

Jimmy and Katia Rocks

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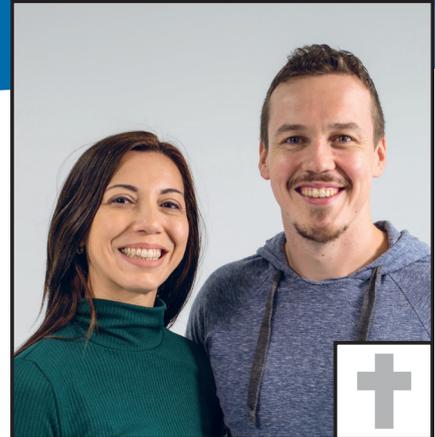
The call in action

Dear friends,

Hope this finds you all well. We can't quite believe how much the world has changed since our last link letter. The first of January is during the summer break here, and with children off school, church activity is light during the month of January. For us the year really gets going after carnival (Ash Wednesday). And our year got off to a good start here, starting Sunday meetings at our congregation plant in the city of São José at the beginning of February. We were investing more in our youth outreach, launching new projects for the community, preparing to host the national Vineyard youth conference at our church, planning conferences with New Wine in three cities, and looking forward to receiving a team from St Michael's Church Stoke Gifford later in the year. Then COVID-19 threw a spanner in the works! **Though it took us all by surprise and has disrupted the world, it certainly hasn't taken God by surprise.** At the time of writing this we are going into our fourth week of lockdown, which is likely in its present form to last into May, with church services and schools likely to come back at the beginning of June. Our work here has taken a different shape as we respond to the needs and challenges here.

Lockdown in a country like Brazil has huge and immediate consequences for folk who don't have a fixed income and do "cash in hand"-type work. At our church we have set up a mini food bank. Over the last three weeks we have helped more than 70 families with food and cleaning products. Some in our church felt the economic impact of the lockdown immediately, causing us as a church to mobilise to support those members. In a short space of time this help was extended to others known to church members who are feeling the effects of lockdown. It has been amazing to see God's provision for the food packets coming in through a mixture of church members, local companies and entities and some folk from the UK who have donated. It's been great to see church members work tirelessly to deliver food parcels to those who are unable to collect. It's been humbling to hear messages from families who have been helped expressing their gratitude to the church at their moment of need.

We have also moved our church meetings to online meetings, and like many churches across the world we are dealing with the challenges of pastoring our community online. The local guidelines allow us to open the church building to meet people one to one while taking the necessary precautions. Though I don't believe that God is responsible for the current pandemic, we have seen God at work in people's lives as they use this time in quarantine to invest in their relationship with him, putting their trust more fully in him as so many other things in which we put our faith are being shaken. Fortunately the spread of COVID-19 hasn't reached the same levels



Name: Jimmy and Katia Rocks

Location: Florianópolis, Brazil

Our call: To share the good news of Jesus, to make followers of Jesus and to plant new churches that will impact the local community positively.

Our role: We are leading a church that we planted, sharing Jesus and training others to do the same.



First Sunday at São José

Continued over the page

here as in the UK. We pray that the quarantine here will be successful at containing the virus and allowing life to return to normal, as we also pray for the UK.

Prayers for the project would be appreciated: **pray for God's ongoing provision, and for the families who are feeling the economic impact to know God's love and care in a tangible way at this time.**

Prior to the outbreak I (Jimmy) travelled back to the UK to attend the New Wine leadership conference in Harrogate and to be part of an international forum there. It was great to be at the conference, reconnecting with old friends and making new friends, and being refreshed spiritually. I also had time to visit family, meeting two nieces born in the last few months, and speak at a few churches during my time there. Though it was a busy time, I came back inspired and appreciative of the time afforded to me back in the UK, allowing me time out to take stock and think and pray through our ministry here in Brazil. I also made it back about a week before there were major disruptions to international flights.

As a family, given the present circumstances we are doing well. The children haven't left the complex where we live much since lockdown began. Katia has been helping them with their school work which the school continues to send them. She has also been very active in the organisation of the food bank here, as we seek to steward resources as best we can to help those who need them most. We are taking regular exercise at home. Prayer for protection and good health for us as a family would be appreciated. **Pray too for wisdom as we seek to respond to the needs and challenges here.** Though we are unable to gather in person we have made it clear that we seek to continue being church, sharing Jesus and living out his kingdom. Pray for the church here in Florianópolis and the congregation plant in São José, that we would all come out of this time strengthened in our faith and eager to make the most of our time to reach those around us with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Much love,

Jimmy, Katia, Joanna & Davi



Photos from top to bottom: Children's schooling for the foreseeable future; church service streamed from our home; organising food packs for delivery; recent family selfie

GOING FURTHER WITH CHURCH MISSION SOCIETY

Prayer is the engine room of mission: We would love you to join us as a praying community around the world with our weekly prayer email. We also have prayer networks for Africa and Latin America. **Go to churchmissionsociety.org/prayer**

If you would like to discuss your mailings with us or to receive this link letter on a regular basis, please email supporter.care@churchmissionsociety.org or call 01865 787400

You can give to Jimmy and Katia at:
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