Jesus.



### Lorin Rubbert | Construction Superintendent

Lorin is from North Dakota, where he resides with his wife Luanne and works as a construction superintendent in the oil industry. He has also worked as a farmer and pilot for more than 40 years and owns a farm in Saskatchewan. He likes spending time in his remote wilderness cabin in northern Saskatchewan where he enjoys photography, flying, and hanging out with family and friends. Lorin became involved with Maranatha after reading a copy of Maranatha's magazine, The Volunteer. After his first trip, he fell in love with India and the people he met there. Lorin will be leading the construction aspect of the project as the construction superintendent.



## Vinish Wilson | Maranatha Country Director

Vinish has been working with Maranatha in India since 2001. His sunny personality, organization skills, and commitment to the mission of Maranatha has endeared him to many volunteers who have worked in India. Vinish will assist with in-country details and make sure everything flows smoothly behind-the-scenes. Vinish and his wife Rachel have two young children.



## We Need Your Help

The team would like to hold a children's program for the local community. At this time, we do not have a children's ministry leader for the project. If you are interested in leading out in this area, please contact Maranatha at (916) 774-7799 and join this project.

## Expenses

The participation fee of \$1,100 covers housing for 11 nights at the Lakshmi Hotel, three vegetarian meals a day, ground transportation to and from the airport and project site, translators, local excursions, health and accident insurance, a Maranatha t-shirt, and luggage tags.

Maranatha must receive all funds and forms by September 11, 2017, due to application processing time. Wait for confirmation of acceptance on the project before purchasing your airfare.

Maranatha participation fees are tax-deductible. For Canadian tax-deductible receipts, payments must be made by check to the Maranatha Association (address located at the end of this information packet). For U.S. tax-deductible receipts, payments can be made by cash, check, or credit/debit cards.

If you are fundraising or receiving donations, please either have them sent directly to you or work with your local church treasurer to collect funds and issue tax-deductible receipts, since it is difficult for Maranatha to track individual small checks. If your church will not work with you, please wait until you have collected the full amount of your participation fee before submitting it to Maranatha.

### Estimate of Additional Costs

**Flight to Tiruchirappalli, India:** \$950-1,300

**Passport:** \$130 or \$110 for renewal

**Visa:** \$75

## About India

The diversity of India's culture and history has made this country an intriguing place of contrasts. The beggar on the street wears a cheerfully vibrant sari. Hunger is widespread, but the air is thick with simmering spices. The country is crippled by illiteracy, but some of the world's brightest thinkers have emerged from India's cities and countryside. Blending modernity and antiquity, India is pushing forward to make social and economic progress while reconciling the future with its past. Yet these juxtaposed details are what make India a captivating country to visit and a fascinating place to work with Maranatha.

In its early history, India was the center of fiscal and cultural wealth as art and literature flourished and the trade of spices, ivory, and silk abounded. Hinduism became the dominant belief system, although Islam also wove its way into the region over the years. India's prosperity made it a desirable target, and the British began to colonize the region in the 1600s. Efforts to liberate India started 200 years later, but it wasn't until Mahatma Gandhi introduced a non-



## Facts and Figures

**Capital:**  
New Delhi

**Population:**  
1.2 Billion

**Language:**  
Hindi 41%, Bengali 8.1%, Telugu 7.2%, and various other local languages and dialects.

**Climate:**  
Humid and monsoon in southern India, temperate in the north.

**Religion:**  
Hindu 81%, Muslim 13%, Christian 2%, Sikh 2%

**Currency:**  
Indian Rupee

violent approach did the Indians achieve independence from the British in 1947.

Today, India is the second most populous nation in the world with more than 1.2 billion people. The impact of this huge population is rampant poverty, which has caused illiteracy, inadequate access to drinking water, and widespread illness. Potentially contributing to the overall poverty is a cultural remnant from India's past: the caste system.

Although discouraged by the government, this system of social stratification still dominates many rural communities. The caste system assigns class to individuals and offers no escape from this imposed category. For those subjugated to the lowest level of "untouchables," life is a constant flood of prejudice, discrimination, and abuse.

India remains a country of diversity and beauty. The architecture of the Taj Mahal, the dances and music of Bollywood, the colorful saris and festival of colors, and the spicy curries—India remains a country rich in culture and full of life.

## Travel Information

Volunteers will purchase their own plane tickets to the city of Tiruchirappalli (see below). Please wait for confirmation from Maranatha before purchasing your airfare to ensure there is still space on the project. Maranatha representatives will meet you at the airport, and volunteers will travel together by bus to the hotel, located approximately one hour from the airport.

### Flights

**Arrival** | Please plan to arrive in Tiruchirappalli, India (airport code TRZ) in the morning or early afternoon of Wednesday, October 18. Depending on flight schedules, volunteers who arrive earlier may need to wait at the airport until the rest of the volunteers have arrived. The group will travel together to Thanjavur.

**Departure (Project Only)** | Please plan to depart from Tiruchirappalli, India (TRZ), in the afternoon of Sunday, October 29.

**Departure (Optional Excursion)** | If you are planning on joining the optional excursion, please book the following flights:

1. Book the following Jet Airways itinerary from Tiruchirappalli (TRZ) to Delhi (DEL) on Sunday, October 29.
  - a. Jet Airways #2751 from Tiruchirappalli (TRZ) to Chennai (MAA) departing at 11:50am
  - b. Jet Airways #740 from Chennai (MAA) to Delhi (DEL) departing at 1:40pm (This results in a 35-minute connection, a closer connection than many people are comfortable with. Please book the flight anyway. If the group is delayed, the airline will book on the next flight which is only 5 hours later).
2. Then book your departure home from Delhi (DEL) in the evening of Tuesday, October 31, 2017, or early morning of Wednesday, November 1, 2017. Volunteers will be dropped off at the airport Tuesday evening.

### Arriving Early or Staying Late?

India has some beautiful travel destinations. Some of you may choose to arrive earlier than October 18 or stay beyond October 29 to explore the country on your own. Please make your own hotel and transportation plans for any days outside of the Maranatha project dates. If you have any questions, feel free to call Maranatha at (916) 774-7700.

### Travel Resources

**Azumano Travel:** 800-777-5149 or by email with Erle Dpenha or Azumano Team at [corporatetravel@ciazumano.com](mailto:corporatetravel@ciazumano.com)

**Butler Travel:** 503-879-5005 or by email with Nathanael at [nathan@butlertravel.com](mailto:nathan@butlertravel.com) or with Ellen at [ellen@butlertravel.com](mailto:ellen@butlertravel.com).

**Kayak:** [www.kayak.com](http://www.kayak.com)

*When contacting the Azumano or Butler travel agencies, mention Maranatha to receive a discounted service charge.*



## Entry Requirements

Below are the requirements for U.S. and Canadian travelers. Citizens of other countries should consult the Indian embassy or consulate in your home country for entrance requirements.

**Passport** | All passports must be valid for at least six months from the dates of intended travel (May 1, 2018). If you do not have a passport, U.S. citizens can apply at any U.S. post office or online at <http://travel.state.gov>. Canadian citizens can apply online at [www.passport.gc.ca](http://www.passport.gc.ca). It can take up to two months to complete the entire process, so plan accordingly to give yourself enough time to receive your passport.

**Tourist Visa** | In addition to a passport, you must have a valid tourist visa for the country of India before traveling. A document with complete visa requirements and tips for filling everything out will be sent to you with your confirmation. There is an online E-Tourist Visa for India, and for volunteers on their first trip to India, we recommend using that option since it is cheaper and faster than applying for a multiple entry or five to ten-year visa.

You must apply for the E-Tourist Visa online at least four days before your trip and within 30 days of your arrival in India. It is only good for 30 days from date of issue, so Maranatha recommends that you wait to process this paperwork until three weeks before your scheduled departure (September 28). If you are delayed in your travel, you don't want your visa to expire before you arrive in India. In order to enter India, you must present the printed confirmation page at customs when you arrive in India. If you go to the airport without this paperwork, you will not be permitted to board your flight to India.

## Staying Healthy

Maranatha requires that every volunteer have a current tetanus vaccine (within the last 10 years). The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also recommends vaccines for hepatitis A, typhoid, Japanese encephalitis, and an anti-malarial medication other than chloroquine.

Some of these you may already have and some of them you may deem unnecessary for this trip. You should schedule a consultation with a travel clinic doctor to talk about the medical risks in India and the ways to minimize them.

## How to Register

To register, please complete the online registration form and pay the full participation fee or an initial deposit of at least half the total participation fee. You can make this payment by credit card online, over the phone, or with a check made out to Maranatha Volunteers International and sent to the address below. If for any reason you need to cancel your participation, Maranatha will do our best to refund your deposit up until one month before travel. After that point, \$150 is non-refundable and the remainder will depend on the reservations and the project arrangements already made.

Register online at [Maranatha.org](http://Maranatha.org) or over the phone.

## Contact Information

**Phone:** (916) 774-7700

**Fax:** (916) 774-7701

**Email:** [volunteer@maranatha.org](mailto:volunteer@maranatha.org)

**Website:** [www.maranatha.org](http://www.maranatha.org)

**Mailing Address:**

Maranatha Volunteers International

990 Reserve Drive

Suite 100

Roseville, CA 95678

**Canadian Payments Only:**

Maranatha Volunteers International  
Association

c/o V06494C

PO Box 6494, Station Terminal  
Vancouver, BC V6B 6R3

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\*All confirmed volunteers on an International Maranatha Open Team receive a Maranatha t-shirt as part of their participation fee.

