

Kingdom Builder

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Ministry of Construction Comes Alive at Willott

Willott Community Church in St. Charles is the first area church to break ground in the Building God's Way program. Pastor Sparks is excited to see Perfection Steel employees erect steel beams that support the 23,000 square foot addition to their church.

Ministering to the construction workers is a key part of the BGW program—a part that Willott Community Church has embraced with enthusiasm. Pastor Sparks tells how he brought 23 third graders from their Christian school out to the edge of the construction site and had them shout thank you to the workers. Watching the worker's smiles was gratifying for him and the children.

The construction workers have come to appreciate other ways that the church is thanking them. A hospitality committee established just for the building project is headed by Christi Christea. Every Friday she serves a hot lunch to the workers.

The Friday before Thanksgiving her lunch for the 16 workers included Cornish hens, wild rice, green beans and pumpkin pie topped with chocolate turkeys. She says when she began serving the lunches the workers were shy and held back as she delivered the boxed food. Now she says they are all waiting eagerly for her arrival with warm thank you's. She finds this a great

compliment and loves serving in this way.

The founder of the Building God's Way program, Daniel Cook, says, "Through this ministry hundreds of construction workers are coming to know the Lord and many more are increasing their Christian walk. It's about stewardship, faith, relationships, and showing our light to the construction community."

Dan Garrett, Demien Construction employee eats his Thanksgiving meal and comments, "This is what Christian fellowship is all about." Employees from Perfection Steel enjoy their Cornish hens and pumpkin pies with smiles and thank you's.



Willott Road Community Church is scheduled for completion in spring of 2004.

"A Night Before Christmas" Revisited

Author and editor F.R. Duplantier has chosen a uniquely appropriate way to remind yuletide revelers of the true meaning of Christmas:

In "A Visit from St. Nick," better known as "The Night Before Christmas," Clement Moore dispensed with the true story of the nativity and substituted instead a fanciful tale of a jolly fat fellow who flies from rooftop to rooftop in a reindeer-drawn sleigh and slides down chimneys with a bagful of stocking stuffers.

"It's an imaginative and charming bit of nonsense," Duplantier affirms, "but it's not what Christmas is all about."

In his revised version, entitled "A Visit from the Christ Child," Duplantier offers a "crèche course" in the true meaning of Christmas.



"Twas the morning of Christmas, when all through the house

All the family was frantic, including my spouse;

For each one of them had one thing only in mind,

To examine the presents St. Nick left behind."



Gathering his family together, the father reminds them of the real significance of the occasion, recounting the details and explaining the significance of the birth of Jesus. He concludes with an exhortation to keep the true meaning of Christmas uppermost in their minds:

"Santa Claus, Christmas presents, a brightly lit pine,

Candy canes and spiced eggnog are all very fine;

Let's have fun celebrating, but leave not a doubt

That Christ is what Christmas is really about!"





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DMA Offers a Free Church Assessment Report

Churches and Schools in Missouri can receive a free gift this Christmas season from Development Marketing Associates. DMA offers a free Church Assessment Report to help churches and schools discover their financing potential.

Since DMA's inception the company has helped over 3,500 organizations around the world in raising over a billion dollars. DMA has found churches and Christian schools oftentimes have big visions for the future, but need a starting point in making their dreams a reality.

The assessment report is a tool organizations use to measure the viability of their vision. Churches can obtain the free report by emailing Debi Demien at debi@demien.net with their request. DMA requires the following two pieces of information to produce the assessment report:

1. Amount of the organization's annual budget
2. Average weekly attendance

Christian schools can also receive an assessment by providing the amount of their annual budget and their weekly average attendance.

DMA can be contacted via their website:

www..DevelopmentMarketing.com



Was the Christmas Star a Double Eclipse of Jupiter?

The star of Bethlehem has long been a symbol of God's promise and providential guidance. For centuries, scientists and scholars have debated about the nature of the Biblical light that led the Magi to the newborn Jesus. Some have suggested a comet or supernova.

But Michael Molnar concluded that the star was actually a double eclipse of Jupiter roughly 2,000 years ago.

According to CNN's Rod Stenger, U.S. astronomer, Michael Molnar, believes he has uncovered the first reference to the star of Bethlehem outside the Bible, in the 4th-century writings of a Christian convert.

The former Rutgers University researcher came up with the idea while studying a symbolic star map on an ancient Roman empire coin from Syria, which depicts Aries the ram and other celestial symbols.

Molnar, deducing that Aries was the sign of the Jews, figured that ancient astrologers would have searched that constellation for a sign of a savior of the kingdom of Judea.

Computer modeling backed up his claim. But Molnar lacked historical proof until

now.

The Mathesis, a book written in 334 A.D. by Firmicus Maternus, an astrologer of Constantine the Great, described an astrological event involving an eclipse of Jupiter by the moon in Aries, and said that it signified the birth of a divine king.

"Maternus did not mention Jesus' name," Molnar said. "But Roman astrology was a popular craze at the time and everyone reading the book would have known the reference was to Jesus and that the astrological event was the star of Bethlehem."

"Firmicus was a pagan who had converted to Christianity in his lifetime," said Molnar.

The unconventional astronomer has gained the respect of notable Biblical historians. "I take Molnar's work quite seriously," said Owen Gingerich of Harvard University. "Anything he comes up with along these lines has to be considered as being very likely correct."

Gushed Bradley Schaefer of Yale University, in a review Molnar's book, 'The

Star of Bethlehem: "(It) has stunning new insight and approach, which finally gives a confident answer to a question that has fascinated all Christians through the ages."

In the end it doesn't matter if God used a comet, supernova, or a double eclipse of Jupiter. The important thing to remember is that God is the Supreme Being and controls the stars and His creation. He will do whatever it takes to fulfill His will for His plans.

This is what the LORD says, he who appoints the sun to shine by day, who decrees the moon and stars to shine by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar- the LORD Almighty is his name. Jeremiah 31:35

