



**April 2023**

Dear Friends,

We are delighted to share that God is showing great favor to the English Language Congregation of the National Evangelical Church. Following one of our Good Friday worship services last week, I received the following message from an ELC Board member:

*The church overflowed today! We added four columns of extra chairs and filled every vacant spot in the nave and the balcony, and yet people still kept coming. Praise God for the amazing attendance!*

Yes, we do indeed praise God for such amazing attendance. We are certainly challenged to know where to go with all the people God is bringing to the ELC. One of the options we are considering is the planting of another church. We have an ideal location in mind. What we lack at present is a church planting pastor or an associate pastor for the ELC. Please join us in praying about this wonderful opportunity as well as spreading the word to persons you know who may possess the gifts and missional spirit to serve in the Middle East.

But it's not only about attendance. We bless and praise God for evidence of lives transformed! Easter evening we gathered together around the NEC baptism pool to celebrate new life in Jesus Christ for our newest ELC members. Just think for a moment with me. In a place where many people believe the gospel cannot take hold and that people are, in fact, hostile to Christianity—the ELC has baptized dozens of new believers in the last few years.



Would you like to receive these updates digitally? Please email Kelli at [kgilmore@rca.org](mailto:kgilmore@rca.org) to be added to the email list. You will receive more timely updates from the missionary you support and help us be good stewards of our resources.



However, not everyone who has chosen to walk by faith in Jesus has decided to be baptized. I received a message just before Easter from a man I have never personally met, but someone who attended my confirmation class last year over Zoom (never turning on his camera). My friend is Arab and feels great concern that his commitment to Christ would bring shame to a family he loves sincerely. However, this dear brother in Christ continues to take the risk of faith. The following is the message I received in the days leading up to Easter:

*Hello,  
Happy Easter in Advance  
I came to know that there will be a service tomorrow. Am I allowed to have the bread and wine if not baptized? Thanks.*

I was pleased to respond by saying:

*Yes, if you have confessed Jesus as Lord and repented of sin. All who do so are welcome at the Lord's Table!*

As much as we celebrate robust attendance and sincere confessions of faith, we know that many in our community are never going to darken the door of a church, or care about a God of love or the message of forgiveness and hope in Jesus—unless they experience followers of Jesus who care and love and serve others. This is another aspect of the ELC which gives us such joy! This week members of our Needs Ministry will deliver over 300 meals and pray with groups of day laborers who are challenged by incredibly difficult living and working conditions. There are limited protections in Bahrain for the most vulnerable and often this population is exploited by managers and certain business owners. This type of injustice is difficult to navigate legally or politically in a nation where one is a guest. But the one thing we can always do when we encounter need and injustice is to offer a cup of cool water or a loaf of bread in Jesus's name.



*RCA Global Mission does not receive denominational assessments or covenant shares. We depend on the faithful generosity of churches and individuals.*

Thank you for the support you provide which allows us to extend God's provision to the most vulnerable here in Bahrain. Thank you for your prayers and investment in all that God is doing in this important part of the world. God's Spirit is at work here and we rejoice in your partnership in the work of the gospel!

With affection,

Blaine and Kathleen Newhouse  
RCA Global Mission  
Kingdom of Bahrain