

# the LISBON

focus

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## THEN V.S. NOW

One of the best things about the “New Year” is hope for a fresh start. What a stark contrast this year has already been to last year!! We spent ALL of **last year praying for tax exempt status** to be able to open our youth center as a ministry of our church. The purchase was pending for 11 ½ months. Finally, at just under the year mark, it was granted. **We were able to finalize the purchase of the building January 6<sup>th</sup>** and begin work on the inside.



Through donations from supporting churches, we have been able to install flooring, office walls, air conditioning, and now a ceiling. Next will be lighting and a kitchenette. We also have a ping-pong table, a PS4 and a flat-screen TV. We are praying churches will fund items such as tables, couches, bean bags, a computer and printer, and wall art. If you would like to know what we need and the estimated costs of these items, we will be happy to make that information available to you. Pray for us as we juggle our current ministries, our family, and progress on this project.

**Last year** we “suffered through” our **lowest Sunday attendances of the past 5 years**, but **this year**, **our auditorium has been steadily full** and visited by new faces. Two sisters, their families, and in-laws have attended. Some have joined by letter and two men, Adolfo and Antunes, are currently in one-on-one discipleship.



**Last year, we did without one of our most faithful and talented children/youth/music workers.** What a difference one faithful member makes in a small church!! This month she completed a year-long missions internship in Germany and **this week she will be returning to Portugal.** She surrendered to be a missionary as a teenager and after this internship, is sure that this is still God’s plan for her life. **She will be supported by our church and 3 others as a missionary here in Portugal,** working in our youth center as well as youth camps, VBS’s, material translation, and much more. Though our small church already supported other missionaries, what a privilege for us to send and support one of our own.

Of course the passing of time couldn’t be any more obvious than in children! At this time **last year**, **Owen was completing his post-nicu follow-up appointments** for things like failed hearing tests, extra fluid on his brain, a hole in his heart, and sensitive lungs. Test after test came back 100% perfect. What a merciful God we serve!



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