



A Bi-Weekly Ablaze! publication from the CNH District - LCMS
December 6, 2007

Ablaze! for God's Mission, in partnership with **Fan Into Flame** is a movement to inspire individuals and congregations in the CNH District to respond as recipients of God's abundant grace through the sharing of resources in the work of mission.

Fan Into Flame

LCMS Fan Into Flame Goal: \$100,000,000.
CNH District Goal: \$3,500,000.

Campaign Update
Commitments from individuals & congregations to date:

CNH District: \$856,070.
LCMS Worldwide: \$25,817,797.



Ablaze! and Fan Into Flame Resources:

- [Ablaze! Start Up Kit](#)
- [Fan Into Flame Campaign Manuals](#)
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- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Profiles from successful campaigns in other LCMS congregations](#)

Bethel Grace- San Francisco - First CNH Congregation Completes Fan into Flame Appeal

"*Appealing to the heart*", that was the goal of Bethel Grace Lutheran Ministries of San Francisco when it launched the *Fan into Flame* appeal. Wanting to financially support the ongoing mission efforts of LCMS World Mission and the CNH District, Bethel Grace congregation set a goal of \$12,500-\$15,000-10% of its annual general offering.

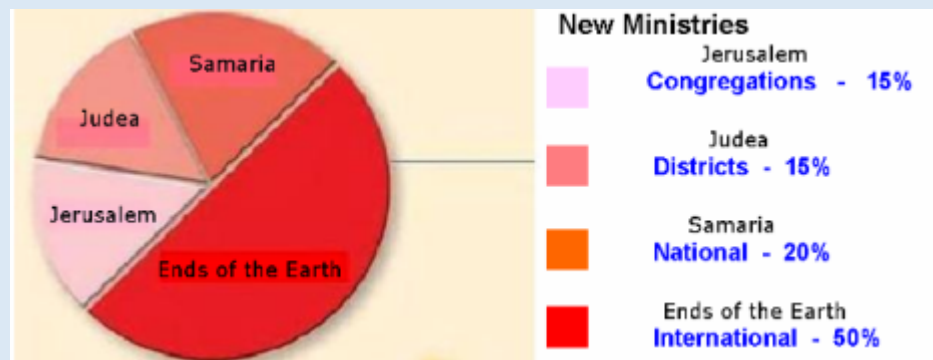
Bethel Grace took the simplest approach by utilizing Plan 3, which consisted of a variety of weekly worship service announcements by lay leaders, bulletin inserts, newsletter articles and two informational letters asking for prayerful participation conducted over a six- to eight-week period.

On Pledge Sunday, nineteen families pledged a total of \$25,210-168% of the \$15,000 goal! And to date, four additional pledges have been received-bringing the total to \$30,710, or 205% of the original goal!

Individuals shared that they were pleased that the *Fan into Flame* appeal was not "pushed down their throats" or "promoted as another program" or "motivated by guilt." Rather, it was appealing to the hearts of God's people at Bethel Grace to be a part of the *Ablaze!* movement to "spread the Good News of Jesus with 100 million unreached or uncommitted people by the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017!"

While the entire appeal took only several weeks to complete, it was more a part of the ongoing transformation of the congregation during the past three years to become more missional. Building on the *Ablaze!* Initiative, Bethel Grace has already planted a large cross-cultural mission among Chinese people and is hoping to do the same among Hispanic people. The congregation completed the "*50 Days Ablaze! Mission Outreach Journey*" in early 2006 to help individuals grow in their spiritual faith and commitment, and it has also participated in refocus and renewal activities of the CNH district. The congregation's generous response was a natural next step in its transformation from congregation to mission outpost.

Rev. Terrence Chan
Missionary/Lead Pastor
Bethel Grace Lutheran Ministries



*Circuit Convocations -
Mark Your Calendars!*

DATE CIRCUIT #

Feb. 9	1
Jan. 26	2
Mar. 1	3
Jan. 5	4 & 19
Mar. 9	6
Jan. 20	7
Feb.10	8 & 18
Jan. 19	9
Feb. 23	13
Feb. 24	14
Jan. 13	15
Dec. 1	16
Feb. 2	17
Feb.10	18 & 8
Jan. 5	19 & 4

[Click here for more details](#)

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What Your Fan Into Flame Dollars will Fund . . .

From its beginning, CNH has served on the "missionary frontier" of the LCMS. The congregations of the CNH District still serve on the missionary frontier. Over the past decade the total baptized and confirmed membership of our CNH congregations has declined by nearly 10%. This trend does not reflect a lack of evangelical intention among our Lutheran congregations. It signals, however, that a challenge lies before our district to create ministries that intentionally reach out to serve our communities. The cultural bridges that once brought unchurched people to us have collapsed and we struggle to sustain connections between our churches and our communities.

As Christ's missionary people, three significant challenges lay before us:

1. To be outreach churches in an unchurched society, that is, in a society where the Christian church no longer holds significant cultural meaning or value.
2. To confess our Cross centered faith not only in the arena of the Christian Church, but also in the arenas of other religions and religious pluralism.
3. To shift from ministry roles of clergy and laity commonly associated with a church environment to roles regularly employed on mission fields.

In partnership with The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod *Ablaze!* goals for the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, our district has initiated the *Fan into Flame* initiative with a goal of raising \$3.5 million to benefit missions internationally, nationally, and throughout our district and congregations.

At the heart of *Fan into Flame* is Jesus' final instruction to His disciples: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Accordingly, LCMS World Mission has defined the following areas to target and direct the funds raised by the *Fan into Flame* campaign:

The CNH District joins with other Missouri Synod Lutherans throughout our Synod in support of the *Fan into Flame* campaign. Consider this appeal as your personal invitation to covenant with the CNH District in this historical endeavor.

Voice of Grace - An Appeal for Ethiopia by Rev. Dereje Fantaye

I left Ethiopia at the eve of the new Ethiopian millennium which was Sept 12, 2007 or Sept 1, 2000 (EC). The city was decorated with streetlights, slogans saying "Drought will be a past history", "our children will have a better Ethiopia" etc. and pictures of the leaders for the past 1000 years were posted at Meskel square. The streets of Addis Ababa were full of people to welcome the new millennium, with hopes to see changes. They hope for peace, economic growth, unity and prosperity. Does the new Ethiopian millennium celebrated on September 12, 2007, by itself will bring a change in people's life? I don't think so; people have to obey God to bring a blessing to a nation. God will bless a nation when people repent and change their evil way of living. Then, I ask myself another question; 'will God bless Ethiopia in my lifetime'? For that I have no specific answer, but nothing is impossible for God. I believe that the church of Christ in Ethiopia will rise and shine in this new century. "Ethiopia will stretch her hand to God".

The harvest is ready and time to gather the harvest is now. People are coming to the church in hundreds. Freedom to preach the gospel is granted. Every one is hungry for the Word of God. The letters received from our radio listeners request more time and spiritual

literature. Thousands of people traveled for three days to attend our evangelistic crusade and hear the Word of God for three days in an open air field. Correspondence classes, regular and center students are committed to studying the Word of God.

It is time to act for God. Maybe you have a wish that the whole world to be evangelized but not able to go to a mission field, here is an opportunity to be a part of this great mission work. You can pray for the work of GEOM in Ethiopia and beyond, or you can support a missionary who is willing to go to a mission field - to see what is going on the field and feel the power of the Holy Spirit.

As a president and founder of Grace Ethiopian Outreach Ministry, I would like to appeal to all Christian brothers and sisters to support Grace Ethiopian Outreach Ministry, which is ready to train 5000 church leaders in the next 5 years. We have more than twenty-five centers all over the country of Ethiopia, and three in other parts of the Africa. So far 3,400 Christians have received their training from this ministry. Most of the graduates are in certificate level; however, they want to continue their Biblical studies. These students are not like full time students, they do their daily work on their farm or business from Monday to Friday, and then they go to the centers on weekends to learn the Word of God.

I urge you to consider helping these students, who are the future and hope of the Church and peace of the world. Most of our graduates are already in the field reaching out to Muslim fundamentalists with the Good News and some of them experience hardships and excommunication. It is one thing to pray, but it is also equally important to take action and give some assistance to the ministry.

Do you want the Animist and non-Christians to come to Christ and have eternal life? This is a good opportunity for you and your family to support the radio program called *Voice of Grace* which is on the air for seven days a week for 15minutes each day. If you support this ministry you know that your generous gift will be to a wonderful cause, which is, the continuity of Christianity in this historical land. Church history tells us that North Africa was once upon a time a center of Christianity, but now the power of Islam has covered all of the North Africa nations except Ethiopia. I believe Ethiopia will not be dominated by Muslims, like Egypt, Nubian (Sudan), Somali and Djibouti. With hard prayer against the power of darkness, and doing evangelism, the light of the Gospel will be transmitted to this nation in the coming century. The time is now and the person is you.

(For further information, contact Rev. Fantaya by email at:
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HMONG OUTREACH MINISTRIES NEWS

by Rev. Kou Seying

We have been busy with leadership trainings and new mission developments. Lutheran Worship and Bible & Basic Principles of Biblical Interpretation were the last two modules of leadership training. When leaders come together, not only do they learn from the instructor but they learn from each other as well, which is equally important. There are many "aha!" experiences for the leaders that come together in these training sessions. Learning what is Christian worship and why we do what we do in Lutheran worship was such a meaningful experience for many of the leaders that attended the worship module. Such comments as "I did not know that," or "I learned something new today" were common refrains throughout the training sessions.

Three men had been moved by the Holy Spirit to enter the pastoral ministry. Locheng Thao of St. Andrew, Stockton, CA, is currently enrolled in the Concordia University-Irvine pastoral certification program; it is a Master of Culture and Theology degree program. This is a distance

education program that allows the students to remain at home to continue carrying out their ministry. Vue Lee of St. Paul, Merced, CA, has been accepted into the Pre-Seminary Studies program at Concordia University, St. Paul, MN. Soun See of Grace, Visalia from our Lahu Shi group is entering the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (EIIT) program from our St. Louis seminary, which is a distance education program. He will continue to serve the Lahu Shi congregation at Grace as he begins his pastoral studies.

By the grace of God, many people are inquiring about our church (LC-MS) and wish to join us. Maykou and I have been busy talking and visiting with potential new ministry starts throughout the Valley. Recently, a group in the Fresno area has decided that they would like to join the LC-MS. We praise God for their responses to the call of the Gospel. It is with joy to see that the radio ministry plays an important role in the outreach efforts of our ministries. For an example, by the time Maykou and I actually see the people face to face they already knew us and heard us via our radio program. People greeted us very warmly and were so glad to see the faces behind the voices. Not only the radio program serves to pave the way for outreach and new ministry starts, but it plays an important role in nurturing for many Christians across the country and around the world via the internet.

We finally received word from Sacramento that time slots have been opened for broadcasting *Light of Life*, our radio program. We thank God for answering our prayers. We have been seeking a broadcast time in Sacramento for many months, and finally we are working out the details to begin broadcasting. Many more thousands will have the opportunities to hear God's Word on a weekly basis.

In the midst of busy, busy, busy, with ministries and other worldly concerns such as the yearly budget uncertainty, it is easy to overlook what God has been doing in the lives of people that He had used our ministries to reach. We do want to pause a moment to give God thanks and praises for what He has done through our outreach ministries in the three short years. God's new people in the faith are being fed through Word and Sacraments ministry stretching from Fresno to Sacramento. Leaders are being trained. God is calling men to serve as shepherds for His flocks. The Good News is being heard via the radio program. People are responding to God's Word positively in many areas.

LCMS launches Operation Barnabas to serve military veterans

New initiative equips congregations to help soldiers returning from the battlefield)

By: Kim Plummer Krull of LCMS World Relief and Human Care

Equipping congregations for the critical role they can play in helping military chaplains and other veterans returning from battlefields is the goal of a new initiative by two ministries of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS).

"Everyone who goes into a war zone and returns home needs a period of readjustment," said Chaplain Mark Schreiber, director of Ministry to the Armed Forces, LCMS World Mission-which developed the program in partnership with LCMS World Relief and Human Care. "Too many Vietnam veterans returned and were not taken care of. Today, we're more sensitive to needs and how we as a church can help."

Assisting pastors called to active duty as Reserve and National Guard chaplains is the initial focus of Operation Barnabas, named for the apostle who accompanied St. Paul on his first missionary journey. The name Barnabas means "son of encouragement."

"The Gospel is deep and rich and gives us strength, but chaplains and pastors are still human beings who get tuckered out," said Operation Barnabas Project Manager Mike Moreno, a Navy chaplain who served 7½ years on active duty, including in Iraq. "They need a little down time to reconnect with their families and catch their breath."

The second phase will expand Operation Barnabas to all Reserve and National Guard soldiers who are members of LCMS congregations. Plans are to place liaisons-most likely Reserve or retired military chaplains-in all 35 LCMS districts to work with congregations to offer support to soldiers and their families.

According to Schreiber, the LCMS is one of the first national church bodies to address the role congregations can play in helping veterans make a positive transition from active duty.

Congregations can be a powerful source of support and healing-especially for the large number of Reserve and National Guard personnel whose service has changed from "weekend warriors" to almost certain overseas deployment. Operation Barnabas focuses on those men and women because they typically live far from military bases and accompanying services.

"All too often, reservists 'fall between the cracks' and may not get the help and resources they so richly deserve," Moreno said.

Operation Barnabas also aims to help congregations reach out to veterans struggling with anxieties related to their war-zone experience. But while all returning soldiers need time to adjust to life back home, most will not suffer from the clinical diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome.

"Congregations don't need to be 'on guard' about their pastors and members who return from active duty, but realize that a re-entry period is important and that resources are available that can offer support," said Rev. John Fale, associate executive director of LCMS World Relief and Human Care and a certified pastoral counselor.

Numbers are difficult to determine, but most-if not all-LCMS congregations have members serving in the military overseas, including in Iraq and Afghanistan. More than 100 LCMS pastors serve as Reserve chaplains, according to the ministry partners. For information about Operation Barnabas, contact LCMS World Mission's Ministry to the Armed Forces at (800) 433-3954.

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