

NEWS BRIEF

FEBRUARY 2020

Can you answer the following questions?

Question #1

What happens when you pull out an almost new soccer ball in an African village crawling with kids?

Question #2

A prison warden in Kenya permits a former professional soccer player (and graduate of GSSM's training program) to enter a large prison and put on a sports program for the prisoners. Can you guess what happens?

Answer to Question #1

Goes beyond a bunch of excited kids. Not only did the children get involved but many adults wanted to participate as well. As the nearly new soccer ball was rolled out it was joined by a squadron of other soccer balls as the GSSM staff and students organized a fun-filled soccer clinic followed by a whole series of small-sided games and ending with a soccer match between a GSSM team and the local village squad. The game attracted the entire village as they were treated to a very enjoyable match and most importantly, they listened intently as the Christmas story was presented and clearly laced with the Gospel. Dozens responded to the Good News as precious lives became citizens of heaven and the Angels rejoiced!



Answer to Question #2

Once inside the prison, Franklin Shelimba, former professional soccer player in Kenya's Premier League and graduate of GSSM, went to work with some of his friends.

Want to guess how many prisoners showed up for the soccer clinic and matches that followed? 10? 50? 100? You are getting close but the correct answer is over 900 inmates turned out for this specific event. Many participated, some watched as spectators. At the conclusion of the various sports programs that were offered throughout the day, the Gospel was presented and our graduate student stated that he estimated that hundreds of men responded to the Gospel and exchanged their prison number for a brand new identity: Citizenship in Heaven that would never be revoked. Their names are now recorded in the Lamb's book of life and finally they are truly free, free at last. Their lives will never be the same. A follow-up program to disciple these new believers will soon take place.

Did someone say, **"Praise the Lord?"**



As we wrap up our February News-Brief, how about some more good news from our Christmas outreach in an Ugandan village some 3 ½ hours from Kampala, the capital.

- Residents of this out of the way village in Northwest Uganda were amazed as some strange vehicles drove into the center of the village and a small army of GSSM students and staff piled out of their vans, greeted the village elders and the pastor of a small church while David, one of GSSM's Team Ebenezer members, and a resident of a nearby village, looked on and smiled. It was David who organized this invasion party with a great deal of help from Barnabas Mwesiga, GSSM's African Director and close friend of David's and one of Barnabas' Timothies.
- Once the formalities were over, it was off to work as GSSM students in training, graduates and staff members with tools in hand moved throughout the village cleaning up the trash, repairing homes of the elderly, cleaning out the sewage ditches and performing numerous other community service projects.
- Games for the children then took the spotlight as kids came out of nowhere to be part of this unexpected delight.



- With the help of the pastor and village leaders, family food packs were delivered to those identified as the most needy; kids kits packed with clothing, shoes and other essentials were given to those children who had little or nothing...
- For 5 days this out of the way village was never the same. When GSSM's festival of Christmas concluded with a meal for the entire village there were already cries to "please come back." During this nearly week-long event people with little or no hope gave their lives to Christ and moved from being on the lowest strata of society to becoming members of the Royal family of God. How we praise our Lord for welcoming these broken lives into His Kingdom.





A huge thank you to each one of you who prayed for GSSM's Christmas Outreach. Your prayers and generous support made it possible for our GSSM team to go into some unlikely places to inform many who had given up on life but were able to exchange the hopelessness that blanketed their lives for the love and hope that only Christ can provide. Just think, some day you may even be able to meet some smiling children and some tear-stained adults who have become your brothers and sisters because you truly cared. May the Lord shower you with His blessings as you share in the joy of rescuing those who were smothered in the dark shadows of this world but by God's grace and mercy found the light that has led them to the greatest position of all...the opportunity to become a part of the growing family of our Lord and Savior.

Thank you once again for making all of this possible.

Blessings!
Russ Carr

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Russ Carr". The signature is stylized and cursive.