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Dear Mission Partner,

Lenten greetings to you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

As you know, the *Ablaze!* movement is the bold initiative sparked by LCMS World Mission within The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod to share the Good News of Jesus with 100 million people by the year 2017, the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. ***Fan into Flame*** will secure new funds to reach the lost through mission work locally, nationally, and internationally.

The District staff and the ***Fan into Flame*** steering committee recently met with Andrea Essling, professional counsel from Community Counseling Services (CCS), and Bill Lapp, senior principal gift officer from LCMS World Mission, to lay the framework on how ***Fan into Flame*** will roll out in the Nebraska District. As both Andrea and Bill travel throughout our District, I encourage you to welcome them into your congregations and work with them to ensure a successful campaign.

The steering committee, co-chaired by Linda Reiser and Rev. Chip Winter, has been hard at work recruiting Circuit Coordinators from District circuits. These coordinators will serve the congregations of their circuit as a resource person and voice of encouragement throughout the campaign. The circuit coordinators who have agreed to serve so far are:

Ainsworth Circuit – Rev. John Ryding, O'Neill
Beatrice Circuit – Rev. Charles Schmidt, Fairbury
Deshler Circuit – Rev. Paul Albrecht, Superior (tentative)
Falls City Circuit – Bruce Houghton and Rodney Robison, Pawnee City
Fremont Circuit – Glen and Mary Mueller, Fremont
Grand Island Circuit – Rev. Shawn Kitzing, Loup City
Kearney Circuit – Becky Mustard, Lexington
Lincoln Circuit – Rev. Brad Beckman, Lincoln
McCook Circuit – Rev. Gregory Stuckwisch, Wauneta
Norfolk Circuit – Bill and Bonnie Begeman, Norfolk
Omaha North Circuit – Rev. Ronald Holling, Omaha
Omaha West Circuit – Rev. Gary Werling, Gretna
Plainview Circuit – Rev. Duane Fahr, Bloomfield
Wayne Circuit – Rev. Terry Buethe, Wakefield
Western Sandhills Circuit – Dr. Marvin and Marcia Swan, Grant
York Circuit – Harold and Betty Renken, York

A complete listing will be printed in the April *Nebraska Lutheran Reporter*. As your congregation begins discussing the opportunities to participate in ***Fan into Flame***, feel free to contact your circuit coordinator with questions or for resources.

Congregations will be receiving more information about *Ablaze!* and ***Fan into Flame***, as well as an invitation to informational workshops to be held across the District in April and May. If you wish to learn more about this historic mission effort, please go online to the Nebraska District website, www.ndlcms.org, and follow the ***Fan into Flame*** link on the homepage.

I am excited about joining hands to spread the Good News to those who have not heard the saving Gospel message of His peace and love. I look forward to working with you on *Ablaze!* and ***Fan into Flame*** in the mission fields of the Nebraska District, and I pray God will use our efforts to enlarge His kingdom. I count on your leadership to engage your congregation to participate in this extraordinary mission effort. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you have.

Thank you.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Russ Sommerfeld
Nebraska District President