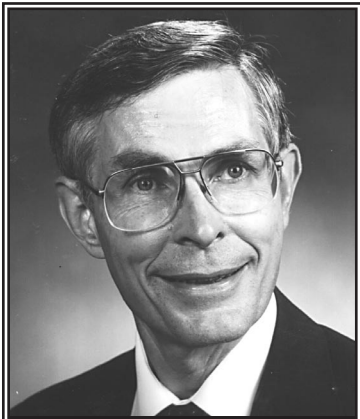


## Up Front and No Deception



### APPLE TALK

Bruce Lieske  
Founder Lutherans in  
Jewish Evangelism

Years ago I recall a true "evangelism story" told by a Lutheran pastor. He and a friend were knocking on doors, hoping

to present the Gospel. At one house they did briefly present the Gospel, but were clearly rebuked by the classic (but seldom done) "slamming of the door in the face."

The pastor spoke loudly, "OK then, you can go to hell if that's what you want!" The door immediately re-opened and the man said, "What did you say?" The conclusion of the story was that the two Lutherans were invited into the house and the hostile man was led to a saving faith in Jesus.

The story illustrates the practical application of Luther's "doctrine of the keys" — in that Christ gave to the church the power to forgive and retain sins: "If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." (Jn 20:23) Rather than simply "making nice" on people who reject the grace of

God, we do have the authority to tell that person his sins are not forgiven. If we do not say that, we are actually helping a person to deceive himself.

Christian evangelism must be up front and not deceptive. Many years ago I was invited to a

those of the rabbis, avowing the "two covenant" theory of the atonement: Jews are saved by following the laws of Moses, but Gentiles are saved by faith in Jesus. I publicly disagreed with my pastor friends, quoting what Paul (the Jew) said: "All

Sometimes the Jewish community accuses us of being deceptive because we say that Jews can be Christians. They say "you can't be a Jew and a Christian at the same time — you have to be one or the other." We would be dishonest, and truly deceptive if we said that you cannot be both a Jew and a Christian. St. Paul was proud of his Jewish identity (Ro 3:1; Acts 21:26), and all the early Christians were Jews by the thousands.

Today in the State of Israel, the Christian Church is growing rapidly among Israeli Jews. They are proud to be Jews in the Jewish state, even as we are proud to be Americans, and many of them are members of the IDF, fighting the Islamic terrorists of Hamas and Hizballah. Estimates range as high as 7,000 Jewish Christians in Israel today.

Questions about Jewish evangelism? Puzzled about the complex relationship between the synagogue, mosque and church? We can help with resources and speakers. Call 1-877-457-5556 x220 or e-mail [blieske7@bellsouth.net](mailto:blieske7@bellsouth.net). □

**We would be dishonest, and truly deceptive if we said that you cannot be both a Jew and a Christian. St. Paul was proud of his Jewish identity ... and all the early Christians were Jews by the thousands.**

Lutheran-Jewish dialogue event where 14 Lutheran pastors and 14 Jewish rabbis were to share their theological views and hopefully arrive at a better understanding of one another. The word "rabbi" means teacher, and almost all the pastors fell into the pattern of "being taught" by the rabbis rather than confessing their faith.

Some pastors accommodated their views to

have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus." (Ro 3:23-24)

Later that evening, one of the rabbis was speaking to me and one of my more liberal pastor friends. Turning to the other pastor, he said: "I like what you say, but I don't trust you; I don't like what Lieske says, but I trust him, because he expresses the historic truth of the Christian faith."

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## LSF Office Serves Orlando Hispanic Community

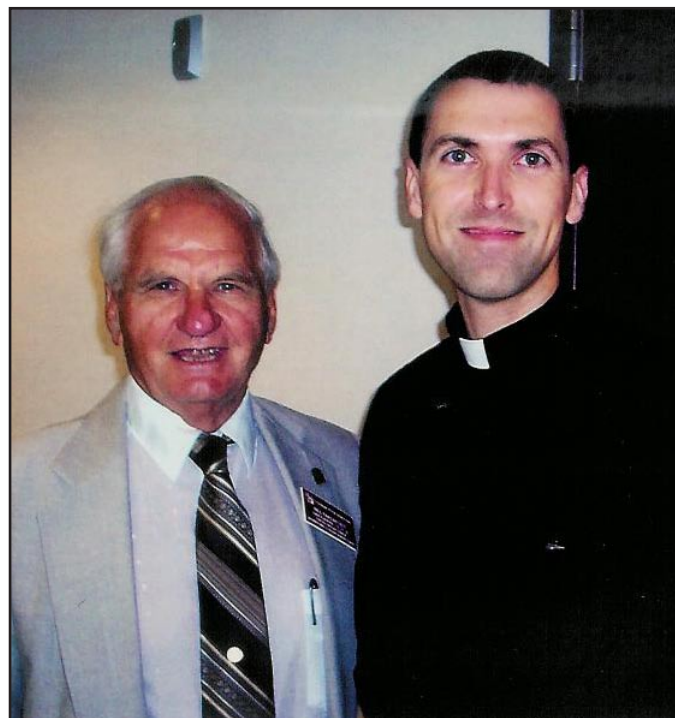
Lutheran Services Florida has opened its second office in the Orlando area, this one dedicated to serving the region's growing Hispanic community.

As an agent of its participating church bodies — the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America — Lutheran Services Florida is implementing a Church and Community Outreach Ministry to serve Orlando's Hispanic community. This ministry will also help area Lutheran congregations meet the needs of new Hispanic residents.

The goals of the LSF Church and Community Outreach Ministry are to collect relevant information and resources and make them available to

congregations and individuals in need, and to develop programs for teaching and training on issues that affect the Hispanic community. The primary topics are Disaster Preparedness and Response issues. Additional topics include ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages), tutoring for elementary and middle school children and referrals to available services in the community.

The new LSF office is located at Hope/Esperanza Viva Lutheran Church at 2600 North Dean Road. A grant Lutheran World Relief enabled Lutheran Services Florida to hire a full-time, bilingual staff member who will work out of the new office. The office space is an in-kind gift from Hope. □



NEIL FINKENSTADT, the President of Circuits 13-15 of the Florida-Georgia District LLL, presented a Minuteman talk at Caring Christ Lutheran Church on June 18. Caring Christ is one of the newest congregations in the Florida Georgia District. Finkenstadt is shown here with Pastor David Hammer, the Mission Developer. □