

WoF-Flying Preachers

While these televangelists publicly justify the purchase of their planes by claiming they are strictly "tools for spreading the Gospel globally," flight tracking data and investigative journalism have repeatedly proven that the jets are regularly used for completely personal, luxury trips.

Watchdog groups like the [Trinity Foundation](#) keep continuous tabs on these aircraft via tracking projects like **@pastorplanes**, exposing how the lines between "ministry business" and "personal vacation" are completely blurred:

1. The Proved Personal Travel Patterns

- **Kenneth Copeland:** During an infamous investigative interview with *Inside Edition*, Copeland was confronted on camera with flight logs showing his ministry jets had flown to his private **Steamboat Springs, Colorado vacation home at least 143 times**. When cornered, Copeland openly admitted on camera that he used the ministry-funded jets to travel to his vacation properties, defiantly claiming it was a "biblical thing".
- **Creflo Dollar:** Flight tracking data has captured Creflo Dollar's ministry-owned Gulfstream jet taking off from Atlanta and landing on the **resort island of Aruba** for periods with no scheduled or recorded ministry events, serving as highly probable personal family vacations.
- **The Lamb Family (Daystar):** A whistleblower lawsuit from a former Daystar executive explicitly revealed that the family's **\$20 million Gulfstream V** was routinely routed to Florida for golf trips and family reunions under the guise of "ministry operations."
- **Other Major Ministries:** Watchdogs frequently track ministry jets flying to secular vacation hotspots. For instance, planes tied to *LIFE Outreach International* have been tracked taking multiple flights to **the Bahamas** with no documented ministry purpose.

2. How the Tax Loophole Funds the Vacations

The reason these televangelists can get away with this lies within the tax structure of registered churches:

- **The Parsonage and Travel Exemption:** By law, if a pastor travels somewhere to preach, the flight is a tax-free ministry expense. Televangelists frequently schedule a tiny, one-hour church service or a brief meeting with a local pastor at a vacation destination so they can legally classify the entire multi-thousand-dollar jet flight as a "business trip."
- **Income Cloaking:** Under IRS rules, if a pastor *does* use a church jet for a purely personal vacation, the value of that flight is supposed to be reported as personal taxable income. However, because Daystar, Creflo Dollar, and Keith Moore are legally registered as churches, they **do not file IRS Form 990**. Their internal ledgers are completely hidden from public eyes, making it almost impossible for the IRS (which audits less than 0.1% of tax-exempt groups) to verify if the personal trips are being taxed properly.

Ultimately, the private jet serves a double purpose: it acts as a tax-sheltered luxury limousine for the family's personal leisure, funded entirely by untaxed donor dollars under the umbrella of religious exemption.

Because these groups use FAA privacy programs to block their tail numbers from mainstream commercial flight tracking apps like FlightAware, watchdogs have to rely entirely on raw, decentralized military/hobbyist receivers (ADS-B Exchange) to prove to donors exactly where the aircraft are traveling.

The data summaries compiled by independent watchdogs show that ministry aviation is a massive, multi-million dollar daily operation.

The [Trinity Foundation's "Pastor Planes" project](#) currently tracks **66 active private aircraft** operated by American televangelists, religious networks, and Christian universities.

By monitoring open-source ADS-B flight transponders, watchdogs calculate that **on high-traffic days, televangelists burn over \$100,000 USD in a single day** on private jet fuel and operating costs alone.

Monthly Flight Metrics & Cost Summaries

Recent monthly logs compiled by [MinistryWatch](#) show the sheer volume of these flight operations:

- **August 2026 Fleet Totals:** The 62 tracked ministry aircraft logged **380 individual flights**.
- **August Estimated Operating Costs:** **\$1.9 million USD** spent globally in a single month.
- **July 2026 Fleet Totals:** Tracked planes completed **307 flights**.
- **July Estimated Operating Costs:** **\$1.43 million USD**.

(Note: These numbers are calculated assuming a conservative baseline of 200 flight hours annually per plane and do not include additional cargo planes or fractional ownership services like NetJets).

Who Spends the Most? (Top Flight Budgets)

While specific prosperity preachers make individual headlines, the largest overall financial spenders on private aviation are large-scale organizational ministries:

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Ministry / Organization	Estimated Monthly Flight Spending (August 2026)	Typical Fleet / Primary Aircraft Types Used
Samaritan's Purse <i>(Franklin Graham)</i>	\$338,025	Operates a heavy corporate fleet, including high-value Gulfstream G550 models.
Liberty University	\$197,400	Uses corporate flight entities like C&C Aviation to manage multiple executive Cessna Citations and King Air aircraft.
Assemblies of God	\$193,420	Utilizes a network of regional and national executive transport aircraft.

Recent Noteworthy Flight Dispatches (Late 2026)

The [daily tracking feed from @pastorplanes](#) continues to log continuous domestic and international trips by prominent media ministries:

- **Jesse Duplantis Ministries:** Flight logs recorded his luxury **Dassault Falcon 7X** (the jet he raised \$54 million for) taking an international route from Zurich, Switzerland to Sofia, Bulgaria.
- **Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN):** Their ultra-long-range **Bombardier Global Express** routinely logs multi-hour transcontinental flights (such as an 8-hour sprint from Italy to Orlando, Florida), burning roughly **\$5,042 per hour** in operational costs.
- **Word of Life (Nancy Dufresne):** Their **Dassault Falcon 50** tri-jet was tracked operating flights between Toronto, Canada and Pontiac, Michigan.
- **Philadelphia Church of God (Gerald Flurry):** Their **Gulfstream G4** heavy luxury jet was logged on flights routing from Greenville, South Carolina back to their main hub in Oklahoma City.