



Andy and Kati Walsh

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Location: Brazil



What we do: Working with local church partners in Florianópolis, helping people in challenging contexts to find hope in Jesus



Discovering creative ways to share the hope of Jesus with people unconnected to church

Dear friends,

We hope this update finds you well. We're excited to share some encouraging developments and prayer points from our life and ministry here in Florianópolis.

On 21 June, Andy was ordained as a pastor in the Vineyard Church in Brazil. The ceremony took place during the annual Vineyard conference, held in São Bento do Sul – a small town around four hours north of Florianópolis. It was a deeply moving and joyful occasion for us, made all the more special by having a group of dear friends from our church there.

This appointment has grown organically from years of active service in the local church since our arrival in January 2022 – particularly through close collaboration with the leadership team.

While this wasn't part of our original mission brief with CMS, it became evident that God was opening the door for us to serve the local church more deeply.

Andy co-pastors the church with one of its founding leaders, enabling continuity in both spheres of mission. We count it a real privilege to serve in both church and prison, with the same vision: to see lives transformed by the gospel and people becoming committed followers of Christ.

After more than three years without formal pastoral oversight, this step also marks a significant moment of renewed stability and direction for the church community. Kati and I continue to invest in emerging leaders, and we're encouraged to see people deepening in faith and stepping up to serve.

We're currently praying about relocating to a larger meeting space. We have outgrown our current venue, and we're exploring options to better serve our Sunday gatherings and midweek ministries. The financial step will be significant, so we're trusting the Lord for wisdom and provision.

By the end of August, we'll have completed three additional 12-week courses in prisons around greater Florianópolis. Since launching this ministry in September 2023, we've delivered around 250 hours of gospel-centred teaching to over 120 men and women. To date, 11 full terms of Prison Fellowship International's discipleship course have been completed across three facilities.

These sessions offer an in-depth exploration of the gospel and its transformative power, even in the most difficult of environments. What continues to move us deeply is what happens beyond the sessions themselves. During their limited time in the courtyards, men often form circles – sometimes of 20 or more – to pray, sing and



*Andy commissioned as pastor
after years of faithful service
and leadership*

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read the Bibles we've distributed through the course. Some even approach me through the bars as I walk past to offer words of encouragement or share what God is doing in their lives. It's deeply humbling.

It's also been an intense and stretching season. I regularly visit three separate prisons each week, offering evangelistic services, Bible teaching, pastoral support and baptisms. These moments have brought profound encounters.

One man, Julio, approached me after a session, visibly distressed, and simply said: "Please pray for my life." As I prayed, tears ran down his face – unashamed before the other men. It reminded me of the tax collector in Luke 18:3–14 – broken, repentant and seeking God's mercy. The very next day, Julio told me he'd been unexpectedly offered a job inside the prison and attributed this to prayer.

These may seem like small moments, but in this context, this is a privilege for just a few in a system. 1,800 inmates are confined for 22 hours a day and in many cases go months without even leaving their cells. These signs of answered prayer are restoring dignity.

When another heard this testimony, within days, they were also offered a role. The word is getting around and now I'm waiting to hear about whether a third person, a former course student, acquired work!

Weekly we pray for healing, and for the families of inmates going through very tough times. And weekly we hear testimonies of God's faithfulness. Praise the Lord!

A growing burden on my heart is to establish a regular space for informal worship within São Pedro de Alcântara penitentiary. Brazilian law actually requires such a space in every unit, but in practice it's rarely implemented. As expected, we've encountered resistance – logistical and bureaucratic: "There's no space," "We can't open the door to one denomination without opening it to all..."

Still, there are glimmers of hope. I've held encouraging meetings with the prison director and head of security, and a further meeting is being scheduled. Pastor Antônio and Kati will join me to discuss a pilot initiative – perhaps starting with open-air gatherings in the courtyards, led by an inter-denominational group of local churches. This would allow any inmates to attend, without placing strain on already stretched resources.

The proposal remains under review, but we'd value your prayers for wisdom, favour and unity. Our hope is that this could become a regular activity in the prison.

We remain deeply thankful for your support, friendship and prayers. Whether in church or prison, in Sunday services or courtyard prayers, we see God faithfully at work – drawing people to himself, one life at a time.

With love and gratitude, Andy, Kati and Eva

PS: Andy in the UK – fundraising opportunities in September

Andy arrives in the UK Tuesday 9 September for a fundraising trip. And he'd love to visit as many of you as possible! Would your church like to host a mid-week or Saturday fundraising event to support Andy and Kati's work?

Browse the fundraising ideas attached and contact Julie at CMS on julie.hinckley@churchmissionsociety.org.uk to book Andy for your event – he'd love to share more stories of God's work in Brazil with you.



Photos from top to bottom: Andy, Eva and Kati; Daniel and Gabriel, former inmates, joyfully welcomed into church community; Baptising an inmate at Sao Pedro with Pastor Antonio - grace behind bars; team day at 18th-century Forte de Ponta Grossa, a Portuguese stronghold against naval invasions



Discovering creative ways to share the hope of Jesus

We've been encouraged to hear stories from others who are part of our 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/bringhope