



Katia Rocks

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Location: Florianópolis, Brazil



What I do: Through a church I helped start, I encourage people, particularly women, to connect with Christ



Bringing hope where people have given up on God and the church

Dear friends,

I am writing on a rainy night here in Florianópolis. Summer has passed and autumn has arrived, bringing that cold wind from the south.

Florianópolis, being an island surrounded by beaches, attracts many tourists in the summer – people from other regions and other South American countries. This past summer, we had many tourists here, which makes it harder to get around. The church also suffers a bit, as many members receive visitors or travel themselves.

Vineyard Floripa

The Sunday services have been amazing, with a move of the Spirit happening. New people are arriving, either because someone invited them or just walking in off the street. People who were searching for Jesus and didn't yet understand are being introduced to him. Since February, we have had a couple, D and O, who have been coming at the invitation of a member. They say they are Catholic but have no commitment to the Catholic Church. D, a young woman in her 30s, was a regular visitor to a Candomblé centre (where African religions are practised). Since her first visit to Vineyard, she and her husband have felt the Holy Spirit, and something new has been happening with them. Since then she has decided to abandon her Candomblé practices and has been inviting neighbours and friends to come to church.

These are answers to prayer. As a church, we have been praying for healed and transformed lives, and God has been moving even among people we didn't know, but whom he brought to us.

At our last women's meeting, Shine, I spoke about when Jesus walks on the water and Peter goes to meet him. I drew an analogy of how we often have "boats" in our lives that give us false security and prevent us from going to meet Jesus. During our small group prayer time, two women opened up about difficulties they have been facing in their families and marriages. Together, we prayed over these situations. Difficult things have happened in my own personal life, and this has made women feel more open to sharing with me. I praise God that he uses all things for the good of those who love him.

I praise God for the mature leaders we have – leaders committed to the kingdom, who have been seeking God with all their hearts and have dedicated themselves to the work of God. People who, despite of having a full-time job, are always available to serve the Lord.

Andy Walsh (my brother-in-law and also a CMS mission partner) and I are preparing, through Vineyard Brazil, to take on the church as pastors alongside a team of leaders. I ask that you keep us in your prayers so that we



Shine, our women's meeting, in March

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**With Jesus
With each other
To the edges**

have wisdom and are attentive to God's voice for everything he has prepared for the church.

Vineyard Floripa's purpose is to glorify God, extend the kingdom and help people come to know Jesus and become his disciples. We want to be a healthy church that makes a difference in our community. This has been our prayer – that we continue in this purpose of helping people become disciples of Jesus. And that all honour and glory go to him.

As a church, we exist to reach the lost. We want to participate in God's mission through evangelism, supporting projects like the Acreditar Project, which hosts a weekly solidarity coffee and helps drug addicts get off the streets. Unfortunately, since my cancer diagnosis, I have had to stop doing street evangelism. But we still support the team with donations and prayers.

We are also involved with Bible discipleship courses that continue in the male prisons of Florianópolis. The course in the women's prison has been suspended for a time, but we continue praying for the doors to open again so we can have a consistent presence inside.

I continue to participate in evangelism at the women's prison monthly, along with the Baptist church. Last month, I had the privilege of participating in the baptism of five women, each one born again to live a new life with Jesus. (Unfortunately, I can't share photos of them.)

On the first Sunday of April, I was again at the women's prison, along with another missionary from the prison chaplaincy, and together we shared the Word and prayed with six cells. The majority of prayer requests were for God to take care of their families, who are anguished because their daughters, wives and mothers are imprisoned.

As a church, we have been working hard to proclaim the kingdom, to make Jesus known and help people relate to him. We have been doing this in our meetings at the church, in homes, on the streets and in more difficult places. We want people to be filled with the Holy Spirit so they can live a life full of God's presence in their daily lives, whether in freedom or in a prison cell. We want them to truly know him.

Health and family

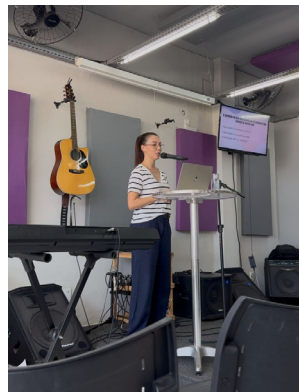
It's been eight months since I finished chemotherapy, and I continue with medical follow-ups and routine exams. At the end of March and the beginning of April, I've been doing several new tests to check if everything is fine. I am waiting for the results before meeting with the doctors again.

Davi and Joanna are doing well. Both attend school in the mornings from 7.30am to 1.00pm. Davi continues with his asthma treatment, especially now with winter approaching. The humidity gets worse here and causes him to have more frequent attacks.

Please pray:

- for the church leadership, that we all maintain the vision and purpose of God for our community
- for new people to come and have a deep encounter with Jesus, for growth in numbers, but also in spiritual maturity within the church
- for all the work done in the prisons of Florianópolis
- for our family, for protection and complete restoration of health

With love, Katia, Joanna and Davi



***Photos from top to bottom:** Buscai, a meeting where we seek God's presence and spend a lot of time in worship and prayer – this last one happened on the last Sunday of March on the beach; Janaina and me on the first Sunday of April in front of the women's prison after spending time with women inside the prison; me preaching at a Sunday service*



Bringing hope where people have given up on God and church

I've been encouraged to hear stories from others who are part of my wider area of work. In Honduras, Carlos had a change of heart working with a Christian ministry, and in the UK Garry Ion reports on how Carlisle's Community Shed is sharing skills, community and Jesus. Read more at churchmissionsociety.org/bringinghope

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