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Dear Partners in the Mission Field,

Summer is rapidly drawing to a close as children and parents prepare for the beginning of another academic year, football practice begins, and congregations plan for another year of Sunday school and Bible class. As I look back over the course of this year so far, I am amazed at the many ways in which God is blessing our Nebraska District through *Ablaze!* and ***Fan into Flame***. To date, Nebraska congregations and individual donors have committed \$2.13 million to ***Fan into Flame***. Praise God for these gifts over and above commitments to District and Synod that will provide for mission work in Nebraska, in the United States, and around the world.

Our records indicate that most of our Nebraska congregations have not committed to participate in this historic mission effort. We have heard from 80 congregations saying they have an interest in being involved with ***Fan into Flame***. A number of these 80 congregations, as well as many more, are undecided as to when and how they might create an opportunity for their members to respond.

So with fall and the beginning of Advent quickly approaching, **what can you do** to partner with other congregations to help provide offerings toward our district goal of \$6 million to support Lutheran Christian mission work in your community and around the world?

1. Review the enclosed documents and take ***Fan into Flame*** to your congregational leadership for prayerful consideration.
2. Consider making a pledge payable over the next 5 years using the enclosed pledge form.
3. At your approval meeting, vote to make a gift of new offerings of 10% of last year's budget pledged over 5 years.

Once the decision has been made to make a pledge or run an appeal, contact Andrea Essling at [Andrea.Essling@lcms.org](mailto:Andrea.Essling@lcms.org) or 888-643-2961 to share the information with her. Resources are available to help congregations as they make the decision and as they move into the implementation stage.

There are some incredible stories of what the Holy Spirit has already accomplished in Nebraska congregations where pastors and people have prayed and joined this mission-funding effort. What I am discovering is that God can do great things anywhere and in every congregation, *if we let Him*. ***Fan into Flame*** is an opportunity

for your congregation to witness once again the power of the Spirit in the lives of God's people. One pilot congregation's report is included with this letter. Other reports from Nebraska congregations that have completed appeals are available on the District website at [www.ndlcms.org](http://www.ndlcms.org).

I ask you to join with me in prayers of thanksgiving for the ears that will hear the saving message of Christ Jesus, the eyes that will read God's Word for the first time, the hearts that will be touched, and the lives that will be saved through the generosity of the people of Nebraska.

As the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians, "*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.*" (2 Corinthians 8:9) May God bless and empower you amid the great opportunities that are in front of us to share the Good News of salvation through Jesus with a world that does not yet know him as the Savior and Lord that He is!

Partnering with you in the Lord's Mission Field,

Rev. Russ Sommerfeld  
Nebraska District President

Enc. – *Next Steps* Informational Page  
Congregation Pledge Agreement Form  
First Trinity, Bloomfield, Profile