



## An Alliance for Life

Abortion is not an election issue. It didn't go away when the election ended. In fact, in my opinion, based on the outcome of the election it should now be given even more attention by the Christian community. That is one reason I was thankful to receive an invitation for a luncheon held by Texas Alliance for Life.



This is their mission statement: "Texas Alliance for Life is a nonprofit organization of people committed to protecting the fundamental right to life of all innocent human beings and to promoting respect for their value and dignity from the moment of conception until natural death. We therefore oppose the advocacy and practice of abortion (except to preserve the mother's life), infanticide, euthanasia, and all forms of assisted suicide."

I had not heard of the Alliance until I received the invitation. I'm glad that I did. Dr. Joe Pojman, a rocket scientist (literally), shared about the organization at the lunch (pictured with me). I was able to connect with a few other pastors and even the Honorable Edna Staudt. She is also pictured with me. I told her if I ever have to see her in court, I will bring this picture and remind her of our close friendship and "alliance". It was only slightly funny.

Seriously, her wisdom, knowledge, and willingness to talk with me encouraged me. Several things encouraged me greatly about the luncheon! Let me share a few:

1. **They really care for women.** The policies they lobby for extend far beyond the simple overturn of Roe vs Wade. They fight to make sure that women who have abortions in the state of Texas are given the normal FDA standard of care. Often they are not.  
(continued on page 3)

<b>In This Issue:</b>	
Verse of the Month	2
Advent 2012	2
Texas Baptist Children's Home	3
2012 Recap	4
By-Laws	4

Verse of the Month:  
ENCOURAGE EACH  
OTHER WITH THESE  
WORDS

Till Now the LORD Has  
Helped Us

“And the people of Israel said to Samuel, “Do not cease to cry out to the LORD our God for us, that he may save us from the hand of the Philistines.” So Samuel took a nursing lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the LORD. And Samuel cried out to the LORD for Israel, and the LORD answered him. As Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to attack Israel. But the LORD thundered with a mighty sound that day against the Philistines and threw them into confusion, and they were defeated before Israel. And the men of Israel went out from Mizpah and pursued the Philistines and struck them, as far as below Beth-car. Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen and called its name Ebenezer; for he said, “Till now the LORD has helped us.”

1 Samuel 7:8-12 ESV

## Advent 2012: Making Room for Christ

It has been a privilege to lead our community in worship during this year’s Advent celebration. Over the past few years we have had some rich and uplifting Christmas seasons, but from my perspective this year has been one of the most meaningful. To worship in Christ’s birth and initial coming to earth is indeed an amazing thing to experience as a congregation, but sometimes it’s easy to lose focus on the present and future as we sing all of the songs that we’re supposed to sing, and follow all of the traditions we’ve always done. Not that there is anything wrong with the sentiment of Christmas (it really is the most wonderful time of year!), but Advent is about much more than celebrating Christ’s birth alone. It is a time of experiencing Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace that can only be found through God in the present and in the future, as we wait for His second coming. This year at Milwood I feel that we were able to worship and give Him glory for His first coming, His presence in our lives now, and His second coming.

Our overall theme for this year was “Make Room”. Just as our Savior came into this world with nowhere but a stable for shelter, it is worth asking if you are making room for Christ in your home, life and heart. We sang these words together many times this Christmas, “O come to my heart Lord Jesus, there’s room in my heart for you.” May this be the sentiment that stays in our hearts and minds this new year as we think back to Christmas in 2012.

-Michael Davenport  
Worship Pastor

Here is a photo of the Fieleke family doing the Advent reading



(continued from page 1)

2. **They work strategically with legislators.** They join a march on the capitol every year. But their main work is simply trying to affect laws that protect women, save the unborn, and require doctors to give alternatives to abortion in the case of unwanted pregnancy.

3. **They are peaceful, though deeply resolved.** I was partly nervous that I would be yelled at for an hour and then be given a torch and pitchfork so we could mob the capitol together. Not really. But I did not want to be a part of a group whose motives are anger, resentment, and frenzy. I found the leaders to be extremely knowledgeable, proactive, and deeply resolved. I felt it is an organization that acts from deep convictions rather than seasonal feelings. That is important! I left feeling that I have found a group of people who care for people, not issues. Granted, their care for people must give attention to the issues, but I think you know what I mean.

Take a look at their website. They have some great resources! ([www.txchoose-life.org](http://www.txchoose-life.org)) You can find legislation that is coming, ways to take action, and more. Also, they support the Texas Rally for Life in January. You may already be familiar with it. You will hear more about it later ([www.texasrallyforlife.org](http://www.texasrallyforlife.org)).

Mostly, I just wanted to write to say that I feel I have made an alliance for life. I am thankful for this organization and aim to put them in front of you again!  
For His Glory, Pastor Nathan

Here is a photo of Daniel McFarland reading from Luke 2 at the Mary Lee Foundation on Christmas Eve



## Texas Baptist Children's Home

This year for our Angel Tree, we sponsored a cottage from the Texas Baptist Children's Home. This cottage is home to two mothers and three kids. In addition to sponsoring each of these "angels", they asked that we help supply them with stuffed stockings for an event they were having in the Children's Home. We stuffed 40 stockings! Thank you to all of those who brought a stocking and to each of you who sponsored an angel and blessed this cottage on Christmas.



## 2012

What a great year! There is so much to praise God for. Take a minute and recount the things that happened this year. Use this opportunity to stop a moment and praise God!

- Four Baptisms
- The student ministry saw two students come to Christ
- Almost 15 new members with another class coming in January
- New Lifegroups:
  - Steve Sivells and Ed Wilson started a LG at Jon and Jonni Meredith's home
  - Kyle and Kelly Fieleke will begin one in the new year
- UPG Adoption:
  - We adopted the people of Haiti and the UAE
  - We were blessed with a gift of \$100,000 towards our UPG Initiative
- KidCity started this year. Uptown and Downtown are filling up each week. Downtown will need to expand soon!
- 2012 Fall Fest: We had around 400 people from the neighborhood join us for fun and games
- Christy Bunce became the KidCity Director
- Full Awana roster with children coming to Christ
- Full VBS where the kids sponsored 5 orphans
- Danielle Cheek was hired as our part-time Administrative Assistant
- The Ladies' Ministry hosted many showers this year and studied James this Summer
- Several men got together and studied Tempted and Tried during the Summer
- At Christmas we enjoyed a blessed Advent season
- We gave to the Lottie Moon Missions offering, gave gifts to Angel Tree families, filled stockings, sent kids on mission and so much more!
- Two Lifegroups hosted Block Parties in the Summer that had around 30 and 50 people attend
- Students started d-groups (small group discipleship)
- We shared a lot of delicious meals together at First Wednesdays!

## Remember Upcoming By-Laws

In 2012 Pastor Nathan worked with the Deacons to restructure the Milwood Baptist By-Laws. The restructuring of By-Laws has been on the table for several years now and we are thankful that we are moving forward in this area. 2013 is the year we will be presenting amended By-Laws to the church. Review the following schedule for more details: January 13-27 Nathan will be preaching on church leadership and plurality. January 27 we will have a church family meeting in which we will introduce and explain the By-Laws. February 10 we will have another church family meeting. This meeting will be for questions and amendments of the By-Laws by the church body. And on February 17 we will plan to take a church vote on the amended By-Laws. This date is subject to change, based on the question and answer session on February 10.