



# الخدمات اللوثرية العربية

## ARABIC LUTHERAN MINISTRIES

### 2020 Report



From the desk of  
Rev. Dr. Abjar Bahkou

Dear Partners in Mission, in just a few months our world experienced significant change. For many, 2020 was a year of uncertainty. Nearly every aspect of our daily lives was changed by COVID-19. Economic downturn, political and social unrest, international tensions, and the list goes on. Chaos defined the year. In 1928, Dietrich Bonhoeffer wondered: “who can bring help as we face these destructive realities? Who can deliver us from sin and death?” and then he answers “Only one! Our Lord delivers us from sin and death... Soon we shall acknowledge that our Lord Jesus Christ comes into our world, into our homelessness, into our sin, and into our death.” Just as Bonhoeffer stated “Only one! Our Lord delivers us from sin and death”, that has been the conviction and the commitment of

Arabic Lutheran Ministry this year. Amid a chaotic world, we remain committed to delivering the unchanging Word of God to an ever-changing world. God is faithful to His promise that His Word will never return void. So, as we look back on 2020 with gratitude to God and His provision. We are ready to move forward into what he has next for us. Arabic Lutheran Ministry continues to grow at a pace that we never could have imagined. The number of Arabs (Muslims and Christians) turning to us for Bible strong teachings and resources has grown exponentially in every facet of our ministry this year. Our team is committed to continuing our mission to preach the Word and impact the world. Because only our Lord Jesus Christ can deliver us from sin and death. But we need you to keep standing with us. There is more to do, and our God-given ministry will not slow down. I am grateful that we can be on this adventure together. Thank you for your incredible partnership in this mission of building God’s Kingdom.

In Him,  
Executive Director, Rev. Dr. Abjar Bahkou

# STRATEGIC PLANNING

**Arabic Lutheran Ministries  
Strategic Plan 2025**



**Media Ministry + Publications**



**Training Field Workers**



**Partnership With Churches**

As an ethnic ministry, we envision planting Arabic speaking LCMS Churches, disciplining, and training leaders and Church planters, nationally and internationally. In 2020, the Arabic Lutheran Ministries team developed a five-year strategic plan to meet the challenges that the world is facing. The mission's strategy has three main focuses. First, media ministry and publications; we continue to use multiple media platforms to preach, teach, and disciple Arabic people from all over the world. Second, training field workers. We are a 503-C Non-Profit Organization and an LCMS

Recognized Social Organization (RSO). In partnership with LCMS International and the National Mission Office and in collaboration with Concordia Seminary Global Engagement, we are working to create online training courses in Arabic for Arabic speaking men and women who desire to be certified pastors, deacons, deaconesses, and missionaries in the LCMS and its partner Synods worldwide. Third, expand our partnership with churches and mission societies locally and globally. In this end of the year report we are sharing with our partners and supporters how are we following up with these three goals.

## PARTNERING WITH LCMS



In February of 2020, Pastor Bahkou met at the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod International Center with Rev. Bob Zagore, Executive Director of National Mission, and Rev. Daniel McMiller Executive Director of the International Mission, and other officials to discuss partnership with Arabic Lutheran Ministries on the National and International Level.

December 2, 2020, our Board had a Zoom meeting with Deaconess Dorothy Krans, Director of Recognized Social Organization at LCMS, and her assistant Cara Patton. The purpose was to interview our board, learn about our ministry, and the privileges of being an RSO member.



## MEDIA MINISTRY



Arabic Lutheran Ministries continue worldwide Media Ministry. The teaching based on Luther's Catechism is reaching the most remote areas of the world. In addition to Social Media, several International Christian Channels are requesting to post our teachings on their channels. Our partnership with the Worldwide Multilanguage JC World TV continues to develop: our ministry now oversees the whole Arabic Language Program. This requires financial responsibility on our part. JC World TV Board of

Directors has asked our ministry to contribute \$500 a month for the next three years. This will help create more programs to reach broader audiences. Currently, we are partnering with different Christian groups on different Social Media platforms. As of November 2020, we have been able to reach over 800,000 followers. Our goal is enlarging the broadcast area to reach over 300 Million Arabs in the Middle East and Africa, this will require recruiting and partnering with other Arabic-speaking Lutheran teachers and pastors that can broadcast their teachings on JC World TV-Arabic. The goal is to air programs with our ministry teaching 25% of the broadcasting time.

# PUBLICATIONS

Life with God, a discipleship book written by Rev. Dr. Abjar Bahkou in 2017, is being used in the Arab Middle East in many Lutheran and non-Lutheran churches. Dr. Abjar Bahkou is currently working on a second edition. Vicar Arthur Stevens from Hawthorne, California is involved in prison ministry and is enrolled in the Specific Ministry Program at Concordia Seminary Saint Louis. He asked our ministry to send hundreds of copies to distribute to Arabic-speaking inmates in California. According to Arthur, over 10% of the inmates he ministers to are Arabs. Another Vicar and SMP student Chris Kolupa, who works at St. John Evangelical church in Schaumburg IL, and oversees a ministry to Muslims in his area has acquired the last 10 copies of life with God to give them to Muslims.



Pastor Tony Boos at Faith Lutheran Church distributed food and the book to Arabic families.

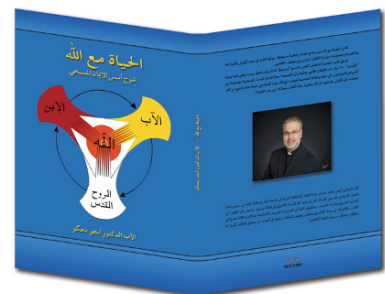
During the pandemic of COVID 19 Faith Lutheran Church in Troy, Michigan has helped hundreds of Arabic speaking families and distributed hundreds of copies of Life with God to these families.

The 1000 copies of Life with God that were published in 2017 have already sold-out and many copies we sent for free worldwide. Dr. Bahkou has been updating and revising the first edition and the plan is to publish a second edition.



In November 2018 Rev. Bahkou taught in Stockholm Sweden, from the discipleship book, Life with God. Since then groups and families began bible study based on his book.

Bible study in Stockholm, Sweden.



Dear Father,

Grace and Peace to you. I would like to thank you for sending us 25 copies of your Arabic book: **شرح اسس الايمان المسيحي، الحياة مع الله، Life with God, Foundations of Christian Faith.** As a pastor of three Arab Immigrants Churches in Florida I will be using your book for our adult Bible study. You told me that you do not have copies of the book anymore and you are planning for a second edition, I am eagerly waiting for it to order more copies and help distribute them to Arabs all over the world. We also received your English book entitled *On the Road to Emmaus, a Youth Devotional Journey Through Christian Faith.* This material will be used for our upcoming Youth Bible Studies. We have been blessed to follow your sermons and teachings broadcasted on JCWORLDTV-Arabic and on your Facebook page (Father Abjar). Your teachings have touched the lives of many of our members including myself as a pastor. We give thanks to the Lord Almighty for our ability to partner with you and your mission organization. Your media teachings and publications are much needed for Arabs all over the world.

September 26, 2020

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. John Kouki Parish Pastor

## PARTNERING WITH CONCORDIA MISSION SOCIETY



Good News Magazine English and Arabic Edition

One of our projects is to publish and distribute worldwide an Arabic edition of The Good News Magazine. This is in collaboration with The LCMS Office of International Missions and Concordia Mission Society. This summer Rev. Dr. Bahkou was able to translate issues 42 and 43 into Arabic. The Magazine editor has asked our ministry to oversee the Arabic Language translation and the distribution of the magazine to Arabs locally and globally. We praise the Lord for this partnership. This also will require a financial commitment from our parts. Shipping and handling and advertising world-wide is not cheap.

In November Rev. Dr. Abjar Bahkou has signed a contract with Concordia Publishing House to publish his latest book, *The Quran in Dialogue with the Gospel, Challenges, and Perspectives in Muslim-Christian Encounters.* In addition to training seminary students, the book will be used to teach Adult Sunday School classes about reaching out to Muslims locally and globally. The expected date for the release of the book is November 21, 2021.

## TRAINING FIELD WORKERS

Through our Global Media Ministry and outreach, we are being contacted from all over the world. Many Arabic speaking men are expressing interest to join the Lutheran Church and pursue ordination in the LCMS.



Joe and his family

One of them is Joe Jibreen. He is from Jordan, a worship leader and lay minister in the Catholic Church. Joe became critical of his Catholic faith and started asking many questions. At this time, he heard about our ministry in Texas and began to watch our teaching. He and his family have been waiting for their immigrant paper to be complete for over 8 years. In 2018, he contacted our ministry while he was visiting his relatives in Dallas. He also attended our Arabic worship at Peace Lutheran Church in Hurst Texas. Rev. Dr. Bahkou met with him and in their conversation Joe expressed his interest in joining the Lutheran Church and even pursuing ordination. Rev. Bahkou gave him a copy of his book, *Life With God*. Joe began to read the book and continue to follow the teachings. In 2019 Rev. Bahkou tried to enroll him at Concordia Seminary in Saint Louis. The process was faced with many

challenges. In October of 2020, Joe contact Rev. Bahkou and told him he was able to get his immigrant visa to United State and he is in Detroit Michigan looking for a job. Joe asked Rev. Bahkou to get him connected with one of our LCMS churches in Detroit Michigan. Rev. Bahkou Contacted pastor Tony Boos, Associate Pastor at Faith Lutheran Church in Troy Michigan. Pastor Tony began a membership class with Joe to join the church. In November Joe went back to Jordan to complete the process of moving his family to Michigan. Pastor Boos and Bahkou continue to work with him and prepared him to enroll in the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology at Concordia Seminary.

Please pray for Joe and his family as they move to Michigan and began their lives and ministry in America.

## TRAINING YOUTH LEADERS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

November of 2020 Pastor Manhal Alzoukimy in Hums Syria and a leader in Youth Ministry program at the Middle East Council of Churches, contacted Rev. Bahkou and asked him to partner with them by offering an online training seminar in Arabic. Planning is underway and we are expecting to begin the courses in the Summer of 2021. This initiative will be in partnership with the Office of Global Engagement and Continuing Education at Concordia Seminary in Saint Louis.

## MINISTERING LOCALLY

We continue to reach out to Arab families locally in the Saint Louis area. Our plan is to plant an Arabic Lutheran Speaking Congregation in the Saint Louis area where there is a rapidly growing Arabic community. For the last three months, we were able to meet many Muslim families and connect with them. One of the most recent ones is a Kurdish family from Syria, Dr. Bahkou has been helping them with job and housing applications. Their two daughters were struggling with academics. Dr. Bahkou was able to connect them with a seminary student, with a degree in Math, and both seminarian P.J. and Dr. Bahkou visited them twice a week. While P. J. tutored their daughters Dr. Bahkou was conducting an informal Bible study with Farouk Hannan and his wife. Farouk is illiterate and has learning differences. Dr. Bahkou is using oral teachings and proclamation to lead them in Bible study. Our ministry to this family has developed and they have accepted a gift of a cross that now hangs in their home. Farouk also now carries a bible in his car. The truth that a Muslim family now has a cross in their home is a huge step and blessing. Through the help of our ministry we were able to move them to Hawking Village Housing in Fenton, a government housing for low income families; it is half a mile from Dr. Bahkou's house. This will give us more opportunities to minister to them and the Muslim and Arab families live at the same complex.



Pastor Bahkou continue also to ministry to the Arabic Community in North Texas by regularly visiting the area and seeing the spiritual need of the community.

# PARTNERING WITH CHURCHES AND MISSION AGENCIES



January 2020, Rev. Bahkou and the vice-president Dr. Jouhn Loum attended the The Annual Meeting of Associated of Lutheran Mission Agencies. This year Pastor Bahkou served as a devotion presenter.

Rev. Bahkou and the vice-president Dr. John Loum regularly attend the local monthly meeting of all mission organizations who minister to refugees and immigrant in Saint Louis area. These meetings help us exchange ideas and expertise, meet and minister to immigrants locally.



In 2020 Christian Outreach to Muslims Everywhere (<http://www.come316.com>) a local mission agency has joined force with Arabic Lutheran Ministry. The two-board met and decided that COME will be working under the board of ALM.

## FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING

Financial oversight will be conducted by the Board of DirectorsLutheran Arabic Ministries.

## NAME OF CONTACT PERSON(S)

Rev. Fr. Abjar Bahkou, PhD., Executive Director; Ken Payne, Treasurer

## CONTACT US



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