

More Than Gold Approaches Olympics Outreach With Acts of Service

With the Olympics less than 100 days away, outreach ministries are gearing up to reach the sports-loving masses with the love of Christ.

Christian leaders in the U.K. said that churches have a great opportunity for outreach through service and hospitality as they engage with their communities and visitors.

“The Games offer churches a multitude of ways to engage with their communities,” More Than Gold CEO David Willson told Charisma News. “And we are providing the resources and training that will help them, doing so by coordinating the skills and experiences of over 60 Christian agencies.”

For the past two decades, this kind of involvement has already made a life-changing impact at summer and winter games around the world. In Atlanta, churches passed out more than 3 million cups of cold water to visitors. And in Sydney, churches ran more than 100 sports clinics for disadvantaged youth.

“There’s a greater prize to have than a gold medal—wonderful though it is,” Peter Meadows, communications director at More Than Gold, told Charisma News. “To know the God who made you, and to be at peace with him, is the greatest prize of all.”

Since the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, More Than Gold is a banner used by the Christian community to represent their involvement with the world’s major sporting events. One specific way More Than Gold will be involved in the 2012 Games is through participation in the Olympic Torch Relay.

The Flame will arrive from Greece on May 18. The Olympic Torch

Relay will run for 70 days across the U.K., from May 19 through July 27. On a typical day, the Relay will include a team of around 370 people, and 8,000 torchbearers will carry the flame to 1,000 cities, towns and villages throughout the U.K.

“The route and dates of the Torch Relay are being used for a cascade of **prayer** and praise. Especially, church leaders in each town/city where the Torch is stopping overnight will take prayers of blessing to church leaders in the next stopping place,” says Meadows.

“Our conviction is that **prayer** and **mission** go hand in hand as churches respond to the Games. So, we are inviting every church, group and organization to explore creative ways to pray for all that will happen before during and after the Games,” Jane Holloway of the World Prayer Centre, who is heading up prayer for More Than Gold, told Charisma News.

A recent survey revealed that more than 8 million people are expected to line the streets to cheer on thousands of community heroes, who will carry the Olympic Flame throughout the U.K.

The Torch Relay will pass through the entire country, and there will be football events, other sports disciplines and training camps taking place all around the U.K.