



**A church for video gamers has existed since 2016 – and Alice Cheeseman is a volunteer there. She explains more**

**T**here's a gentle chattering through my headphones. A group of around 10 people are hanging out and catching up on how life is going, before turning their attention to prayer. AI is playing quiet reflection music in the background. It's a Saturday afternoon (for some), and a small portion of the group are spending time with each other before the first of two services, but right now their main aim is to pray and put God first. A few people pray, voices and accents from around the world fill the speakers. They are expecting to see their average of over 100 people show up from all around

the world over the two services, the majority of whom they have never met onsite and possibly never will – knowing only their screen names.

Their commonality? They all enjoy video games.

Welcome to GodSquad Church. Their core value is simple '...a place where gamers from all over the world can come and find a place they can call home, no matter their beliefs or background. Our community is a place where people can come game together, grow together, and build relationships that will last a lifetime.'

Their mission point, however, calls to a deeper, more spiritual side: 'GodSquad Church exists to connect gamers to God by meeting them where they are.'

For the more academically theological among us, this may feel distinctly familiar as a form of relational or incarnational ministry, especially the versions modelled by Andrew Root. Going out to where the people are and making the relationship the goal.

In 2014, Matthew Souza found himself feeling called 'to reach gamers all over the world with the gospel. A brief time after putting his feet in the water that was the still-growing website, Twitch (a streaming service that focuses on video game live streaming) Matt recognized the potential for something far greater than himself sitting in a boiler room playing video games live on the internet.' ([godsquadchurch.com/our-history](http://godsquadchurch.com/our-history))

Over time he found more and more people who felt the echo

of this call and eventually they would launch virtually the first-ever church just for gamers on 24 March, 2016: GodSquad Church, or GSC to their regulars. These services became a regular staple, and as the team grew and developed, their call has been the same: to reach gamers and journey with them from their virtual lives to eternal life.

Currently - at the time of writing - they have 19 interest-based house-groups that meet purely online (ranging from topics on Israel, to playing Dungeons and Dragons all the way to one of the latest popular MMORPGs - massively multiplayer online role-playing games - Destiny 2); a Twitch channel in the tens of thousands of hours watched (in 2022), over 300 broadcasts in the year and a volunteer base ranging between 50-100 individuals. It is little surprise to see their church is thriving and developing in a relatively uncommon area for the church to be found. They have especially found it popular with those in the young adult category - which reflects the median age (33) of those playing video games.

At GSC, their online community server is as diverse as the worldwide community they host; from discussion channels tackling difficult complex theology, to memes and video clips all the way through to a women's group that shares recipes and everything in between.

But as much as they play hard and game together to win, they also put at the pinnacle of their community their faith. They ensure space is given for those who need prayer, and those who are seeking to learn more, the opportunity to explore the ideas of faith. They have seen

many come to know Jesus for the first time or come back into relationship with him.

Their services are like what we came to know over Covid (even though this predates that format), of worship recorded from home, and a sermon (linking video games to the Bible) live streamed from a desk, and a short 'altar call' at the end. They stream throughout the week as well, putting a focus on doing community well and playing games together; from Mario Kart, World of Warcraft to free chat-based games like Marbles. Growing their community to game together but also chat faith together has led to their influence being spread across the world, one life at a time, and many people coming to know who Jesus is in a real way.

I stumbled across this community at the beginning of 2018; a third-year university student trying to write an essay about cyberbullying in video games, and if we as youth workers should encourage our young people to interact with online video games at all. Looking for a Christian community, I did what most people do - went straight to Google - and saw that a church especially for gamers had a service that evening on a platform I already knew and loved. Curious, and after a few polite conversations with people who would later become my friends, I stuck around in the service, and joined their Discord, falling asleep at about 3:30am. Within a few months I had joined their prayer team; and now after five and a half years, many late nights laughing, theological debates, and a wider experience with volunteering than I could have ever dreamed of, I'm beginning to recognise a similar call to engage and encourage churches to reach out to those online.

GSC is in some ways unique to church - putting an emphasis on gaming to build relationships; however in other ways it feels familiar, like many other pioneering movements that have gone before. However, it still calls us as the Church to be creative about how we do mission and reach those online, whose screen names are our only clue to who they are.

**For more about GodSquad Church, visit:**

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**Twitter (X): @GodSquadChurch**  
**Twitch: Godsquadchurch**  
**Or**  
**Scan this QR code**



**Alice Cheeseman is a qualified youth worker and was baptised at age 17. She has been serving and worshipping ecumenically ever since.**

**She volunteers for a vast array of teams over both GodSquad Church and in her local church - Kidlington Baptist Church.**