

A New Beginning in João Pessoa

About a year ago Phil and I (Jen) Snell felt that God was beginning to prepare our hearts for a new season. We didn't know for certain what that would look like but we sensed it involved changes, possibly big ones.

We had just completed our first full year in Maraba, learning the language, continuing the Alpha program, starting a girls and boys ministry and just generally getting involved in as many aspects of the church as possible.

We had already made some deep relationships so it came as a surprise to us when we began to hear God saying he had plans for us elsewhere, possibly outside of Maraba.

In December we felt confident that God was calling us further afield and so our search began for our new home. We combined our search with bringing Alpha training to several bases that had been asking for us to come and help them get it started.

In a "planes, trains and automobiles" journey that took us to Santarem, Macapa, Portel and Joao Pessoa. In the end, we felt a clear call to Joao Pessoa.

Joao Pessoa is the capital of the state of Paraiba on the northeast coast of Brazil and is one of seven cities that are part of a bigger vision for bringing the good news to new areas of Brazil for the Xingu mission. It is large city with over 800,000 people and growing.

Currently, there is a small group of Vineyard couples meeting weekly. They are the core of what we hope will become the next Vineyard church.

Moving to a new, big city comes with challenges and exciting opportunities. We will be fully dependent on God's leading for location and how to begin to connect and reach out to the people of what's known by it's residents as 'Jampa'.

In October we will travel to Jampa for one month to get to know the city and look for accommodations and once we have secured a home we will travel back to Maraba to organize our move and say our good-byes. Good-byes are never easy, and Maraba and the people there will always hold a very special place in our hearts.



Joao Pessoa church planting team



XM Field Report

Planting Churches & Training Leaders

Go and make Disciples

In 2004 I (Rick) started a bible study on our porch with a group of neighbourhood men, including the five men in the photo below. We drank strong, sweet, coffee, sipped mate' tea from a gourd, and we told stories. Eventually we read some Bible verses from one of the gospels, and pondered the meaning together. Those were days of conversations, laughter, story-telling, and animated discussions rather than formal top-down teaching. Clyde and Keith started going on outings with these neighbours, fishing and walking in the jungle. Deanna helped with occasional cook-outs at our house. At the same time Elba was spending time with their wives. As time went on Elba and Steve brought some of them into church leadership, and Keith and Marsha took others on church-planting trips to the Interior.

Most of the men at that Bible study would have considered themselves far from God, when it first started, yet in the years that followed several of them became leaders in the church. Like the parable of the sower and the seeds, the other men from that group went

various ways. Some flared up and faded out, but some of them were consecrated as pastors at the 2016 national InterVinha conference in Brasilia.

Discovery Bible Studies are one way to help people get started on the right track, to get them moving from no-interest to full-on Christian leadership. They are a way for us to obey the Great Commission.

1. Hang out with people. Be non-judgmental. Be friendly and real. Value their stories and friendship. Show them how Christians live. Show them how to interact with God's Word.



Rick's group of disciples

Donation in USA
Xingu Mission - PO Box 340785
Columbus, Ohio 43234



Donation in Canada
P.O. Box 14072 Trethewey PO
Abbotsford BC V2T 0B4

Go and make Disciples

2. Baptize them.
 3. Teach them to obey Jesus.
 “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” Matthew 28:19-20a.
 Please pray for our leaders in Brazil, that we will be able to help many more people get on the right path, to help them move from far-from-God to zealous Christians.



Blessing Joao and Ivanildo as pastors at the National Vineyard Conference. Joao and Ivanildo were a part of the original group Rick started

Community Center

The needs in the community where our Maraba church is based are many. Poverty is part of life for most of our church members. Our deep desire has been to find ways to meet needs, bring in more education both formal and life skill related.

A year or so ago, as part of his Masters degree, Rick set up something called a ‘World cafe’. We invited our neighbours in for breakfast to hear what they had to say about our involvement in the community, what they had already appreciated that we had done and what they would like to see in the future.



Laying the bricks for the Community Center



Brainstorming sessions

We learned that there were many people in our community who had a skill or knowledge base that they were willing to share with others. A retired teacher had a passion to teach people to read, a dietician wanted to teach people about good nutrition, just to mention a few.

We had the people, now we needed the space. Along with the dreams of a community project, our Sunday school was busting at the seams. We needed a new, dedicated space.

In November 2015 we had a team from the Snell’s sending church come down and in their preparations they raised funds to help build the community building (CDR). Having

a team visit from their church was life-giving in so many ways, not to mention the life it breathed into making this building a reality.

A few months later the building was completed and stands ready to receive those who want to learn. One of the first programs set to run out of the new building was going to help people who wanted to further their education but lacked the funds to do it.

There are many programs the government offers for people to gain entry to university for free, but there are many who don’t know how the system works. Eliel, our youth pastor, was set to run a course to teach people how to study for the tests and what options were available to people who didn’t gain a full scholarship. We hope that it is just the beginning for Maraba and our beloved neighbourhood. With new skills and knowledge, coupled with a relationship with Jesus their lives can change beyond our imagination.



The Community Center