



December 2009

Dear Links Player,

As December opened, our president Jeffrey Cranford, two of our Links Players board members, and nearly 40 Links Players from California landed in Tel Aviv. Their intent: spent 10 days in Israel, walking where Jesus walked and ministering encouragement to Christ-believers among the Jewish people there. Scripture tells us that God's heart remains with the Jews, and that there will be a revival among them when "the fullness of the Gentiles (the rest of us) has come in" (Romans 11:25). And since I know that this prophecy and these people are close to Jeffrey's heart, I am pleased to see him seize the opportunity to conduct a trip with some of our Links Players friends in such an awesome setting.

But even if you are like me and have not yet been to Israel, traveling to Bethlehem, Nazareth, and on to Jerusalem, there is still much linking to be done between us and the land where God touched the earth through His Son. And the Christmas season is when we seem to make this connection best.

Though most historians place the actual historical date of Jesus' birth sometime outside of December, I for one am glad that we take a specially designated time to celebrate His coming as Immanuel. The ancient Jews followed an annual pattern of celebrations, fasts and feasts to remember and honor the work of God among His people.

In the case of Christmas, we honor God's work on behalf of all people. For we have all been those "people dwelling in darkness" that Isaiah wrote of in the ninth chapter of his prophetic book. Jesus, who is the great light—indeed, the light of life—, shed a new dawn into the midst of this darkness and showed us the way out.

At Links Players, we join the celebration at this time of year. We desire so much to lead people by Christ's light out of the darkness where they dwell and into a place of God's wondrous forgiveness and life-giving grace. And while we look to do this year-round, we'll gladly take the special emphasis of the Christmas season and run with it as far as we can!

Thank you for taking part in this blessed opportunity for ministry with us. A merry and soul-enriching Christmas, as well as a God-evident New Year to you and your loved ones!

Jeff Hopper
COO, Links Players