

Kingdom Builder

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Holy Land? A Matter of Federal Law

Does your church, want to build, expand, or remodel a sanctuary? Does your religious mission include soup kitchens, homeless shelters, or other community ministries? Are you part of a home-based Bible study or worship group? Involvement in any of these activities can bring you or your ministry into conflict with land use and zoning laws.

Churches in the United States are facing ever-increasing pressure by municipal authorities to limit their physical presence in America's cities and towns. According to zoning boards, mayors, and city planners across the nation, churches may belong neither on Main Street nor in residential neighborhoods. And those

whom neighbors deem a "cult" may not belong at all.

Many municipalities believe that land used for churches does not attract enough traffic to generate retail and tax revenues for surrounding areas. Therefore, churches are being eliminated from downtown and commercial areas. At the same time they are frequently being eradicated from residential districts for creating too much traffic and noise.

In the past, such conflicts frequently left churches and other religious groups at the mercy of the largely unfettered discretion of local officials and land use boards.

But now that the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized

Persons Act (RLUIPA) has become law, religious groups have a powerful new tool on their side. Under RLUIPA, government officials and zoning boards must now give due deference to the rights of religious groups to use their property and carry out their ministries to further their religious missions.

Brad Dacus, President of the Pacific Justice Institute, recently addressed the American Bar Association's national convention and stated, "RLUIPA is the most powerful civil rights statute for churches ever enacted in U.S. History. However many attorneys representing cities still have yet to learn its breadth and depth."



"the most powerful civil rights statute for churches..."

The Pacific Justice Institute is presently representing 36 churches under RLUIPA. To learn more about RLUIPA visit www.rluipa.com or www.pacificjustice.org.

Building God's Way Surfs it up Online

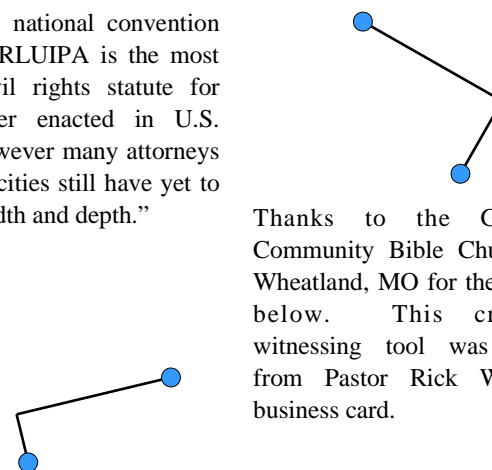
Building God's Way, a strategic partner of Demien Construction, offers a great website online at :

www.BuildingGodsWay.com

The website is fully functional with virtual church and school tours, testimonials, seminar registration, Frequently Asked Questions and more. Ministries thinking of building a new church or school can go to the



Building God's Way website for information on how an organization can save 30% off traditional construction costs.



Thanks to the Galmey Community Bible Church in Wheatland, MO for the image below. This creative witnessing tool was taken from Pastor Rick Walters' business card.

THE WAGES OF SIN IS

Death

THE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL

Demien Construction

Building for a better community

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Schedule of Resources for 2003.

October: *Nehemiah Newsletter*
November: *Vision In Focus Email*
December: *Kingdom Builder Fax*

How do you get to know a construction company? Look at their roots, at the fruit of their labors and at their relationships.

Demien Construction's roots go deep into the community. They have developed their reputation through two generations of commitment to building for a better community.

Ralph Demien laid the company foundation in 1956 and his sons, David and Russell continue his original commitment to excellence.

Serving the greater St. Louis area and beyond, Demien Construction's office is located in Wentzville, Missouri. They are proud to have been a key player in the development of Missouri's rapidly expanding communities. Today the company continues its commitment to building for a better future.

Members of their construction team have witnessed the community growth from its earliest beginnings and now are able to look at their labors with satisfaction and pride in their accomplishments.

With more than 45 years of experience in the construction industry, they bring to each project expert design skills, quality craftsmanship, and superior materials.

Demien Construction does more than build buildings; they build relationships. Client relationships flourish because Demien Construction is committed to meeting each patron's specific needs. Professionalism, reliability and quality workmanship are the hallmarks of their partnerships with other trades as well.

South American Mission Trip for Demien Employee

This summer, Demien Construction employee, John Wehrle, was given the opportunity to serve at an orphanage in Garca, Brazil. Traveling with a Sunday school class from the First Baptist Church of Harvester, John and 24 others flew from St. Louis, Missouri to Sao Paulo, Brazil to start the week long mission trip.

After a 9 hour bus drive from the Sao Paulo airport, the St. Louis missionaries arrived in the small rural town of Garca. While in Brazil, half of the group worked as a construction unit to design and create much needed closets and tables for the orphanage, while the other missionaries started a week-long Vacation Bible School for the 100 plus kids at the orphanage. For many people the best part of the trip was spending time with the kids at the orphanage.

The people of Brazil speak Portuguese, but communication was rarely an issue. The missionaries relied on hand signals and pointing this way and that. Some, like John, had learned Espanol and French that was useful because Portuguese is a mix of the two languages. Within the week, great friendships and strong bonds were created.

John had the opportunity of documenting the trip by taking over 700 digital pictures and hours of video. Compiling all of the multi-media, he created a DVD to be shown at his church in Harvester, Missouri.

"It was truly an honor to be able to serve God in a foreign land. Going to Brazil changed the way I look at life," said John. Most of the short term missionaries involved are making plans to serve again in Brazil in 2004.



The host church in Garca, Brazil.



Demien Construction employee, John Wehrle, in Brazil with children from the Orphanage.