



# 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



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

Dear friends,

Over the past three months, since settling back into our second term here in Brazil, we've experienced both exciting progress and some significant new challenges in our ministry within the prison system. This period has opened doors to potential new opportunities for sharing the gospel and discipling new believers in ways we hadn't anticipated. We are ever grateful for your steadfast support and prayers.

You may remember that last year we shared that there was a significant shortfall in our funding. Thank you so much to those who have given sacrificially to help us with this. Although the situation has improved, our funding situation is not fully sustainable yet. Please pray with us for our God who provides to meet that gap. If you are able to increase your regular giving or to give an additional gift this year we would really appreciate you prayerfully considering it. You can give online at [churchmissionsociety.org/Walsh](https://churchmissionsociety.org/Walsh), by calling 01865 787489 or by completing the enclosed form if you received this letter through the post. Thank you so much for walking on this mission journey with us.

Shortly after returning to Brazil, we encountered our first major obstacle. On attempting to restart the discipleship course, the prison governor notified us that we would need to extend the programme to offer a more substantial and impactful course for sentence remission purposes. Initially, this seemed like a setback, as it required additional approval from Prison Fellowship International (PFI) and the judge responsible for prison sentencing. Thankfully, both PFI and the judge moved quickly to provide authorisation. Despite not being a Christian, the judge took the time to formally endorse our course's transformative impact to each of the three prison governors, stating, "This is a highly successful project." She noted the course's rapid expansion and its positive effects on the inmates, affirming that it's now running successfully across three prison units with the full support of each administration. This commendation lifted our spirits and renewed our resolve.

This term, we concluded another course at the women's prison, though this group presented some unique challenges. The participants were particularly young and attendance varied, with conflicts among the inmates disrupting the flow. Yet, we've been reminded to trust God's work, even in the midst of such disorder.

Meanwhile, the men's Bible course is now underway and we're encouraged by their engagement. We would be so grateful for your prayers for these men – that the gospel would take root and bring lasting transformation in their lives. Every session is an opportunity for them to encounter Jesus in a personal way. We help each person understand the gospel according to the Word and we are committed to conveying its meaning effectively.

While these initial developments seemed promising, we recently faced another setback as our activities in the women's prison were suspended due to logistical constraints and staff shortages in the prison. We have



*Pastor Luis Magalhães shares a bold vision: a church in every prison – a call to transform lives behind bars*

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



scheduled a meeting with the judge to discuss when we can realistically resume, likely in early 2025.

For several months, God has been stirring our hearts toward a long-term vision to plant a church within the prison. This idea had been building in our prayers and discussions and it felt affirmed when we attended a Baptist church training conference in the city led by Pastor Luis Magalhães from Curitiba, Paraná, who coordinates prison ministry nationally. His presentation opened with the phrase, "A church in each penitentiary," which struck us

deeply as we realised that God might indeed be calling us to pursue this vision.

With no hesitation, Andy drafted a formal proposal to implement this vision locally with support from the Baptist church. Working through some minor amendments, we have been advised to present this proposal to the prison authorities at the start of 2025. We've also connected with another Baptist pastor who pioneered similar work in Campo Grande, Mato Grosso do Sul over 30 years ago, and his experience will help shape our approach. This work may take years, but if the Lord wills it, we trust it will come to fruition.

In addition to our prison ministry focus, Kati and I have both taken on more significant roles in leading the Vineyard church. Andy preaches regularly on Sundays. Working closely with other leaders, our focus has been on sharing and strengthening the Vineyard vision and values within our community. We've been intentional about identifying and appointing new leaders who align with our core values: worship, fellowship, discipleship and mission.

Each of these areas represents a cornerstone of our church life, and by appointing leaders with the right character and giftings into these ministries, we are establishing a foundation that will support growth and reach people within the congregation and beyond. We're excited about what's taking shape and look forward to sharing more about this journey with you in the near future.

As we continue, we always deeply value your prayers and would be so grateful if you could please pray specifically for breakthrough in these areas:

- ▶ For swift approval from the governor to resume our activities in the women's prison; that the prison would be sufficiently resourced and that every stronghold hindering the gospel's work would be broken.
- ▶ For wisdom as I complete the proposal for planting churches in prisons, that it is received favourably by key decision makers and that we would navigate this journey with grace and faith.
- ▶ That the judge continues to endorse this ministry, acquiring favour with the authorities and that we would encounter key individuals with strategic influence who can advance this mission.
- ▶ Please pray for the Lord's anointing as we grow as leaders within Vineyard Floripa and as we proclaim the gospel – through prison bars, in the courtyards, and within the classrooms – that we would see more lives impacted and lasting fruit.

Thank you for walking alongside us in this journey. We know we're not alone in this mission! Your prayers and support sustain us as we witness God's transforming power in settings that are particularly challenging. We are grateful for each of you and pray God's blessings over you.

With love and thanks,

Andy, Kati and Eva



*Photos from top to bottom: Andy preaching the gospel of the Kingdom at Palhoça penitentiary; a glimpse into transformation: one of our graduates from the discipleship course at Florianópolis women's prison; inmates stand prepared for baptism at São Pedro de Alcântara maximum security prison; men dedicated to new life – embracing baptism even in the murky waters*



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

**We've loved hearing recent mission stories from others in our area of work.**

Jonathan in Ecuador has grown spiritually and got his first job as he's gained life skills, and a Breakfast Club in Hull celebrated 25 years of food, community and steps of faith.

Read more at [churchmissionsociety.org/bringhope](https://churchmissionsociety.org/bringhope)