

James and Heather Cochrane

Location: **Porto, PORTUGAL**

Mission: **Church planting**



It is hard to believe that we moved to Porto from the Algarve almost nine years ago, in July 2013. From July to December 2013 we took time, with our missionary co-workers, to flesh out the Comunidade Pedras Vivas (CPV) church planting project. James' Master's thesis on the missional church fed into our thinking and led us to adopt six principles:

1. To be a missional church,
2. shaped and molded by the biblical narrative,
3. gospel-centered and gospel-driven,
4. called to witness to the kingdom of God by word and deed,
5. collectively sensitive to the Spirit and
6. attentive to our context.

We have sought to follow these principles over the years and, as new people arrive in CPV, we continually cast vision and bring these principles before them.

During the last few weeks we had the opportunity to reflect on these principles through several visiting preachers. We were delighted to receive the Moderator of PCI, Rt Rev Dr David Bruce, who visited us over a long weekend. He preached a very challenging address to CPV on the characteristics of a healthy, missional church. Just a few days later another event organised by a colleague in Porto, called 'One God, One Church and One Calling' reminded us, through a visiting preacher (USA) of the importance of unity in and between churches to reach the nation of Portugal. James was also encouraged after taking part in the PCI 'A Time to Plant' conference in Dundalk, an opportunity to reflect with other church planters in Ireland.

We feel blessed to have taken part in these events and thank God for the encouragement we received. It is our prayer, however, that these events would spur us on and help us (and CPV members) to understand, implement and live out what we learned.



Prayer points

- Give thanks for visiting preachers and conferences and pray that CPV would be encouraged to continue its work of making disciples in Portugal.
- Pray that, as we cast vision among CPV members, that there would be an openness, especially from those who come from other countries, to adapt to the context in which we live.
- Pray for us as we plan for the summer. It's the first summer in a couple of years when we have no restrictions to navigate. Pray for our young people, that there may be an opportunity to get them together over the summer months.