



Postcards from Portugal

September 2026 | Samuel & Emily Loa-Ferreira
Serving Jesus in Portugal

Olá precious prayer partners,

It has been a fully and busy summer (we apologise for the slightly delayed newsletter), but full of good things that remind us of how God is at work in Portugal, as you will read about in our newsletter below. It is a privilege to be sent here by you to take part in His work, and to have you uphold us and this ministry in prayer. We continue to thank God for you!

With love in Christ, Emily and Sam.

A snapshot of the summer



Sam was guest preacher at several churches in Coimbra, while regular preachers were on summer holidays.



We enjoyed a family holiday in the north of Portugal (but were not brave enough to swim in the chilly Atlantic Ocean!)



Sam and his dad preparing sardines for the barbie - the Portuguese equivalent of "shrimp on the barbie" ;)



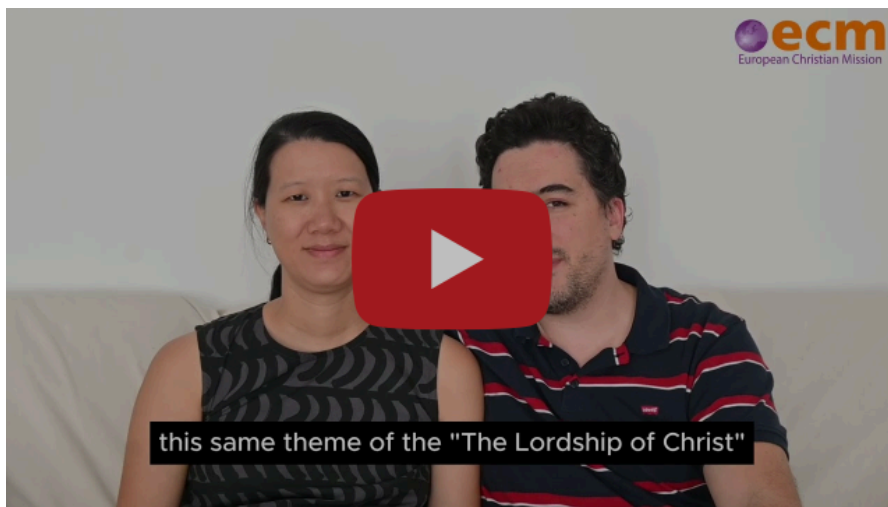
Grilled sardines - the quintessential Portuguese summer food. One of the best tastes and smells of summer!



Em finished up the bookclub [Motherhood: How the gospel shapes our purpose and priorities](#) with the group of Portuguese mums working in Christian ministry. It has been a source of great mutual encouragement, and a highlight of the year for Em.

A new academic year exploring "The Lordship of Jesus"

[Click to watch the video or read the transcript below](#)



[Video transcript]: It is the beginning of a new academic year, with tens of thousands of students arriving on university campuses across Portugal.

Our theme in the GBU this semester is "The Lordship of Jesus"- that is, submitting every area of life to Jesus and live his way.

This theme shaped our recent national GBU conference, where around 60 students from across Portugal gathered to hear Bible talks on **Jesus as Lord of our work** - thinking about God's purposes for work from creation through to the new creation.

Sam also led a seminar on **Jesus as Lord of our money**, helping students see from the Bible that our money ultimately belongs to God, and that we are called to steward it with an eternal perspective.

And the Bible studies Em wrote on the Psalms were launched at the conference. These eight studies explore **Jesus as Lord of our emotions**, looking at the emotions expressed in the Psalms and what a godly response to them looks like. They'll be used in around 40 GBU Bible study groups across Portugal, and we're praying they'll be a real blessing to students.

Here in Coimbra, this same theme of "The Lordship of Jesus" shaped our recent planning days with the student leadership team. **Our weekly public Bible talks will explore questions like: What does it look like for Jesus to be Lord of my prayer life, my relationships, my rest, and my service of others?**

We'd love prayer that Christian students in GBU would grow in maturity as they learn to

follow Jesus in every area of life - and that non-Christian students would be challenged in their worldview, and become curious about what the Bible has to say about these topics!



"Jesus as Lord of our work" - the theme of the main bible talks at the recent GBU Portugal National Conference



"Jesus as Lord of my money" - a seminar Sam led at the GBU National Conference



"Jesus as Lord of my emotions" - the theme of the bible study series Em wrote in the Psalms. These studies were launched at the GBU National Conference.



The GBU Coimbra leadership team reading Matthew 16, reflecting on what it means for Jesus to be Lord of our lives, and allowing that to shape our plans for the semester ahead.



Our first GBU Coimbra event for this academic year - a welcome picnic. There was a very big turnout! **About 1/3 of these students are newcomers.**

More harvest workers for Portugal

Meet Alan and Kathleen Portes, final year students at Sydney Missionary and Bible College. They are with us in Coimbra for the next month, getting a taste of university ministry in Portugal and Portuguese life and culture to see whether they could serve here long-term. Both are Australian born and raised, although Alan is also Portuguese, has family in Portugal and speaks the language (sound kind of familiar?!). We'd love to have more co-workers with us in Coimbra, but of course, only if it's God's will! Will you join us in praying for Alan and Kathleen, for prayerful processing of their time with us and wise discernment of God's will for their future?



For your prayers... coming up!

- **This month: Restarting of regular GBU Coimbra activities** - weekly public bible talks, weekly bible studies and 1-2-1 discipleship of students.
- **September/October: Sam running bible study leaders training course** online for GBU students across Portugal.
- **October 3rd: Em giving evangelistic bible talk** at church women's "crafternoon" event.
- **October: Sam giving the GBU Coimbra weekly public bible talks.**
- **Mid-November: Baby girl is due!**

- November and December: Em's parents staying with us, taking of maternity/ paternity leave, and adjusting to being a family of 4!



Baby Bump! Em and baby are healthy and well, apart from the physical tiredness and discomfort of this last trimester. She is due in Mid-November :)

Prayer Points

- Praise God for a lovely summer holiday and special times spent with Sam's family.
- Praise God for the start of a new academic year, new opportunities to proclaim Jesus as Lord, and for a unified and enthusiastic GBU Coimbra leadership team.
- Pray that this semester's focus on "The Lordship of Jesus" would lead to Christian GBU students submitting more of their life to Jesus, and that non-Christian students would be challenged in their worldview, and take steps towards knowing Jesus.
- Pray for Alan and Kathleen Portes, an Australian couple who are considering serving in Portugal long-term. Pray for prayerful processing of their time with us and wise discernment of God's will for their future.
- Pray for a smooth end of pregnancy for Em, a smooth birth and adjustment as a family of 4. Pray that one day our little girl may know and worship the God who made her.

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We are serving with European Christian Mission ([ECM](http://ecm.org)). ECM's vision is to see the peoples of Europe transformed in the name of Jesus Christ through evangelism, discipleship and church planting in partnership with local believers across Europe.