

# the LISBON

focus

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## 10 years of youth camp



We praise the Lord for what He did at youth camp this year. Camp for us is always a major undertaking, as we actually plan/run every part of our camp unlike many churches who pay their fee and “off they go”. We actually don’t even have a proper “church camp” property, so 10 years ago, our colleagues (the Smiths and the Edwards) hosted the first youth camp at a municipal campground with a half a dozen tents and a handful of kids. Over the years, it has grown with the participation of several churches. This year, there was a total of 74 campers (21 adults and 53 youth). As the number of campers has grown, so have the logistical challenges. We bring every single thing necessary, including clotheslines and clothespins for 74 campers to dry their towels, as well as toilet paper and dish soap for 74 people. How can one predict how much toilet paper 74 people will use in a week? That’s a great question, and our colleagues do an amazing job calculating, shopping for, storing, and transporting all of those supplies to camp. It takes a half a dozen workers all day to set up 25-30 tents and prepare for the arrival of the campers. They then cook in a literal tent, wash hundreds of dishes by hand daily in a “dish washing” pavilion, and lay down their tired bodies at night on an air mattress next to tents of rowdy campers – and all with a sweet attitude of ministry and service. We had a long list of **logistical obstacles** arise the week leading up to camp, more than any previous year, I believe. This included things such as broken down vehicles, a change of management at the campground that caused them to not want to honor our reservation, and Valerie getting the flu the day before camp started. But once we made it to camp, there was a calm and peace that had not been present in past years. This year, there was a sweet spirit between the campers (even taking some fist fights between girls into consideration) and it was smooth sailing for the most part.



*Two things in particular were a huge blessing to me this year – watching our team work together so well in their areas of gifting and seeing “tenured” campers come back as counselors and workers. Beau was the evening speaker, we organized the music and some games, and Valerie spoke to a group of girls each morning. As I taught the girls, they found scriptures in their Bibles on their own, nodded their heads in understanding and agreement, and answered questions correctly making me realize this was not the first time they had heard these truths (as is usually the case), and they were getting it! What a blessing! These young people are learning, maturing and becoming faithful ministers in their churches in between youth camps! Many spiritual decisions were made throughout the week, including **5 decisions for salvation**. Praise the Lord for how He is working in each life.*



## our “own” building

In our last letter, we mentioned the possibility we could be **losing our meeting place**. It was our desire to be able to sublet or sign our own lease on that building, but finally that was not an option. God led us back to the building we originally had our eyes set on (“Domino’s Baptist Church”, we joke – because it shares a wall with Domino’s pizza) though we had been scared away by how much work it needed. It is completely common in Portugal to rent a building that has nothing – no ceiling, no floor, no walls, and no electric work – but we weren’t sure we were up to the task. But finally, God gave us peace, and **our churches and individual supporters so generously gave** for us to be able to undertake this project, and we are happy to report that we are 28 days in, and we now have a floor, walls, ceiling, and tomorrow – lights!! We look forward to how God will use this space for outreach in our area and for the gathering of a local church on Sundays. Thank you for your prayers, encouragement, and support.

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