

It was amazing to see how the kids with a limited church background grew in their knowledge and interest in Jesus throughout the week. It resulted in several of them praying that Jesus would enter their lives!



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



“I wish it need not have happened in my time,” said Frodo. “So do I,” said Gandalf, “and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us.”

J. R. R. Tolkien, The Fellowship of the Ring

This quote was written in the first half of the 20th century. It was a turbulent

time for many as two world wars sandwiched the Spanish Flu pandemic and Great Depression.

Many people can relate to how Frodo felt as he embarked on a perilous journey to help avert the destruction of all he knew in his corner of the Kingdom.

2022 has also been a traumatic year. We have emerged from lockdowns, seen a war start in Europe, are enduring an energy crisis and the death of our Queen has left us with uncertainty and anxiety moving forward.

In the midst of all of this I believe that there is a real desire in people to know more security and to understand life better. I believe that we as Christians have a chance to share what that means for us and answer the questions that many people are asking themselves these days.

It has been exciting for us to serve churches through football. Homeless people in Kent, inner city youths in Manchester and girls in Lancashire are all getting to hear the Good News through churches supported by Ambassadors Football GB. The Women's Euros gave a chance for girls to see the potential for success through football - and the World Cup in Qatar gives amazing opportunities for Christians to share their faith - we have been sending out resources to our partners relating to this recently.

We are looking forward to 2023, where we will start working in Wales and also use the Women's world cup as a catalyst for ministry here.

And we cannot do our work without the prayer and financial support that we receive from you. Please take time to read about what God is doing and how he is using us.

Yours in His team
Martin



CAMPS

This year has been our busiest ever! We ran 19 camps across the UK, attended by almost 600 children. Camps are a very effective mission tool for churches, with 67% of attendees coming from outside the church community which creates wonderful opportunities for follow up.

Alongside playing fun games and football, camps provide a space where kids can explore faith in Jesus in an environment and language which they can relate to and feel comfortable in.

As well as great feedback from children and parents alike the response from church leaders has been very encouraging:

“The coaches were amazing! Partnering with Ambassadors was the best decision I've made here at St Andrew's”. *Children's ministry leader at St Andrew's, Burgess Hill.*

St Paul's Crofton were able to secure a grant from the Diocese of Rochester's Children and Young People Fund. This allowed the church to purchase all the equipment needed to run the camp and continue to use football to share Jesus in the community in the future.

Over the week 20 children attended, 3 were regular church attendees and excitingly 7 made their first connection with the church.

In addition to the camp the church have started a small football session on a Monday night on the local school football pitch for ages 16+. The majority attending are not regular church goers. At the end of each session a Bible verse is shared.

Contact Claire – our women's football lead on:
clunn-rockcliffe@ambassadorsfootball.org
to start a programme near you

WOMEN AND GIRLS' FOOTBALL



It is a really exciting time for female football in the UK.

Over the summer England were victorious in the final of the Women's Euros at Wembley and coverage of the Women's Super League is increasing with matches being played at bigger venues.

At Ambassadors Football we are encouraging more girls and women to be playing football by developing a wellbeing and football programme for churches to help them to reach different communities.

The programme looks at different issues that women and girls face. Time is built into the football sessions for discussions that focus on areas around wellbeing which include physical, social, emotional and spiritual health.

We have seen the huge benefits there are of meeting with other ladies to participate in active and fun settings, we know that football has contributed to that. We encourage anyone - not just the 'good' or those who understand the offside rule to take part. We would love for any girl to come along to a session and learn, meet other like-minded people, have fun, support each other, be encouraged and think about faith.

There is huge potential for churches to get involved in running a wellbeing programme for women and girls in their community. Football is a great way to meet with those people.

Here is some feedback we've had from a recent girls' tournament:

"Annis had a lovely time, and it really boosted her confidence on the field, thank you."

"We ran a football tournament for 38 girls. The girls had lots of fun and they commented how they really enjoyed playing with new people and making new friends. About 50% had never been to an Ambassadors event before, but 100% said that they would come again if we ran another similar tournament."

This year local churches in Lancaster and Morecambe have started girls' football groups to great success.

Ambassadors GB partnered with Morecambe Parish Church to set up a new girls' football group in Lancaster which has 12 girls attending regularly. The Talk Football programme is used to share morals and values that are important to us as Christians.

Lessons include learning about resilience, patience, focus, self-control and friendship. We use bible verses and examples to link the morals with football and our own lives. The club is now being run at the local primary school, which has resulted in a really positive relationship between the church and staff there.

In Morecambe a second group has started and the benefits are already being seen. When Elizabeth first arrived she would gently dribble around and not let anyone go near her. Now she is getting stuck in and during matches she goes in for tackles and moves towards the action rather than away from it.

She has really grown in confidence in her own ability and this is a recurring theme for players throughout.

TOURNAMENTS

We love to run tournaments at Ambassadors Football to serve churches. The aims of our tournaments are to provide a quality football tournament that encourages fellowship among teams and an opportunity for players to hear a Gospel message.

In 2022, we held 5 tournaments in London, Sheffield, Nottingham, Lancaster and a national based one in Telford. We had tournaments for men, women, walking, youth, and children.

Across these tournaments we had around 1,200 players, playing in 105 teams and representing 80 churches.

We will host the same amount of events in 2023 and hope to add Manchester to our list of tournament venues as well as individuals in running smaller tournaments in their local community.

In 2021 we started to work with Good News for Everyone (formerly

Gideons) to have New Testaments available at every event we host. Here are a few quotes from the church team leaders:

“The first thing my son said when he got home was that he won the player of the tournament. The very next second he started telling his mum how great the talk was. PTL!!!”

“**My kids loved the talk at the end. They all wanted to grab a Bible and Gospel booklet.**”

“We brought 15 young people from our outreach project, only one of whom attended church regularly. We had seven young people go up and get Bibles, which I think is amazing. I will be asking them in the coming weeks whether they have been reading them.”

“A couple of guys took away Bibles and one said he’d have a read. Another said it was the first time he’d heard anything about Christianity.”

COMMUNITY FOOTBALL OUTREACH



support we successfully launched their community outreach and 11 kids came to the very first session! Members of the church attended to serve drinks and chat with spectating parents.

‘One of the lads had agreed to come although he didn’t think he was very good at football and struggled to play so didn’t enjoy it at school. After the session ended, I asked him if he was ok and he said he was much better at football than he thought!’

In Kent, the Genesis Football project was recently recognised at the Kent FA Grassroots Workforce Awards.

A partnership between St. John’s Chatham, Anchorians FC, Medway Council and Medway Night Shelter, the project uses football to work with the aim of building community and developing personal skills and confidence. Lunch and equipment are provided so anyone can easily attend and leave feeling physically and mentally refreshed. They won an award from the Kent FA for their project and will continue it into 2023.

Reaching communities through football is a big part of our ministry and a key way of getting churches active within their local communities. Currently there are projects running across the country each week reaching hundreds of people, with more churches looking to start in the coming months.

Last summer a parent called Matt from a church in Manchester stumbled across our website. It was the perfect timing because they had been thinking about running a football club at their church. They wanted to combine football with sharing Jesus and had been looking for ways to get started. At the time, the church only had 4 children. With our training and



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TOWARD THE

GOAL



A CURRICULUM THAT TAKES KIDS ALL OVER THE WORLD THROUGH THE STORY OF THE BIBLE, AND HOW IT ALL POINTS TO JESUS!



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