

James and Heather Cochrane

Location: **Porto, PORTUGAL**

Mission: **Church planting**



In February we had the opportunity to return to Porto and visit *Pedras Vivas* church. We were invited by the church to celebrate their first anniversary (as a constituted church.) It was a joy for us to be part of worship on this Sunday, with James enjoying the opportunity to preach in Portuguese again. We were encouraged to see how the church has continued to thrive and grow to the point that the church will probably have to move to larger premises in the coming months. It was a delight to see how the elders, deacons and other ministry leaders are serving the church with such commitment and dedication and to hear of new ministries that have been introduced. We praise God that, even though *Pedras Vivas* has been vacant, the church has in no way become stagnant.

As we mentioned in our last bulletin, the leadership of *Pedras Vivas* identified Pastor Leonardo as a candidate to take on the role of pastor. During an extended period of 6 weeks in Porto in December/January, Leonardo was interviewed by presbytery and received by the denomination (ICPP) to be the pastor of *Pedras Vivas*. Pastor Leonardo and his wife Daniela are from Brazil but are currently in the US where Leonardo is doing some post graduate study. They plan to arrive in Portugal in June. We ask you to pray for them as they wait for their visas to be issued and as they prepare to come to Portugal, where the culture, life and ministry are very different.



On a personal level, it was lovely for us to catch up with members of the church. We enjoyed many visits in different homes and ate too much good food! It was also a time for us to tie up some practical loose ends, like closing bank accounts and visiting the tax office, given that we will not be returning to live there. This felt very final and was not easy. As we stepped onto the plane in Porto for our return trip to Ireland, we had mixed emotions – we felt happy and blessed, having had the privilege to serve in Portugal for 15 years but, at the same time, we felt sadness as we left behind a city we loved and people who have become like family.

But God is good, and we know that He will be with us as we continue to serve Him in Ireland. Heather will be taking up a part time job with Latin Link (maternity cover) as Ireland Coordinator. She is excited about this, and we give thanks to God for this opportunity. James is still waiting for clear direction.



Prayer Points

- Give thanks for our recent trip to Porto and for the many encouragements we experienced.
- Give thanks for Pastor Leonardo and his wife Daniela. Pray that they will adapt to life and ministry in Portugal.
- Praise God with us for the privilege of serving Him in Portugal for 15 years.
- Give thanks for Heather's new job with Latin Link which begins on 15th April.
- Pray that all would become clear for James in the coming weeks.