

Jonesboro Circuit Unites Around *Fan into Flame*

“The Doors” is what I thought of when I first learned of the *Ablaze!* movement a few years ago. I’m referring to the rock band from the late 60’s. Their song, “Light My Fire”, kept running through my mind. The lyrics are not what you would call edifying. Now, when I was asked a few months ago to serve as a circuit coordinator for **Fan into Flame**, I was a bit under enthused. I suggested the Jonesboro Circuit would be better served by someone with more passion for the cause.

Now, here I am writing this article for **Fan into Flame**. Why is that? As I have learned more about **Fan into Flame** my attitude has changed. My thinking has moved from “The Doors” to a door. I see **Fan into Flame** as a door for getting the message of Christ out so that the Holy Spirit may indeed be at work to ignite that flame of faith.

Really, what “sparked” my interest was the opportunity to help build churches in India. I learned that this was one part of the work of **Fan into Flame**. I have shared this opportunity with Pastors and lay leaders within our circuit. So far, we have had four of our circuit congregations make commitments to **Fan into Flame** and we are anticipating more. We have set a circuit goal of raising \$50,000 for this work.

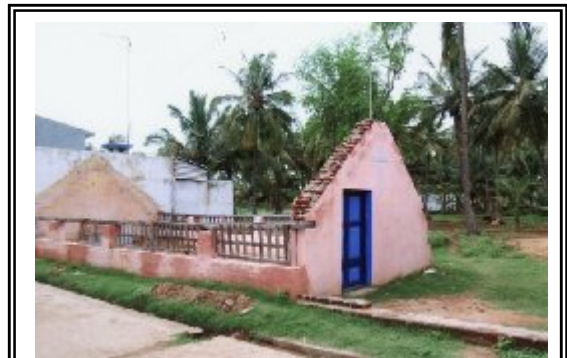
India is a populous place to put it mildly - over a billion people. You may remember that one of the goals of *Ablaze!* is to reach 100 million people with the Gospel by the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. Our partner church in India has committed to reaching 25 million of these. And there’s a more personal aspect. My hope is that some from the Jonesboro circuit will actually be able to visit India. My wife, Nancy, and I are making plans to visit on a short term mission project in July 2010.

There are many **Fan into Flame** stories yet to be told. You could explain it away as one more synodical program, a lot of fanfare, little substance, or **you could learn more**. As your congregation becomes involved, you may be surprised to learn what door for the Gospel is opened to you.

About the Author: Rev. Russell Shewmaker is pastor of Pilgrim Lutheran Church in Jonesboro AR and serves as Fan into Flame Circuit Coordinator for the Jonesboro Circuit of the Mid-South District LCMS..



St. Thomas Lutheran Church, Kannigapuram,
Pastor: Rev. LSD. Gladson Premkumar.
Members 180, Communicant Members 50.
Area of Construction : 1584 Sq.Ft.
Requirement: INR 150,000 (about \$3300)



St. James Lutheran Church, Sengilikuppam,
Pastor: Rev. Joseph Selvaraj.
Members 420, Communicant Members 260.
Area of Construction: 1914Sq. Ft.
Requirement: INR 200, 000 (about \$4400)