

❖ **Yes, we want to be a part of Fan into Flame!
How do we get started?**

There are a number of people in the Nebraska District ready to help your congregation start the planning process. Pastors and lay members have volunteered to serve congregations as Circuit Coordinators. These

volunteers are in your community or in a neighboring town and have the resources and information you need to get started. To find the name and contact information of the



Circuit Coordinator in your area, visit the Nebraska District website at www.ndlcms.org and click on the **Fan into Flame** link. There you will also find links to many other useful resources you may print and copy to distribute in your congregation to raise awareness and excitement. You may also contact Andrea Essling or Nichole Hetz at the District Office for information on how to get started.

❖ **What are the District's financial goals and how does that fit with funding the Nebraska District mission plan?**

The Nebraska District has a goal of committing \$6 million dollars for the Fan into Flame effort. This total goal is broken down into two complementing components - \$3 million from congregational appeals and \$3 million from major gifts. The Nebraska District has developed a mission plan which describes the mission field God is presenting to us right now, and indicates the new money that is necessary to begin ministry in these new fields.

As the Holy Spirit blesses the Fan into Flame effort in Nebraska, 15% net is returned to the Nebraska District. When the \$6 million goal is reached, the Nebraska District will receive \$810,000 toward its District mission plan goal of \$2 million. These gifts will be supplemented by major gifts specified for support of the mission plan. Unrestricted gifts to Fan into Flame, either through your congregation or as a major donor, are a blessing because they allow money to be used within the parameters of the campaign wherever ministry support is needed most.

Nebraska District—
LCMS

Frequently Asked Questions



“You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Acts 1:8

Frequently Asked Questions

❖ **We already support Synod and District, as well as other mission projects. Why should we participate?**

What a blessing that your congregation has embraced its responsibility as a member church of Synod and provides needed funds to support LCMS ministry. The Nebraska District is committed to passing along \$1.35 million of the dollars it receives from congregations this year to Synod for our common ministry. Your congregation's corporate and individual support through Gary Thies' efforts for LCMS World Mission is wonderful support for the Synod's budgeted support of LCMS and Nebraska District missionaries and mission projects. In fact, 80% of World Mission International funds come from designated gifts to specific projects.

Fan into Flame gifts are new funds, above and beyond the regular congregational gifts to the District and Synod and special support of missionaries and mission projects in order to establish **new efforts** to reach 100 million people worldwide, 50 million right here in the USA. These new ministries will then call for future ongoing support via congregational giving to District and Synod and special giving through Gary Thies' efforts.

❖ **Our congregation is situated in a small, rural area. We don't have a mission field around us. Why should we participate?**

The United States as a whole is the third-largest mission field in the world. The number of Lutherans in Africa is greater than the number of Lutherans in the U.S. Closer to home, in a

recent Gallup Poll, 53% of Nebraskans reported attending any church, Christian or non-Christian, regularly. Roughly half of the population in Nebraska does not worship in a Christian church each week. Every other person in Nebraska is unchurched and disconnected from Jesus Christ! That's a mission field in each county of our state! No matter where you live or where your church sits, the mission field is all around you. If your congregation doesn't wish to use the returned 15% net for local mission projects, those gifts can be used to support other ministries right here in our Nebraska mission fields.

❖ **We are a small congregation. What can we do?**

Jesus loves you as His children, and He can use your gifts to do wonderful things. He used the young boy's fish and loaves to feed the multitudes. He praised the widow for the gift of her mites. Your congregation is situated exactly where God would use you as an extension of His mission arm.

Fan into Flame is about **Ablaze!** and sharing the Good News of Jesus. The LCMS wants you to have the joy of partnering in this opportunity. The blessings of

Fan into Flame will come back to you not only in dollars, but in a wealth of materials, leadership, affirmation of your mission, professional assistance, and whatever your unique situation requires. God uses all of His children as He chooses. Participate and see how He can use you!



Fan Into Flame, Frequently Asked Questions

❖ Our congregation is already having difficulty meeting our budget; we don't have enough money to support something else. How can we do more?

When people are given the opportunity to hear what God is doing in His mission fields and how they can be a part of it, the Spirit can move their hearts in response. People who may not have contributed to the church's operation fund may be moved by the mission stories of God's actions they hear through **Fan into Flame**, renewing their passion for returning their first-fruits to the Lord.

Fan into Flame provides new funding for the congregation, District, and World Missions globally to bring Christ to the lost. This includes revitalizing older congregations by breathing new life into them with captivating projects and mission-minded programs. The District is not going to forget the needs of existing congregations, nor will it ignore the opportunities for growth. In fact, these are equal priorities highlighted in the mission plan. *When we return a portion of His blessings we will receive back new blessings a hundred-fold.*

❖ Our congregation already has community outreach projects in place. Do we need to start something new with the portion of our gifts that are returned?

No, the money may be used by your congregation for new or existing outreach opportunities. Your congregation will receive a check every quarter to be used for outreach as the congregation chooses. There are no forms to fill out or reports to make in order to receive the money. You can use these funds to support established outreach ministries or to reach out to your community in new ways.



❖ There are too many other activities going on; can we wait to plan our appeal?

These appeals are straight-forward in their approach and require very little effort if a small team of volunteers pitches in for a few short weeks. There is no need to clear your entire calendar of activities to conduct the appeal. Each local appeal is meant to be crisp, mission-focused, and successful. It is also suggested that planning begin early, in the sense that your congregation get appropriate approval to run the appeal. These are simple steps that, if done timely, provide a smoother and simpler appeal.

Congregations are encouraged to make every effort to complete their appeal by Advent of 2008. This is the period of time designated for the Nebraska District to participate in **Fan into Flame**. Every congregation is invited to choose or modify the appeal plan that works best for them. Appeal plans include:

- Personal visits
- Cottage meetings
- Commitment Sundays with publicity
- Tithe from a starting or ongoing local campaign (capital, debt reduction, etc.)
- Budget-line item

❖ My congregation is willing to participate, but we don't have any ideas for local outreach projects. Can you share some?

Every congregation is invited to participate in whatever way works best for them. The 15% net returned to the congregation may be redesignated in a number of ways. The congregation may choose to support the outreach project developed by a neighboring congregation or circuit, provide for a mission congregation or new church start in the District, or designate the funds for a District or LCMS World Mission project through the District Office or Mission Central.



Congregations that wish to use their 15% net and are looking for ideas may visit the Nebraska District **Fan into Flame** webpage at <http://www.ndlcms.org/news/FIF/index.html> to get ideas from congregations that already participated.

❖ Are Synod leaders willing to sacrifice pure doctrine for numerical growth?

Mission work not based on the pure Word of God can certainly fall under the same judgment Jesus pronounced on the Jewish mission endeavor, which resulted in making the newly convicted person twice the child of hell he was before (Matt. 23:15), fitted not for salvation, but for destruction. **God forbid this is our practice.**

By entering into the campaign process with the rest of Synod, you will have a personal and direct opportunity to make sure that all of us are accountable to our

Lord Jesus. This is your opportunity to stir up one another to love and good works. This is your opportunity to help draw outsiders back into the fellowship.

Our campaign combines both an administrative structure and solid doctrine. Being a part of the process helps participants recognize how each of these two aspects serves the other. It fosters the harmony we so dearly need in Synod. It is encouraging to join in the throng and experience the faith miracles each congregation has to share. Learning to really know brothers and sisters in Christ is such a joy!

❖ Is Fan into Flame is just another fund-raising program of Synod?

Fan into Flame is not a program – it's an invitation for individuals to learn about and support the **Ablaze!** movement. **Ablaze!** is a vision of LCMS World Mission – a vision of 100 million people in the world hearing the saving message of salvation through Jesus Christ. There is no end date to

Ablaze!, just the goal of igniting believers' hearts to openly confess the hope they have in Jesus so that others may encounter Christ. **Fan into Flame** is the effort to provide gifts to fund new and exciting mission projects. It doesn't take money to personally witness, but it does take funds to place a missionary or start a mission effort nationally or internationally. **Fan into Flame** provides funds for **Ablaze!**-inspired projects in your community, in the Nebraska District, nationally, and internationally.

❖ Pastor is already too busy to get involved in this process. I am not comfortable with this campaign. How can I do more?

There are volunteers and staff who stand ready to help your congregation members plan and implement a mission-centered appeal. While the congregation's pastor would be asked to be a part of the process, he would not be asked to do it all himself.

Conducting **Fan into Flame** is a marvelous opportunity to receive help from those who see your parish as a mission outpost for sowing the seeds of the Word and beginning to reap the harvest. We have so many resources to share with you and such an exciting opportunity to include you in the worldwide harvest. Please give your members the opportunity to hear about the mission work being done in Nebraska and around the world and let them decide their level of participation.

If you are hesitant to share this opportunity with your members because of theological or financial reasons, please let us know so we can visit with you about those concerns. Please realize that providing your congregation with the possibility to sow seeds in God's mission fields can also increase your home gifts and relieve your time pressures. The best reason to sow is that Jesus promises there is no sowing without a harvest.

