

Baseball Camp!

When you think mission, baseball isn't the first thing that comes to mind. When I started at Hill Street just shy of two years ago the church had already got a link with The Woodlands First Baptist Church in Texas, their Senior Pastor, Bruce, spent time in Swadlincote during the ministerial vacancy before I arrived. The Woodlands, alongside Synergy Missions have been running Baseball Camps in Germany for over 10 years, and at the start of the year we started exploring the possibility of running the first UK camp here this summer.



After lots of planning we welcomed a team of 21 adults and teenagers to Swadlincote at the end of July for a week-long camp at a local secondary school. We welcomed children aged 7-11 for the morning session and teens in the afternoon, each getting a t-shirt and cap included in the cost for the week. Each day the children and youth learnt more about baseball, but baseball camp was about so much more than just baseball. During each session, the teams had team time, this was an opportunity to hear about Jesus and the difference he makes in our lives. Friday night was Texas night which saw the church packed with families as prizes were given, baseball songs learnt, and powerful testimony shared. The week culminated in Tournament Day, a chance for everyone to use the skills they had learnt during the week with families there to cheer the teams on.

We would like to say a big Thank You to the EMBA for their support of baseball camp in the form of a mission grant which enabled us to put on the camp. Without that we wouldn't have been able to embark on this exciting opportunity to reach so many with the good news of Jesus Christ. What's even more exciting is that their support has enabled us to make sure baseball camp isn't just a one off but is a sustainable outreach for many years to come.

Overall, we had a fantastic week, we saw a church pull together to work in unity whilst building positive relationships with brothers and sisters in Christ from Houston. Children and young people learnt a new sport, encouraged each other and learnt teamwork and we build fantastic relationships with families within our community. Most importantly, faith was built and encouraged as we saw God moving in ways that we didn't expect. Baseball camp may have ended, but we're already looking forward to next year, and to the exciting opportunities in front of us now as we seek to build His Kingdom here in Swadlincote. *If you would like to know more about Baseball Camp and church to church partnership with a church from Texas for mission then please contact Rev. Simon Thompsett, rev.hillstbaptist@gmail.com*