



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

Dear friends,

Greetings from a lovely warm afternoon in Florianópolis. I just dropped off my children at school and, as I sit down to write this new letter, I realise how fast this year has gone. The end of it is very close, and we are approaching the lovely Christmas season. Life and ministry in Florianópolis have been busy and full of challenges, but what ministry doesn't have its challenges?

Vineyard Floripa church is smaller in number than it used to be, but it remains a church with a vision for mission, to serve those who are in need and those who are on the edges. Over the last few months, some Venezuelan people have moved to Brazil. They are people who are running away from the poverty in their country, and some of them have visited our church and made friends with people from the congregation. The church is helping them by offering jobs when possible, donating clothes, food and even assisting with money.

Unfortunately, we had to move out from the building where the church was based. In August, the owner of the building asked us to vacate, as there was someone else interested in renting the building (and willing to pay more than we could). It was a bit sad, as it was another church that was renting the building. But we understood that if this was happening, it was because God allowed it to happen. We spent the whole month of August and half of September looking for a new building, which was very challenging due to the high rent prices at the moment. At the end of September, we managed to find a new place, though it is smaller than what we used to have. It suits us for the moment.

During the time we were searching for the new building, we had to hold our services at a nearby park twice. It was a good experience, as people from the community who were at the park with their families could join us for worship. Also, during the moving process, we could store our belongings at the Familia de Cristo project, which had some available space to keep them for us until we could relocate them to the new place.

In August, we also had a visit from two CMS colleagues, Paul Tester (Latin America mission manager) and Andy Roberts (global mission director). It was great to have them here; they spent three days with us as part of their time visiting CMS people in mission in Latin America. I'm glad they were here for a Sunday service and a church bring-and-share lunch afterwards. This allowed them to connect with the congregation, and vice versa. They also visited the Familia de Cristo project and a drug rehabilitation centre that we support.

The female prison still only allows us to go once a month, always on the first Sunday of each month. In July, we rejoiced as six women were baptised by Pastor Antônio inside the prison. There may be some others who will be baptised before the end of the year. Even though we can only go once a month, it has been a great



Joanna, Davi and Katia with Paul Tester (CMS manager), Kati, Eva and Andy Walsh (fellow mission partners here) and Andy Roberts (CMS mission director).

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



and deep opportunity to share the gospel with people who are hungry for God. Women who are full of pain and sometimes have little hope that their cases will be judged soon, as the justice system in Brazil can be very slow.

I'm working with my sister and brother-in-law to create a document to present to the prison's governor, proposing an eight-week discipleship training course for new believers. It's a course from Prison Fellowship International, called The Prisoner's Journey. My brother-in-law is already delivering this course at the male prison, and now we are working on trying to secure some remission days on the inmates' sentences for those who take part in the course. Unfortunately, we have not been allowed to run this course or do anything other than what we have been doing in the female

prison. We definitely need prayer for this.

In August, Pastor Antônio, who leads the prison ministry, came to preach at one of our services at Vineyard Floripa, and everyone felt blessed to have him share about his prison ministry. He is a wise man and has been used by God for many years inside the prisons in the Florianópolis region.

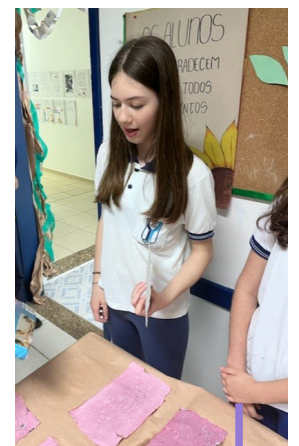
The children are doing well. As the year comes to an end, I can see they are both tired. They have a lot of homework and school assignments to complete. Brazil doesn't have half-terms, so they only have summer (six weeks) and winter (two weeks) holidays. Davi has had many asthma attacks this year, and last month, after finding a very good doctor and undergoing some tests, we discovered that he is allergic to dust, mould and dust mites. He is now receiving the appropriate treatment, so hopefully, everything will be okay.

This week, I've been reflecting on and sharing Isaiah 54:11-14 with some friends, and I'd like to finish this letter by sharing it with you as well. Despite all that happens to us, God is the one who rebuilds us, and this amazing God rebuilds us with precious stones because we are precious to him. Even when we think there is no hope, God says, "I'm rebuilding you with precious and bright stones."

Prayer requests:

- For our family – good health, that we stay close to God and aware of everything he is doing in us, through us and in those around us.
- For the prison ministry – that we can gain favour from the governor of the women's prison and, in the future, run the Bible course and have a more significant presence in the prison. We also ask for wisdom and God's favour when approaching her.
- For the church – in the new location, that new people come and that we all grow together in faith and experiences with the Lord.

With love,
Katia



Photos from top to bottom:
Wednesday night at "Cafe solidario" taking food and talking and praying with the homeless; Sunday service in the new building; Ladies baptised at the women's prison; Joanna at her school talking about recycling in science.



Going further with Church Mission Society

Could God be calling you to follow him to the edges with CMS? We'd love to connect and help you discern what God might be saying. Find out more about how we can help you to step into God's mission at churchmissionsociety.org/explore

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