

Inextricably Linked



APPLE TALK

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The word "inextricable" is not used very often. Webster defines it as "that cannot be disentangled or untied; so complicated or involved as to be insolvable." *Jews and Christians are inextricably linked!* This becomes quite apparent as we approach Easter and Passover, and this year the

place on the 10th day of the Jewish month of Nisan, which was the very day when each Jewish father would publicly choose a lamb for his family to be sacrificed in Jerusalem.

St. Paul described the events of Good Friday: "Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed." (I Cor. 5:7) Growing numbers of

Lutheran congregations are recognizing that Jesus instituted the sacrament of Holy Communion during a Jewish Passover Seder and are celebrating Messianic Passover Seders.

The symbolism in the Passover Seder compels us to think of Jesus. At the first Passover the blood of a perfect male lamb, placed on the lintel (horizontal) and door posts (vertical) of each Jewish home, caused the Angel of Death to spare the first-born of that house — as he "passed over" that house. Redemption, freedom, salvation were obtained by trusting the blood of the lamb.

And just so, because the Lamb of God shed His blood on the cross — upon the horizontal and the vertical pole — redemption, freedom and salvation are obtained by faith. God's judgment for sin "passes over" all who trust the shed blood of the Lamb of God.

The tiny round wafer that we use at Holy Communion is unleavened bread, reminiscent of the unleavened matzah bread of Passover. In the Bible leaven is generally a symbol of sin, and for that reason religious Jews purged all evidence of leaven from their homes. At the Jewish Passover Seder the matzah bread is broken and distributed — the same as for us when we celebrate Holy Communion. Jews and Christians are inextricably linked.

Today many bridges are being built between Christians

and Jews. We at Lutherans in Jewish Evangelism encourage you to walk over one of those bridges and bring the Gospel to your Jewish friend, neighbor, co-worker or relative. Isaiah prophesies the coming of the Messiah, and he says that the Messiah is not only for the Jews, but also for "the nations."

Here is my servant, whom I support. Here is my chosen one, with whom I am pleased. I have put my Spirit on him. He will bring justice to the nations . . . He will not break off a damaged cattail. He will not even put out a smoking wick. He will faithfully bring about justice. He will not be discouraged or crushed until he has set up justice on the earth. The coastlands will wait for his teachings. (Isaiah 42:1-4)

The Gospel is for both Jew and Gentile. We surely cannot ignore the Jewish people. □

Planning Under Way for Immokalee Mission

Plans are under way to being a new multicultural church and social service ministry in Immokalee, FL, an agricultural community of more than 22,000 year-round residents.

"Immokalee is ethnically mixed as farm workers from Haiti, Guatemala and Mexico have made this area their home," reported Rev. Bob Selle, executive director of Amigos en Cristo, which is a ministry of the Southwest Florida Outreach Council.

He added, "The name 'Immokalee' means 'my home' in Seminole, a local Native American tribe. Therefore, the mission statement of our Immokalee Lutheran Mission is to 'hold open the door of our home in order to welcome the nations living in Immokalee.'"

Immokalee is still suffering the effects of last October's Hurricane Wilma. The Immokalee interagency council has developed a list of unmet post-hurricane needs: temporary housing, home repairs, assistance for the undocumented, money for medications and utility bills, employment for year-round residents and job training.

Lutheran Services Florida recently hired Diego Grisales, a member of the Hispanic congregation at Hope Lutheran-Bonita Springs, to work full-time as the Volunteer Coordinator for the Long Term Disaster Recovery Committee of Immokalee. Selle is one of the community leaders serving as board members of the recovery committee. □

Pastoral Care Specialists Program Offered

A training program for pastors and caregivers who want to enhance their understanding of counseling techniques and to grow in their ability to provide pastoral care will again be offered by Lutheran Counseling Services.

This program, which will qualify participants to apply for membership in the American Association of Pastoral Caregivers as a Pastoral Care Specialist, will begin in September at LCS' Winter Park office. A total of 17 sessions are planned from September until May.

The first one-and-one-half-hour session will be a didactic presentation of relevant pastoral care/counseling

subjects and/or methodologies. The last one-and-one-half-hour session will be group consultation dealing with issues and cases presented by the participants.

Some 48 care-giving professionals — including pastors, associates in ministry and parish nurses — from seven different denominations participated in the first seven training programs.

The program is offered to develop the competencies of clergy and pastoral caregivers and to increase the effectiveness of their ministries. To request a brochure or answers to more specific questions, please call LCS at 407-644-4692 in Orlando or 800-444-2842 elsewhere. □



CHRIST LUTHERAN-Brooksville, FL, Men's Club members learned of reverse mortgages at their March meeting. Speaking on the topic was Lynette Ball of TransLand Financial Services — shown here with Tom Bjorkman, Men's Club President. The group meets the first Wednesday and third Tuesday of each month at local restaurants. The club's function is "Christian fellowship and fundraising for the community and Christ Lutheran." □

LCEF

LABORERS WANTED!

Laborers For Christ (LFC) is a ministry of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund. LFC is an organized group of dedicated Christians (both men and women) who spend some of their retirement years working for LCMS congregations and schools, helping them build their own facilities.

Becoming a Laborer:

LFC is currently looking to increase its work force. If you have restless hands and an open heart, consider joining other Christians who are eager to build for God's Kingdom.

- Workers are needed at every skill level (from those with a construction background to relative beginners).
- Laborers can work full- or part-time for the organizations they serve.
- You will experience traveling and meeting new people throughout the United States.
- Required: a love for the Lord with a desire to further His work!

For more information, please call an LCEF Information Representative at 1-800-843-5233 or visit www.lcef.org.



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