



The Nebraska District *Ablaze!* Update

September 4, 2008

Faith, Humboldt Steps Out Boldly

The Nebraska District, in response to the opportunities for new mission work God is placing before us, joyfully supports *Fan into Flame* to help provide resources for witnessing opportunities in the communities of Nebraska and throughout the world.

"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God."
2 Timothy 1:6a

Nebraska District
LCMS
PO Box 407
Seward NE 68434

888-643-2961
www.ndlcms.org

Faith Lutheran Church, Humboldt, was established 60 years ago. Our membership is 238 baptized and 181 communicant members. We are located in a small town with a declining population.

Several years ago, we paid off and burned our mortgage (early). While it felt good to achieve, it left our congregation with a void. We had worked for several years to build and pay for our new church. Now, we were floundering, looking for the right projects to take on. We supported various mission projects, but it just didn't seem to be with a passion.

We began hearing and reading about *Ablaze!* and *Fan into Flame* about the same time our pastor accepted a call in another state. We continued to read and hear about *Fan into Flame*. We had several members attend Prairie Fire events in Seward and brought more information back to the congregation.

Earlier this year, we had four members attend a circuit **FANTASTIC Festival** to learn more about *Fan into Flame*. We began posting and distributing *FIREWORKS: the Nebraska District Ablaze! Update*. As we learned what other congregations were doing, we knew we wanted to get involved in this mission opportunity.

We discussed *Fan into Flame* at a couple of church council meetings and then asked our vacancy pastor, Pastor Schermbeck, to start incorporating a *Fan into Flame* educational process into our church services. After several weeks, we prayerfully considered making a congregational pledge to *Fan into Flame*. After discussion about how we might raise the money, we voted to pledge \$5,000 over the next five years. The discussion showed that we will meet the goal with little effort and expect to do much more.

To date, we have ideas on how we will do this. Our new pastor was just installed. A lead committee consisting of our pastor, elders, chairman, and a couple of other leaders will develop our appeal campaign, which will happen this fall. We already know our plan will be a combination of fund raisers and personal appeals to our members.

A key factor will be to determine how we will expand our local mission activities with the portion of the money that will come back to our congregation.

We are excited to now have found the "something" that will fill the void we have experienced for several years. This is a wonderful cause and Faith Lutheran is going to be a part of it! Now we are anxious to learn God's plans for us. We know that even in this small, rural town, there is still a mission field just waiting for us (with God's help and direction).

Submitted by Dave Knorr, Chairman

Ablaze! Factoids

Looking for a way to begin *Ablaze!* education in your congregation? Share a few of these *Ablaze!* facts in your next bulletin.

1. *Ablaze!* is sharing the Good News of Jesus with people everywhere.
2. Every minute, 83 people die without knowing Christ, while 148 children are born who need the Good News of Jesus.
3. Only 49 percent of the adults in the U.S. belong to a Christian church. Nebraska church membership is nearly the same percentage.
4. The *Ablaze!* movement encourages the baptized to share Christ's love in word and deed.
5. The United States is the third largest mission field in the world. There are more Lutherans in Africa than in the U.S.
6. *Ablaze!* can start with something as simple as telling someone, "Jesus loves you."

* Statistics taken from the *Fan into Flame* National Case Brochure

Campaign Update

Commitments to date from individuals and congregations in Nebraska for *Fan into Flame* are \$2,233,395 as a result of 429 gifts.

National gifts and commitments to date total \$33.7 million.