

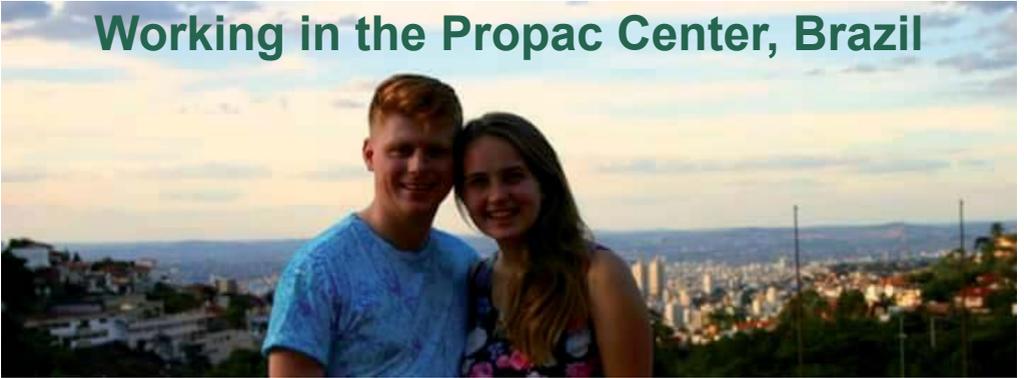
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Emmanuel International UK News
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APRIL 2016

Working in the Propac Center, Brazil



Callum Adams and Rianne Offereins worked in the Propac Center in Águas Formosas in Brazil from 28 October 2015 until 7 April 2016. Callum wrote to tell us the impact of this experience on his life and faith.

Brazil was a life changing experience. I can safely say that it was God at work. He wanted us there. When we first arrived in Brazil, we weren't so sure. We were wondering "was this us just wanting to go visit an exotic country?" but looking back, I can see God. I can see why he sent us there. Why? He used this experience to make me grow: spiritually, emotionally and mentally. He challenged the principles I thought I knew. He opened my eyes to the Gospel and Jesus in a new light, a new culture. As Fred Silva said beautifully during our debrief: "In each culture you have the Gospel, and you have it's 'para-Gospel'; something which people add to the gospel from each place."

That may sound like an obvious observation, but it struck me deeply. I am 21 years old. I've spent 2 years serving in churches. I want to live for God. And yet, I could see that there was so much 'para-Gospel' that I had taken in. Brazil was a chance to take another look at what I believe, at how to live out my faith where I am.

What we were doing

We were based in a small town in Águas Formosas. The population is around 18,000 people. We were helping Propac, an NGO designed to socially support kids from poor, neglected or abused families. Propac gives them the opportunities their rich or middle class equivalents have, such as computing and music lessons. Propac works to break the cycle of poverty in the children, enabling them to do more, achieve more and strive for more. This is the aim of the project socially. But of course, this is all put into a Christian context.



Rianne teaching music

Brazilian culture is Christian, but following or living the Christian faith is another matter for some. To reach the kids, you need to give them an understanding of the Bible and of Jesus, above or beyond the culture; beyond the “go to church 3 times a week” and “go for the sake of going”. Give them Jesus himself. We found this challenging.

Many of the children have behavioural issues: lack of obedience, self-control, self-worth - you name it, I’m sure you’d find it. Why? Because all these kids come from very broken families. This makes the job even harder: you need to teach them obedience but you need to love them and show the Propac Center is a safe place to be, so that they will want to be there. You want them to grow



Callum teaching computing

and to teach them, but you want to build relationships as well. It was difficult as doing both can seem contrasting from time to time. We had to teach them that there is a time to play and a time to work.

That is part of what makes Project Propac amazing. In the impossibility and difficulties, that is where God is at work. He is making things possible, providing the funds, and working in the kids.

Rianne and I felt initially as if we have achieved very little, but from the differences we saw in the last week, we could see the children acted differently. There was more of a sense of hope in them. They understood that Propac was there to help them, rather than just a second school. It is a safe house, a rescue point, a family.



The new Propac Building

Life is not easy for the children. Many of them have to work and find jobs from as young as 10, because of poverty. Rianne and I, as visitors, knew that we could leave the poor conditions behind. We could see the pain and we could help treat the wounds while we were there, and then we could walk away. But those kids could never leave their circumstances behind. They have to suffer, live with abuse, with rags for clothes or without their dads. These circumstances show the need for the Gospel. Not only do the kids need to forgive their parents, but they also need to help their families. Only the Gospel will truly reach the hearts of the families.

In a divided society, with cultural rules and ways of life, crossing the border into Christian life requires courage, support and a strong, real faith. That is the hardest challenge of all: providing the help they need. I think that we cannot always see where we are creating walls, how our ways of living make us inaccessible or where we could reach out to others. For the children we worked with, the barrier is often church: Christians go to church all the time, they don't drink, they wear nice clothes to church and they say "God bless" all the time. That makes it hard for the poor and

those looked down upon. Realising this opened my eyes to how I do it myself: we look at faith as our own salvation, we do good deeds to feel saved, we say the right things to feel saved and to look good... We are looking out for ourselves. We go to church and leave after the service ended, rather than being a connected family who share in love and all things.

One thing I loved about Brazil is that what is yours, is to share: your food, others would eat; your bed, others could sleep. That is their culture. There is a sense of "a bigger family". It broke down barriers in society in one way. In a general sense there was hope. I shall never forget the family setting and sense of belonging you could have there. It made me want that here in England too: opening my life, giving out to others more, changing others by changing myself first.

Was this a good experience?

Yes, it wasn't perfect and it wasn't easy, but it was good. It was spiritually sustaining, testing and growing. So, overall it was an amazing experience. I would highly recommend it to others. Serving God by just following him is the best thing I've ever done and will ever do.



Callum and Rianne are getting married!



Callum and Rianne are getting married on Saturday 30 April 2016. Please pray for God's blessing on their union and that his calling will be fulfilled in their lives.

John Naudé



John Naudé was licensed as Associate Vicar at The Point Church on 23 April 2016. John has recently returned from Malawi, after serving there for 4 years with Emmanuel International.

Dates for your diary

Board meeting: 20 May 2016

EIUK Summer Event: 9 July 2016

EIUK Garden Party/ Summer Social

9 July 2016
starting at 11 am

Trinity Church
Hindes Road, Harrow, HA1 1RX

Children are welcome!

We are thankful to Trinity Church Harrow for hosting us again this year. It is easy to get to, with plenty of parking available nearby (more details on how to get there on our website).

We will have an opportunity to hear from **Andy and Angela Sharpe** and **John Naudé**. Andy and Angela have returned from Tanzania at the end of 2015, where Andy worked with the Water Projects and Angela taught English and helped with Office Finance and Admin. John and his son, Samuel, returned in March 2016 from their time in Malawi, where he taught pastors at the Bible College of the Evangelical Baptist Church of Malawi. We also plan to Skype some of the other families who are overseas, to hear first-hand news from them.



Please bring a light lunch to enjoy in the middle of the day. At 5pm we'll have a BBQ, which will offer ideal time for catching up. Food will be provided for the BBQ. Please let us know at the office

if you are coming so that we can let the catering team know how many people to expect. You don't have to stay for the BBQ if you have other plans for the evening or it would be too long a day.