



Amigos en Cristo

A Ministry of the Southwest Florida Outreach Council: LCMS

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www.amigoscenter.org

Immokalee Lutheran Mission

We are making plans to begin a new multicultural church and social service ministry in Immokalee. Immokalee is an agricultural community of 22,000+ year round residents located about 45 miles east of Bonita Springs. It is ethnically mixed as farm workers from Haiti, Guatemala, and Mexico have made this area their home.

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."

Last year's Hurricane Wilma blew a path for us to follow into Immokalee. The effects of the hurricane continue to be felt in this isolated farm worker community. Many of the poorest live in ancient trailers that did not stand up well to the high winds. The Immokalee interagency council that meets to address the needs of the community in the aftermath of Wilma developed a list of unmet 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 our Hispanic congregation at Hope Lutheran, Bonita Springs, to work full-time as the Volunteer Coordinator for the Long Term Disaster Recovery Committee of Immokalee. Pastor Selle serves as a board member of the recovery committee along with other community leaders.

Fundraising Banquet 2006

Our third annual Amigos Center fundraising banquet will be held Friday, March 24 in the athletic center of St. Michael's Lutheran Church & School, Fort Myers. Our keynote speaker, Doug Molloy, Chief Assistant U.S. District Attorney, will speak to the issue of human trafficking. The evening will include silent auction items, a raffle for a stay at one of Sanibel Island's finest resorts, entertainment and banquet

buffet. Local immigration attorney Josephine Gagliardi will present Amigos Center Immigration Specialist Christina Leddin with a plaque honoring her as this year's Amigos Center Banquet Honoree. Tickets are \$30. Call 437-6727 for information.

Intensive English Course

Beginning March 13 we will offer an intensive beginner English class at St. Michael's Lutheran School, Fort Myers. The class will be team taught by two Amigos Center teachers. The class will meet four nights a week for two hours during eight weeks. The cost is \$5 per class (\$160 for the entire course).

Sarah Says...

Thank you for your prayers and support as we move forward to serve Southwest Florida.

We are partnering with United Way and Salvation Army in an effort to reach out to women with young children in Rosemary Park neighborhood of Bonita Springs. This is an effort to give them an opportunity to have a friend and support network as well as having educational opportunities and Bible studies.

During a planning session at the Outreach Summit put on by the Florida-Georgia district at Boca Raton we decided to partner with Lutheran Hour Ministries to provide radio spots on local Hispanic radio stations. Another plan is to involve our church members in follow-up calls and home visits with those who visit our worship services. We also have plans to start a first communion and confirmation program for our Hispanic youth.

Give thanks to God for . . .

- Efforts to help women of Rosemary Park to connect with new friends and with God.

Pray for . . .

- God's direction regarding the new mission start-up in Immokalee.