

Our Church

First Trinity was established in 1895 in the town of Bloomfield, Nebraska, for children of God from the town and country to come to worship the Lord. First Trinity has a membership of 410 baptized souls, with 346 confirmed.



Our Plan

We wanted to complete our appeal before the busy July and August months of vacations and fairs. Pastor and the elders of First Trinity wanted to participate in the work of the LCMS and help take the love of Jesus to the world. Pastor began by including *Ablaze!* stories in his sermons in April. He also took *Nebraska Mission Stories* off the web page and included a *Nebraska Mission Moment* in the service.

When the time came for our ***Fan into Flame*** appeal, the elders decided to have four cottage meetings, each hosted by one of the elders and their wives or the chairman and his wife. Letters were sent to everyone in the congregation inviting them to a cottage meeting. We promised that the evening would not last over one hour, and we kept our promise. The turnout to these cottage meetings was tremendous, with two-thirds of our average worship attendance present at the gatherings! Praise the Lord!

Pastor Fahr led the cottage meetings, sharing that we all have some bad days, but that every day without Jesus is a bad day. We showed the ***Fan into Flame*** video, including the message from Rev. Robert Roegner, Executive Director LCMS World Mission. The members present were asked to share as God had blessed them, and they were asked to pray about making a commitment to ***Fan into Flame***. Everyone took a commitment card and envelope home with encouragement to return them within a couple of days. After these meetings, people were left to prayerfully consider the mission opportunity before them and were not contacted again unless they had questions.

Our Results

Almighty God, in His Spirit and power, worked through His people. The total pledges received from God's people came to \$34,695, with \$14,365 already paid! God is truly using His people at First Trinity to continue sharing the love of Christ with the world.

First Trinity's Mission

First Trinity has not fully decided where they are going to use their part of the ***Fan into Flame*** mission money. The following suggestions were made at the cottage meetings: (1) Take a bus trip to Mission Central in Iowa and present a *Mission Check* to a missionary; (2) Make a promotional video of First Trinity to present at our Annual Live Nativity Presentation which is given to the surrounding community; (3) Support one of our own members who might want to be a missionary in a foreign country; and other suggestions are still being sought out.

Participation in ***Fan into Flame*** has been a very positive experience for the members of First Trinity. Once again, we witnessed God working through us to share the love of Jesus Christ. And the best part of it all is that God is not finished with us yet. He is going to continue to use us in our community as we share His love using the ***Fan into Flame*** mission money coming back to First Trinity.

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By God's grace I have been serving First Trinity for four and a half years. During this time I have seen God working in the lives of His people. He has brought them from a quiet, reserved group of people to be mission-minded servants of Jesus.

When I was asked if First Trinity would be a pilot congregation for the Nebraska District ***Fan into Flame*** campaign, the Lord moved me to believe that the timing was just right for First Trinity. Two years ago the mortgage to the fellowship hall was burned and last year God blessed us with paying for a new sound system, screen, new hymnals and new front steps. With no debt and a time to give thanks to God, this new mission endeavor would be perfect for God's people.

While we didn't know exactly what to expect, the elders agreed to give this a try. We went into this with the understanding that we would present the ***Fan into Flame*** campaign to God's people and then let God work in them and see what He wanted us to do.

First Trinity's elders were very much involved in this campaign. They encouraged members to attend a cottage meeting and took part themselves by being there and providing refreshments.

The Lord brought more people than expected to our cottage meetings. With an average worship attendance of 120, we ended up with 80 members at our meetings!!! Praise the Lord!

The evening was spent with me sharing a presentation of what the *Ablaze!* and ***Fan into Flame*** was all about. I included two videos from the ***Fan into Flame*** DVD. I also shared how easy it would be to reach our goal if God used His people to share just a little.

After the first cottage meeting we had reached our goal, with three more cottage meetings to go. Everyone sat in church astounded at what God was doing. When all the campaign envelopes were turned in, the Lord had used His people by pledging \$34,695 toward a \$10,000 goal. Gifts already given total \$14,365!

We are now excited about what we will do with the 15% that will come back to First Trinity. While we aren't fully decided yet on what we will use that for, I know the Lord has something very special for us to do.

Once again, I have seen that God's people want to serve Him. They want to help tell the world about Jesus Christ. Congregations need an encouraging shepherd who will share with them what they can do and how they can work in God's kingdom to be part of the mission of God's church.

I would encourage any pastor and any congregation to learn more about the *Ablaze!* movement and how they can be involved in telling the world about Jesus. Please let God do the work in His people, and then sit back and watch what He will do in and through them.

It is my prayer that many more congregations will have the joy of giving to the work of the Lord, just as the people of First Trinity have had that joy and will continue to share Christ with the world.

In Him,
Pastor Duane Fahr