
Stipends for Probationers-As-Church Planters in India

\$23,100



India Probationers



India Worship

In 1895, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) began mission work in India—the first “foreign” mission field in the Synod’s history. The India Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELC) became an LCMS partner church in 1959. The LCMS invested human and financial resources in developing a total Christian ministry of congregations, pastoral training, lay training, school

education, and human care. A large LCMS missionary presence continued until the 1980s, and the last LCMS career missionary retired in 2003. Beginning in 2003, LCMS consultants have gone to India each year to conduct various leadership training seminars.

The IELC operates Concordia Seminary in Nagercoil. This institution is key to the ongoing development of the church. It graduates 25-30 pastoral and deaconess candidates every three years and averages 25 lay people each year in the one-year evangelist training course. Since 2001, new seminary graduates, both in the deaconess program and pastoral program, are assigned to unchurched areas for evangelism and church planting for three years before consecration/ordination and receiving a call to a regular ministry/congregation. It is expected that each "probationer" establish at least one congregation during this period. They give an account of their daily evangelistic activities to their supervising pastor, and return to the seminary quarterly to report and receive guidance. The program not only enables dynamic outreach of the Gospel and Baptisms, but also training for lifelong zeal in outreach and church planting.

In the past three years, 42 probationers have planted 62 mission stations where 135 of the members are new Christians brought into the family of Christ through Baptism.

Funding will be used for:

Funding for this project provides a minimum stipend for the 20 probationers, along with support for worship/housing space rental in the area and program expenses.

Prayer needs:

- Pray for the probationers who have concluded their studies and will now go to unchurched areas for the next three years to begin new churches.
- Pray for the many new congregations that God is raising up through the work of the probationers, pastors, evangelists and lay evangelists. These new believers face a great deal of pressure to reconvert.
- Pray that many new Christians are brought into the family of Christ through Baptism.