

## Our Church

Peace was established in 1976 in the growing west side of Grand Island. From its humble and faithful beginning, Peace has grown to a large church with a membership of 1,582 baptized and 1,201 confirmed people of God.

## Our Plan

We were asked by the Nebraska District to consider being a pilot congregation. It seemed like good timing, as we were just going into the LCEF Strategic Ministry Planning program. We knew there would be outcomes from that SMP that could impact the outreach focus for our church, and participating in the **Fan into Flame** campaign would help focus on outreach ministry, as well as provide some funds for future outreach efforts of the congregation.

Our pastors were very supportive, and approval was received from our Mission-Ministry Council. It was determined that our appeal would last seven weeks. As we considered which **Fan into Flame** appeal plan to use, it became evident that we could modify the cottage meeting approach to take place on Sunday mornings. Over a period of four weeks, we focused on sharing the Gospel message in the areas of our own Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth during Sunday worship.

Our Jerusalem focus was the VBS outreach in a Hispanic trailer court that would be held in June, as well as the local Heartland Lutheran High School. Our Judea focus was on the Nebraska District mission opportunities. Our Samaria focus was a group of members who worked at Camp Restore in New Orleans this year. Our Ends of the Earth focus was a member who went on a mission trip with LCMS World Mission to Kenya, Africa. Each of these groups presented a short presentation during our Sunday morning worship services and then shared their outreach ministry with the adult Bible class.

Our pastors focused on **Fan into Flame** through each sermon, and a **Fan into Flame** focused letter was sent to the congregation prior to our Commitment Sundays. We held two Commitment Sundays, and followed up several weeks after the completion of these with people who had indicated on the pledge card a desire to pray about their pledge/gift.

## Our Results

The Holy Spirit moved the hearts of God's people to recognize the outreach need and opportunity through *Ablaze!* and the **Fan into Flame** campaign to reach the *Ablaze!* goals. Peace Lutheran Church surpassed its \$70,000 goal and to date has received pledges/gifts of \$72,586!

## Our Outreach Plan

Peace Lutheran has not yet made a commitment for the 15% net mission outreach funds that will return to the congregation. However, the whole experience has been positive for our members and it has helped generate more interest in and a vision for the purpose of Peace Lutheran Church in Grand Island. Whether we are sharing Christ with our neighbor or sending money for a missionary abroad, the need for others to hear the saving message of Jesus Christ is our goal. We look forward to the plans God has for Peace Lutheran in using these **Fan into Flame** funds for His glory!



Dear Members of Christ,

Our risen Lord Jesus has given us a very clear mission – to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth. Unfortunately, churches can become so wrapped up in the maintenance of mortar, membership, and status quo that there are almost no resources left to carry out our God-given mission. Ordinary giving is consumed in the maintaining of the status quo of the Church. Thus, for The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod to carry out the extraordinary goals of *Ablaze!*, our church body is in need of extra-ordinary financial resources. ***Fan into Flame*** is the intentional process of doing just that – raising the necessary money to fund the mission of reaching the lost with the saving message of Jesus.

Peace Lutheran Church has a true mission heart. It's reflected in our congregation's budget and actions, as well as in our speech. This made ***Fan into Flame*** a natural fit for our congregation. I believe that is why Peace was asked to be a pace-setting congregation for the Nebraska District's campaign. The congregation's leadership responded with a resounding "Yes" to this request. Two months later the congregation repeated this "Yes," surpassing its goal by more than \$3,000.

***Fan into Flame*** gave Peace an opportunity to intentionally highlight the Mission of the entire Church over an extended period of time. This helped expand both our mission awareness and motivation to be about this mission. It also generated resources for us to use in our local mission field, as well as to the ends of the earth. ***Fan into Flame*** has become an extra-ordinary opportunity for the people of Peace to grow in their own mission commitment and to be part of an extra-ordinary mission effort within the LCMS. Now we are praying that this movement will bring extraordinary numbers of people into a saving relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ. I would encourage your congregation to prayerfully consider how you could benefit from participating in this unique mission opportunity.

Sometimes we reap God's greatest blessings through our reaching out to be a blessing to others. Of course, the only way to discover this is by reaching out. That's been the case here at Peace; I pray it will be for you also.

Pastor Kip Smith  
Interim Sr. Pastor  
Peace Lutheran Church  
Grand Island, NE