

# REJOICE!

We *REJOICE* as more than 180 congregations of the Michigan District are participating as partners in the campaign which, when completed, will have a significant impact on the future mission and ministry of the Church in the Michigan District and beyond.

Since its inception, we have frequently discussed the initiatives of the campaign which directly affect the Michigan District: Intentional Mission Development and Professional Church Worker Scholarships. Less often, our partnership with LCMS World Mission in support of International Ministries has been in the forefront.

Consider the following:

- The population of the world is approximately 6.5 billion, of which, 4.5 billion are unchurched.
- 66 out of 237 nations place significant restrictions on religious practice.
- 1.2 billion people who identify themselves as Christians are nominal, or non-practicing.
- The population of the United States increased by 72 million between 1970 and 2000, but the number of LCMS members decreased by 350,000.

The importance of our partnership with LCMS World Mission is very evident. Thus, your prayerful consideration of including International Ministries in your campaign support is critical to our Great Commission responsibility in Matthew 28:19 to, “Therefore go and make disciples of ALL nations ...”

Assisting the Michigan District is Mr. Bill Lapp who serves as the Director of Principal Gifts Officers for LCMS World Mission. His faithful service has helped generate several major gifts which have benefited both the Michigan District and the International Ministries components of the campaign. The Michigan District would like to thank Bill for his outstanding service.

Bill Lapp wrote in a recent article: “There are some hard times for many of our Christian friends in the Michigan District. However, there is much to rejoice about. The Michigan District, in spite of the hard times, has a heart for missions similar to the Apostle Paul’s. Paul

received support from the Philip-  
pians for his work in spreading  
the Gospel and he told them  
those gifts ... ‘are a fragrant offer-  
ing, an acceptable sacrifice, pleas-  
ing to God.’ Philippians 4:18.  
The same can be said about these  
wonderful gifts from Michigan—  
that is worth rejoicing about.  
Given that Michigan has hard  
times, it is an encouragement  
for the rest of the Districts that  
Michigan is one of the top three  
Districts in total support for *Fan  
into Flame* in the LCMS. I will  
say it again: ‘Rejoice Michigan!’”

For more information  
about *The Future is Now* in  
partnership with *Fan into  
Flame* campaign or to make  
a contribution, please contact  
Ray Zavada at the Michigan  
District office at 888.225.2111.

Ray Zavada, M.A.  
Vice President of Development

*The future is Now*  
In partnership with  
*Fan into Flame*