



## **Trinity Lutheran Church**

## **Broken Arrow, OK**

### **Our Church**

Trinity was established in November of 1983. Located in a large southeastern suburb of Tulsa, we are blessed with a group of active believers who serve Christ diligently. Besides our Sunday worship and Sunday school, our people have shown their love for their Lord by presenting a program on Wednesdays that serves food and then offers the Word to children and adults of all ages. Our congregation has 437 communicant souls, 448 baptized members, and averages more than 200 worshipers on Sunday mornings.

### **Our Plan**

As a pilot congregation in *Fan into Flame*, we wanted to complete our appeal before the summer months, and it was already late February 2007. A lover of missions and well-respected member, Bruce Begitschke, agreed to be our Campaign Chairman. His enthusiasm was vital. Sitting down together, Pastor David Cloeter, Pastor Harold Klawitter, and Bruce set a goal for our congregation at \$60,000, which is about 13% of our annual income.

We made a list of potential early donors, and Bruce made several visits to these individuals. At the same time we held cottage meetings in the homes of seven members, as well as two at Trinity. Bruce trained seven members to assist him in making the presentations. These cottage meetings took place over just two weeks!

### **Our Results**

Initially, we asked a certain member to be on our planning committee. He said he could not. But immediately he volunteered to be a donor, and he and his wife gave a wonderful gift. Others followed their lead. Most of the early pledges came from the hosts of our cottage meetings and from the presenters we trained. We had cottage meetings of various sizes which were valuable because many of these who attended were moved to participate.

Going into Commitment Sunday we had \$31,000 in pledges from 12 individuals or families. By the end of our first Commitment Sunday, our pledges stood at \$87,000 on our \$60,000 goal! Little did we know that the Lord was working in the hearts of many individuals to support this mission campaign!

On the second Commitment Sunday, we reported God's blessings to the congregation. We invited those who had been out of town the previous week, or who needed more time to prayerfully consider participation, to make a pledge. **In the end our totals were:**

- Goal- \$60,000
- Raised- \$113,878
- Gifts- 64
- Average Gift- \$1,779
- Amount received for local outreach- \$15,373

Ideas for using our local outreach money include constructing an outreach resource center, community mailings, and developing a Strategic Ministry Plan.

Participation in *Fan into Flame* has been a positive experience for our congregation. It demonstrated to our members the love of our people for mission work and their willingness to unite and exceed what we believed to be a challenging goal.

# Rev. David R. Cloeter

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Our Oklahoma District resolved to participate in our Synod's ***Fan into Flame*** appeal in 2007. As the year began, our Visitation Pastor, the semi-retired Pastor Harold Klawitter, showed interest in the campaign and spoke positively about it to our members. He also made the first commitment of our congregation, indicating the value of the campaign to himself. Though I knew very little about ***Fan into Flame***, I believed that any support of foreign and national mission work would be a blessing to the spread of the Gospel, and to our church body. Pastor Klawitter also had expressed that, in his experience, congregations that generously support mission work do not lose out financially. Early in the year our voters agreed to run the campaign in our congregation, serving as a pilot congregation in our circuit.

There were two challenges. As we entered into the appeal, we knew little about the campaign's goals. Second, we were entering into the Lenten season leading up to Easter, thus time was short. By the time we looked seriously at the material, we realized that we would have to jump on things right away if we were to complete the appeal before the summer months. We would have to carry this out expeditiously!

The Lord blessed us with an appeal chairman who was committed to mission work and the vision of ***Fan into Flame***, Bruce Begitschke. At the same time we were blessed by the willing assistance of the ***Fan into Flame*** Campaign Leadership for the Oklahoma District. Their help was invaluable in helping us make a plan and showing us the resources we needed to carry out the campaign. Pastor Klawitter's ongoing support was much appreciated. In addition, Patti Story agreed to be our Appeal Secretary, who was extremely organized and detail orientated.

For publicity, we used newsletter and bulletin articles in the Public Relations Manual and those written by the District, which provided inserts for the bulletin. Before our cottage meetings began, we mailed out the ***Fan into Flame*** trifold brochure, along with a list of the times and locations of the cottage meetings. In the last four weeks of the appeal, Bruce made reports after each service, encouraging participation.

When attendance at the cottage meetings was lower than expected, we decided, the week before Commitment Sunday, to pass out the special packets that included the Synod and District case statements, along with the sheet called Frequently Asked Questions and the *Ablaze!* Update newspaper. We are thankful we got the information out.

We have several initial ideas of what to do with the net 15% that will come back to our congregation. But I would have urged participation even if no money would come back to us.

Perhaps it is helpful for you to know that we have been running behind our budget this year. I viewed that concern as completely separate from participation in this campaign. Pledges to ***Fan into Flame*** are special, beyond regular offerings. We will trust God to help us with deal with the budget question.

I would urge you to find several members who love the Lord and the mission of reaching the lost worldwide, obtain their assistance, and allow your members to listen to the campaign and participate as the Lord moves in their hearts.

Rev. David R. Cloeter  
Senior Pastor