

# STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION 2008

## Building Bridges

*Dearborn, Mich.*

Abundant Life Arabic Lutheran Church, Dearborn, Mich., is located literally next door to the largest mosque in North America.

In a city where one third of the residents are of Arab/Middle Eastern heritage, how have the congregation and its pastor, the Rev. Rani Abdulmasih, responded?

They have built bridges.

“Sharing Christ’s love with our neighbor is what this ministry is all about,” said Abdulmasih, who established an Arabic Christian Muslim dialogue through Abundant Life to strengthen community relations.

As a result, Abdulmasih received the internationally recognized “Building Bridges” award from the American Arab Anti Discrimination Committee, presented personally by Queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan.

Abdulmasih commented, “I came from a first career as a chemist where I was somewhat in control of the reactions in the laboratory, but now I see God controlling greater and more powerful reactions through the Holy Spirit—immigrants are helped in practical ways and redirected on the right path, people recovering from addictions and broken marriages and family relations restored.”

Abdulmasih and his congregation also appeared in the ELCA video, “Understanding Islam,” that has been viewed more than 28,000 times online on YouTube.

One viewer, a Muslim, responded: “[I] just wanted to thank you for your efforts in spreading the knowledge of my faith to the general public. May God be pleased with you all for efforts and for setting such a beautiful example to the public at large.”

Your mission support helps to build bridges of peace and understanding by providing start up and supplemental funding to ministries such as Abundant Life.

For more Stories of Faith in Action, visit [www.elca.org/stewardship/intrepreting.html](http://www.elca.org/stewardship/intrepreting.html)



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GOD’S WORK. OUR HANDS.



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