



*The Case
for Support*



*Pacific Southwest
District*

Our Mission

The mission of the Pacific Southwest District is to effectively resource congregations and schools to fulfill the Great Commission.

Abilaze[®]

**An initiative to ignite
100 million hearts with the Gospel!**

The Pacific Southwest District

The Pacific Southwest District is one of 35 Districts in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Originally known as the Southern California District, the geographical area of the Pacific Southwest District includes Arizona, Southern California, and Clark County Nevada. We are a diverse district composed of 300-plus ministries, of which 81 are culture-specific (African-American, Arabic, Asian Indian, Brazilian, Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Hispanic, Indonesian, International, Jewish, Korean, Muslim, Native American, Vietnamese). Approximately 70 of those ministries worship in a language other than English.

Within the Pacific Southwest District, there are 200 schools (preschool, elementary, high school) with a combined total of 24,000 students. Concordia University, located in Irvine, Calif., is one of 10 universities in the LCMS higher education system.

Our Church Today

Today, the 300 congregations of the Pacific Southwest District, together with their educational institutions and other agencies, are reaching out with the Gospel in a diversity of settings. In most cases, the communities served by our ministries are very different from what they were 20 years ago. Our Pacific southwest region continues to grow with a population representing many different nationalities. We recognize that this presents us with new opportunities and challenges for spreading the Gospel to individuals and people groups whose cultural and native language differ from our own.

Right now, congregations in our district are working diligently to embrace new occasions to share the Good News. We seek to reach across cultures, in newly developing suburban communities and in urban areas with dramatic demographical changes.

The mission of the Pacific Southwest District is to effectively resource congregations and schools to fulfill the Great Commission. Working together as God's people, we will continue to connect people across our district with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Mission Challenge

Christ commissioned the church to preach the Gospel to all nations. The message of repentance and forgiveness is unchanging. Reaching out with a

clear proclamation of His Word and faithfulness to the Lutheran Confessions is a joyous and powerful calling.

Through our support and participation in the *Ablaze!* movement, we seek to assist congregations, church leaders, and special ministries throughout our communities and the world to reach out to those who have never had the opportunity to hear the teachings of Christ. We support the *Ablaze!* movement in its worldwide effort to initiate 100 million direct encounters with the Gospel, called "Critical Events," between Christians and those who have not heard the Good News.

The Pacific Southwest District serves the fastest growing area of the United States with new communities continuing to arise, each welcoming a host of nationalities with approximately 80 percent having no relationship with a Christian church. The district does not start missions, but comes alongside *Ablaze!* Covenant Congregations to assist them in new church plants in rapidly growing areas or to a new cultural group. While we have a strong history of school and cross-cultural ministry, we have so much more we can do to serve our members in fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Our Needs

Throughout the district, several areas of our Mission Plan will require new funding from Pacific Southwest District members. Confessing that Jesus is the head of the church and gives growth to His kingdom, the Pacific Southwest District Steering Committee asks for the Spirit's blessing on our *Ablaze!* Mission Plan, which will be formally implemented in 2009 through 2017. In order to fulfill our Mission Plan, the district seeks to raise **\$3 million** in order to fully fund the following mission projects. Our goal for *Fan into Flame* is to secure a minimum of \$1.5 million in the next three to five years to launch these ministries.

Planting New Churches:

In response to the burgeoning population and the unchurched and/or uncommitted people the Holy Spirit has placed in our midst, we have already partnered with congregations to start new churches in the following areas:

- Buckeye, Arizona
- Verrado, Arizona
- Lancaster/Palmdale, California

- Blue Diamond, Nevada
- Vail, Arizona
- Alpine, California
- Chino Valley, Arizona
- Indio (Coachella Valley), California

While we are proud of these eight new starts, we realize these are but initial steps in doing all we can to reach the lost.

Therefore, with new funds raised during *Fan into Flame*, we plan to plant new churches in the following areas:

- Maricopa, Arizona
- Edgewater, California
- North Las Vegas, Nevada
- Northwest Surprise, Arizona
- Sun City Festival, Arizona

Church planting does not happen by itself. A new congregation start today involves the calling of a church planter, the gathering of a core group, space, and equipment rental. As the cost can be overwhelming, the district through the Regional Mission Council provides grants to assist *Ablaze!* Covenant Congregations defray the initial outlay. It often takes three to five years and between \$250,000 and \$500,000 per congregation. It can also cost \$50,000 annually to pay the rent and related expenses for worship at a new church plant. For each new ministry to effectively market to its mission field, an additional \$10,000 will be required.

Through new *Fan into Flame* gifts to our district, we plan to walk alongside *Ablaze!* Covenant Congregations and partner with them to start these new ministries.

Cross-Cultural Ministries

Currently 70 of our congregations have at least one worship service in a language other than English. In fact, we are blessed with 278 different ethnic groups represented by the people in Los Angeles alone! The Pacific Southwest District has representation mainly from 13 cultural groups, which include:

- Hispanic
- Korean
- Chinese
- African American

- African Immigrant
- Ethiopian
- Vietnamese
- Asian Indian
- Native American
- Armenian
- Cambodian
- Indonesian
- Taiwanese

New cross-cultural outreach is happening throughout our district's many communities. It requires up to \$50,000 to provide for a new cross-cultural church planter for one year. Our goal through new *Fan into Flame* commitments is to support eight new ethnic ministries that require an influx of \$25,000 in new money per ministry, or \$200,000 overall, through a Regional Mission Council grant. Currently, new ethnic ministries have begun in:

- Hacienda Heights, California - Chinese
- La Puente, California - Hispanic
- St. Paul's, Phoenix, Arizona – Hispanic
- Trinity, Temecula, California - Hispanic
- Las Vegas, Nevada – African Immigrant
- Pasadena, Long Beach and San Diego, California – Ethiopian
- Beverly Hills, California – Oromo
- Santa Paula, California – Mixteco (Oaxaca)

Transforming Congregations

We in the Pacific Southwest District face a challenge virtually all LCMS districts face – 75 to 80 percent of all congregations are plateaued or declining and in need of transformation from inward focused to outward-focused ministry. In partnership with Transforming Congregations Network, it is our goal to assist as many as 100 of our congregations by 2017 through direct consultation, coaching, and training for staff and lay leaders, all of which will require new financial support. It takes \$10,000 to support a cohort of three congregations through the Transformation process. We anticipate that \$500,000 will be needed to fulfill this area of our mission plan. In some cases, grants will be provided to enable congregations to staff new ministries. Through new *Fan into Flame* money, we will award 20 grants of \$15,000 each to satisfy this important area of mission need.

School Ministry

With our district's more than 200 Lutheran schools—preschools, elementary and high schools—each are viewed as mission outreach tools for their supporting congregations. When we consider the best way to transform a congregation, we must address the transforming of a school to become a mission outreach arm of the congregation. Our goal is to assist congregations in the starting of new schools.

Through our **Grantparent Program** we are able to reach out to urban children with scholarships making it possible for those who could not attend to attend one of our urban schools. For the 2007-2008 school year, we have been blessed with resources to provide scholarships to 45 children supported by 33 sponsors, including 39 elementary school pupils and six high school students. Through *Fan into Flame*, our goal is to increase available funds for sponsorship by making 20 scholarships available at \$1,200 per grant to high school students and 40 available to elementary school children at \$600 per grant, with an additional \$10,000 set aside for the program to expand into another two schools.

Fan into Flame

Two out of every three people in the world today have no relationship with Christ! The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and its 30 church partners worldwide have initiated a mission movement to reach 100 million people by the year 2017 entitled *Ablaze!* This movement will deliver hope and spiritual renewal by communicating the message of the saving Gospel and igniting the flame of faith in the hearts of people everywhere.

In order for the Pacific Southwest District to collaboratively continue ministry work in support of our people and in response to the opportunities for new mission work God is placing before us, we plan to fund each priority area of our Mission Plan by 2017.



Working in partnership with LCMS World Mission, the *Fan into Flame* campaign is designed to help the mission objectives of the Pacific Southwest District. To fully fund the Mission Plan outlined in this case statement, new gifts over and above the current support of the mission and ministry efforts of the Pacific Southwest District will be required. In addition to designated gifts, our district will receive 15 percent of net unrestricted gifts offered by Pacific Southwest District members through congregational *Fan into Flame* appeals to launch this dynamic Mission Plan. Campaign leaders from the Pacific Southwest District and LCMS World Mission will also seek major gifts to support specific strategies to bring the Good News of Jesus to those who have not yet heard His saving love.

Consider this appeal as your personal invitation to covenant together with the congregations, schools, ministries, missions, and workers of the Pacific Southwest District in this historic effort that, with the Lord's blessing, will bring Jesus Christ into the lives of millions as well as His renewing Word among His congregations and missions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For more information, call the
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