

Dear Partner in Christ's Mission

Our Lord always “gets to the heart of the matter” when He interacts with people! Jesus clearly sees into the hearts of His disciples when He calls them to follow Him. He knew the heart of the Samaritan woman by Jacob’s well when He offered her living water. He saw and was saddened by the heart of Judas when they gathered as friends before Good Friday. He read the hearts of Mary and Martha when Mary was focused and Martha was distracted. He sees into our hearts too.

He sees our sin and He also sees the hearts of people He absolutely loves. It is the divine love He has for us that leads Him to the cross. It is this love we celebrate in Baptism, proclaim from His Word and share at the communion table. Getting to our hearts means bringing God’s saving grace directly to us! The words of the absolution bring us the assurance of God’s complete forgiveness and joyous freedom.

As Jesus gets to the heart of us, He changes our hearts and moves us to be His people in real life situations. Our words and deeds can reflect who we are and whose we are in this world. The Holy Spirit moves us to do and be what we would not do and be were it not the power of the Holy Gospel!

“Jesus said, ‘A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another,’” John 13:34-35.

Fan into Flame is an opportunity to live lives and make gifts that grow out of God’s love for us and our love for one another. It is a great discipleship opportunity that we are enjoying in the Indiana District! Though our district was not the first district to respond to this opportunity, we are striving to be a strong partner with our fellow LCMS districts in this effort.

We have a long and faithful history of sharing the Gospel Good News in this part of God’s world and beyond. We are blessed to see existing congregations daughter new congregations, cross-cultural ministry continue unabated, schools expand and many congregations working at revitalization! God is touching and moving the hearts of His people in this place to take a special role in the Wittenberg Project and support Latvian Lutherans in ministering to fellow brothers and sisters who have recently moved to Ireland from Latvia!

Even in these times, we are finding faithful and generous people within our congregations who are being moved by the Holy Spirit to use the *Fan into Flame* effort to demonstrate the love of Christ that burns within their hearts.

We understand that this is not an easy time to do all of this “fanning” and “discipleshiping.” We also understand that Jesus called us to take up our cross and follow Him — not for a walk in the park, but for a mission journey! May this same Lord who “gets to the heart of the matter” move our hearts to overflowing generosity as a response to His great love for us. Thank you LCMS for the partnership we share in Christ Jesus!

Rev. Daniel P. May
President, Indiana District



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Fan into Flame sparks mission outreach mindset in Wisconsin congregation

St. Paul Lutheran Church uses 'Jerusalem' funds to ignite service, mission events

It's quite rare for new pastors to arrive at their congregation with an account full of money "just waiting" to be spent on outreach. However, this is exactly what Rev. Chris Navurskis experienced several years ago. Pastor Chris, who began working as pastor of Youth and Evangelism at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Grafton, Wis., in 2007, was delighted to discover this funding designated for immediate use towards outreach ministry initiatives. Approximately 200 families at St. Paul pledged more than \$140,000 to the *Fan into Flame* campaign in 2006, as the South Wisconsin District was one of the pilot districts for the campaign. As with all LCMS congregational gifts to the campaign, a percentage is returned to the congregation for local outreach in the community.

St. Paul's high school youth serve in Biloxi, Miss.



High school youth of St. Paul are involved in mission and outreach in their community and beyond.

These funds can be used a number of ways, and Pastor Chris and the members were full of ideas.

When Pastor Chris realized that it had been several years since the congregation participated in a mission trip or servant event, he knew immediately that the *Fan into Flame* funds could provide the means for St. Paul members to serve in this way again.

In 2008, the congregation coordinated a bicycle ride to raise funds for a bridge in their community. More than 50 people participated. Through this event, they were able to reach out to the community by supplying for one of its needs and also becoming a greater presence in the neighborhood. The next year, they held a fundraiser for a local food bank. The last several years, they have led a vacation Bible school in a nearby town to share the Gospel with children in that area. In 2009 and 2010, the high school youth group traveled to Biloxi, Miss., to continue the clean-up efforts after Hurricane Katrina. With each of these activities, monies from *Fan into Flame* helped to cover the overhead costs and helped enable

members of St. Paul to personally engage in these new evangelism and ministry projects. Most recently, the group participated in a servant event in downtown Chicago to transform a parsonage basement into a youth room.

Pastor Chris shared his thankfulness for St. Paul's participation in the campaign. He said, "An initiative like this gave us the ability to jump out." He encourages other congregations to be bold when brainstorming ideas for community outreach. "There's no risk...it's all Gospel. It's the ability to stick your neck out and say, 'I'm going to go with this.'" The outreach events that the congregation held were able to "shape the next generation of leaders." He suggests that if you don't know what to do, "just start moving" and windows and doors of opportunity will open for you to share God's love.

As the congregation continues to fulfill their *Fan into Flame* pledges, quarterly checks returned to St. Paul will be applied to help youth and adults at St. Paul continue reaching out to their neighbors with the Good News of the Gospel. To learn more about St. Paul Lutheran Church, visit <http://splgrafton.org>.





Redeemer Lutheran Church in Fort Collins, Colo., carries out multi-site strategy to reach more people with the Gospel

Fan into Flame funding provided initial support for starting second congregation in nearby Greeley

October 10, 2010 was a memorable day for a Colorado congregation. At 10:00 a.m., on the day the calendar read 10/10/10, Redeemer Lutheran Church in Fort Collins, Colo., launched a new site for worship in the nearby community of Greeley. This second site was the result of several years of prayer, planning meetings, community engagement and intentional outreach. That morning, 204 people came to worship and hear the Gospel preached at a local elementary school—which, at the time, served as the temporary facility.

Today, Redeemer's Greeley campus has a permanent location in a prominent business park. The average worship attendance is more than 100 people each week, including many non-churched families from the community. Since the worship service launched in October, 11 new families have joined the congregation, and approximately 35 families have heard the Gospel for the very first time.

As an *Ablaze!* Covenant Congregation, Redeemer is partnering with LCMS mission leaders, the Rocky Mountain District and other partners to plant additional daughter congregations by 2017, the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. This is part of the LCMS goal to plant 2,000 new congregations in the United States. To this end, Redeemer received a \$50,000 start-up grant from the *Fan into Flame* campaign.

Rev. Matt Blackford, who serves as Redeemer's associate pastor/director of multi-site ministries, has led the development and implementation of multi-site ministry at Redeemer. He works in collaboration with Rev. Gerry Harrow, the Greeley site pastor; Rev. Tim Runtsch, senior pastor; and other leaders on staff and in the church to fulfill Redeemer's mission of "Connecting people to Jesus." He shares that the *Fan into Flame* campaign gave Redeemer a "kick-start to reach the community" that would have otherwise been a challenge. The funds were initially put to use to cover basic costs such as facility rental, furniture and advertising.

Planning for the Greeley site launch began in 2008, when Redeemer initially committed to be an *Ablaze!* Covenant Congregation. From that point on, the core leadership team began praying and planning ways to connect with the community. In April 2010, the leadership team focused their efforts on developing a true community presence. This happened through interest gatherings, community concerts, Habitat for Humanity service trips



Above: Pastor Gerry Harrow (center) recognized at his ordination service. Left: Redeemer's permanent worship site in a business park in Greeley.



Left: Before securing a permanent site in Greeley, worship took place at Monfort Elementary School. Right: Redeemer members are intentional about serving and building relationships in their community.

and more. Through radio announcements, newspaper ads, social media and word of mouth, the Greeley site grew from an idea to a core group of worshipers.

Pastor Matt encourages other congregations to “keep it simple” with their Gospel outreach in the community. “Offer less that goes deeper, rather than more that is shallow. This will have a greater result.” He explains that their simple approach—using weekly worship, small groups and outreach events—has helped members of Redeemer to develop deep relationships with the community and therefore has created more frequent opportunities for sharing the Good News of God’s love with their friends and neighbors.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, God’s Word is being proclaimed in this community and is growing in the hearts of its people. While there is no designated

“evangelism committee” at Redeemer, Pastor Matt shares that “the evangelism committee is the church, and everyone is expected to contribute.” He adds, “Everything we do is about mission. We want to get people connected not just to a church, but to a lifestyle that reflects Christ in the community.”

In the future, Redeemer is planning additional events to connect with the community. They are sponsoring Lifetree Café, which will be an informal setting for people to join together and discuss relevant and perhaps difficult topics people are facing in everyday life. The café will be aimed specifically at unchurched individuals in the area.

To learn more about Redeemer Lutheran Church and their multi-site ministry, visit www.redeemerconnect.com.

Worshippers gather inside Greeley’s new facility.



Mid-South District establishes church-planting fund and shares first grant



With their “Judea” funds received by the Mid-South District through their congregations’ participation in the *Fan into Flame* campaign, the district has established a church-planting fund to provide support for new church plants throughout the district. The Groteluschen Fund, as it has been named, honors the Rev. Norman L. Groteluschen, who served the Mid-South District as

executive secretary for missions from 1975-1985 and then as district president from 1985-1991. During these years, 32 new congregations were established in the district. Based on his experience, Pastor Groteluschen established many of the church planting and church planter criteria that now serve as the guidelines for the awarding of grants from the fund.

The first grant from the newly-established Rev. Norman L. Groteluschen Church Planting Fund was awarded on March 30, 2011, to Christ Lutheran Church in Siloam Springs, Ark. The congregation will use the grant to assist their church planter/vicar, Terry Held, with educational expenses as he moves toward ordination by way of the LCMS’ Specific Ministry Pastor program. Members of Christ Lutheran shared that Vicar Held brings with him “an enthusiastic sense of mission, a genuine love of people and a heartfelt desire to proclaim the Good News.” Christ Lutheran was chartered in November 2010. During its brief history, the congregation has already outgrown its first three meeting places. They have been blessed by 17 Baptisms and nine affirmations of faith. Currently, there are five youth in confirmation class.

To learn more about the Rev. Norman L. Groteluschen Church Planting Fund, please contact Allen Helms at 866-373-1343 or ahelms@mid-southlcms.com.



Christ Lutheran Church in Siloam Springs, Ark., receives the first grant from the fund.

Indiana District supports mission outreach in Ireland through Latvian church partnership



Through their participation in the *Fan into Flame* campaign, the members and congregations of the Indiana District have provided support towards mission work being carried out in Dublin, Ireland, in partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia (ELCL). The ELCL especially recognizes Ireland as a mission field because of its 50,000-plus population of Latvian immigrants. Latvian pastors who have served there share that workers and their families who move to Ireland for new job opportunities are far from home, don’t know many people and are more open to spiritual matters than they may be in their home country.

Pastor Ugis Bruklene, of the ELCL, is the full-time missionary in Ireland. (He is pictured above on the left with President May of the Indiana District, center, and LCMS missionary Rev. Mark Krause.) In 2010, more than 100 Latvians living in Ireland were confirmed in the Lutheran church. Additionally, more than 20 children and adults were baptized into God’s family in December 2010. Currently, the mission rents space in the building of a traditionally German Lutheran congregation in Dublin. Rev. Krause, who serves in the Baltic nations of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, writes, “It amazes me every time I visit [Ireland] how God is developing the leadership of this small congregation. I believe this church plant will become a model for church planting in Latvia. God is truly forming a special congregation that is reaching out to the thousands of Latvians living in Ireland. I thank the Lord that He has given us the opportunity to help.”

Southeastern District reaches faith-sharing milestone

Did you know that the Southeastern District recently reported an exciting faith-sharing milestone? Deaconess Sally Hiller shared, “Members of congregations, schools and missions have reported 769,806 faith-sharing events—surpassing our goal for the 2012 district convention of 750,000 and on our way to our overall goal of 2.5 million faith-sharing events by 2017, the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.” Give thanks to God for providing opportunities for sharing the Gospel! To share your own faith-sharing story, visit www.lcms.org/ablaze.

Today’s Campaign Subtotal

\$64,000,000 in gifts and pledges

SUMMER 2011

UPDATE NEWS



**You will receive the next and final
Fan into Flame Update News in
late 2011, after the close of the active
campaign on Reformation Day 2011.**

For more news and information:
www.fanintoflamecms.org



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