

on the horizon

..... Horizons International Newsletter - February 2023

GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS

LAMENTATIONS 3:23



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**painting by Horizons Staff member Eva Bazarbashian*

**Horizons**
INTERNATIONAL
proclaim. disciple. equip.



NIHAD HASAN

A KURDISH PASTOR FROM A MUSLIM BACKGROUND SERVES A THRIVING CHURCH

My name is Nihad Hasan, and I am a Kurdish Syrian living in Beirut. I serve as Lead Pastor of Dêra Kurdi Church, which is home to over 250 Kurdish Christians from Syria and other countries. This church, which I started with outreach ministry to Kurds in Lebanon, has grown miraculously in the last few years. I am filled with joy to see such spiritual growth among my people!

I grew up in a Muslim family. In 2003, when I was a young man in the Syrian military, I came to know about Christ and his Church through a local Lebanese family. At first I resisted—but once I started seeking God, he started speaking to me through dreams, miracles, and even prophecy. In difficult situations I often read Psalm 91, and I asked God for that psalm to be in my life.

Because of my faith in Christ, my family disowned me. I was also unjustly imprisoned in Syria in 2007, under the accusation of starting a political movement against the regime. These events may seem tragic, but God used them to truly make me a new creation, and to confirm to me that I would spend my life following Him and ministering in His name.

In preparation to reach out to my people, I studied the Word for two years at Abundant Life Church in Beirut. I knew the Kurds were in deep need of the gospel—but there weren't any near me! There are over 60 million of us, with no country of our own, spread around the Middle East and the world, but I had no one to help. Then the Syrian civil war broke out, and Lebanon was flooded with Kurds.

I started ministering to people and teaching in small group services, but the group quickly grew. In less than 10 years, we have grown to over 250 members, started ministry programs for children, hosted 13 discipleship groups, and have launched satellite churches. Our members conduct home visits and provide food and goods to support families in need.

This church has grown quickly, under God's blessing. I praise Him every day for His rich abundance toward us, and pray that He will bless us with more resources and faithful servants to accomplish the task of seeing more and more Kurds saved.

“Because he loves me,” says the Lord, “I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him, and show him my salvation.”

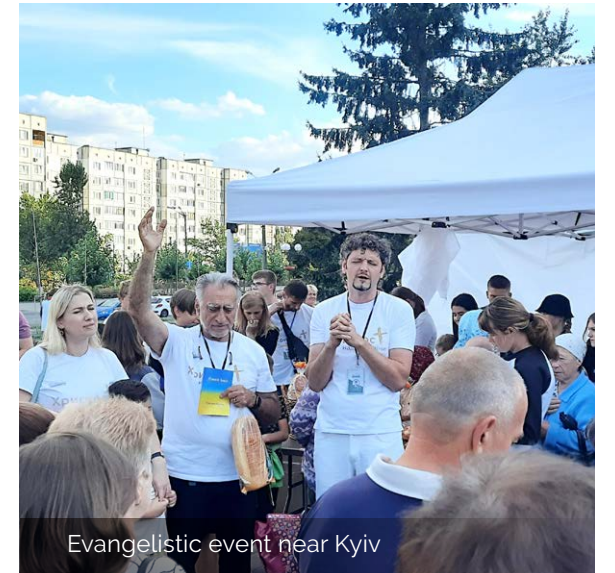
Psalm 91:14-16

UKRAINE MINISTRY

THE LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS

One year since the start of the war in Ukraine, the Lord continues to use the Ukraine Crisis Fund (UCF) to further his Kingdom. The war has brought about devastating missile attacks on hospitals, schools, and energy infrastructure. Families have been separated, and for residents and refugees alike, the emotional, practical, and spiritual toll is incalculable. **But despite these overwhelming obstacles, the Lord is delivering an incredible harvest!** Khalil and Julia Abdelahad, along with several pastors and workers, continue to serve the local church through discipleship programs and gospel-centered humanitarian aid.

Since launching in July 2022, the Lord has grown the team to include three local pastors, who serve with the ministry team. They conduct home visits, distribute food and vital aid, organize evangelistic events, and coordinate with local churches to house and care for refugees and those fleeing the destruction of the war. The team has acquired a four-wheel-drive vehicle, which allows them to share the gospel message in rural communities, previously inaccessible due to poor roads and infrastructure. The UCF is now



Evangelistic event near Kyiv

partnering with 18 churches, and many people are receiving crucial humanitarian assistance and the gospel message. Over 80 people have accepted Christ!

Khalil and Julia are now spending a few months across the border in Poland. Here, they are building partnerships with churches and communities, in order to care for the millions of refugees that will need support in the coming year, while continuing to oversee the UCF. **They are also hoping to expand the ministry to include Muslim-background individuals and Ukrainian refugees in Germany and elsewhere in Europe.** Even when the war ends, the suffering of the Ukrainian people will endure—so the team is working to provide long-term practical and spiritual healing, and empower local churches to make an even bigger impact.

Please join us in prayer for the Lord to bring an end to this brutal war, and to bring spiritual peace to the millions of wounded hearts. We pray that even through this tragedy, many people in and beyond Ukraine would learn of Jesus—the Light that shines in the darkness—and give themselves over to an eternal hope.



Distributing food boxes to refugees

Support the Lord's work in Ukraine today!
horizonsinternational.org/ukraine-crisis



FROM BEIRUT TO THE BALKANS: PASSING THE TORCH OF MISSIONS



Since the Middle East Center for World Missions (MEC) launched in 2019, it has made a significant impact for the Kingdom of God in and around Lebanon. The MEC's two campuses currently operate dozens of initiatives that train hundreds of believers. This model of church collaboration deeply moved and inspired Kosovar pastors Amir and Femi Çakolli during a trip to Lebanon in June. They were encouraged to build a broader training body that could equip churches in the Balkan region to reach Muslims effectively with the gospel.

Balkan Institute for Missions

Only five months after visiting Lebanon, Femi and Amir launched the Balkan Institute for Missions (BIM). This institute will be operated by the church they pastor in Kosovo, Messiah Evangelical Fellowship Church—but it is modeled after the MEC and will serve as a sister ministry in eastern Europe.

The BIM launch event lasted one week, and was attended by **nearly 200 pastors and missionaries from the Balkan region**, as well as several international leaders. Special guests included Horizons' Founder and President, Georges Houssey, who spoke at the launch, and a former imam from Egypt who shared how he came to know Jesus. The launch, themed "Together in Christ, Together for Christ," brought together people of different nationalities and ethnic

backgrounds for prayer, fellowship, and group discussions.

In March, Georges Houssey is traveling back to Kosovo to help launch a course to train trainers, who will equip pastors and leaders from several Balkan countries to raise up more local teachers. Additional training and outreach initiatives will be developed to serve local Balkan churches. As BIM grows, many new disciples will be equipped to share the gospel message effectively throughout Kosovo and the entire Balkan region.

Middle East Center for World Missions

Across the Mediterranean Sea in Lebanon, the Middle East Center for World Missions (MEC) is equipping believers for service through many exciting projects.

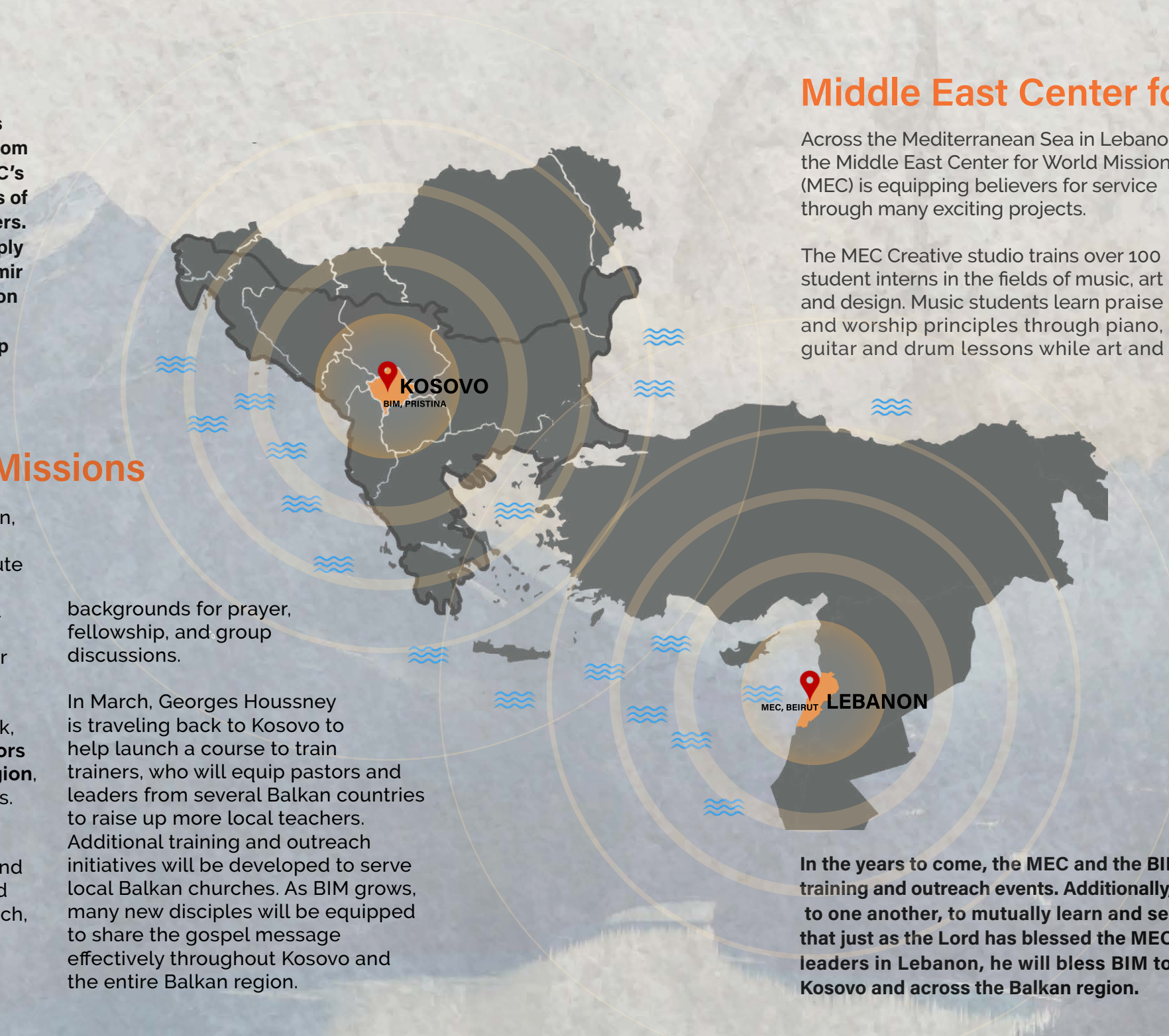
The MEC Creative studio trains over 100 student interns in the fields of music, art and design. Music students learn praise and worship principles through piano, guitar and drum lessons while art and

design students acquire valuable skills, strategies, conceptual thinking, and visual problem-solving. **The MEC offers these internships free of charge to believers, and encourages them to effectively use their God-given talents to build the Kingdom** in their churches and communities.

MEC Creative hosts events for believers and churches from many denominations. Some are evangelistic in nature, while others are focused on empowering and inspiring local churches. Examples of such events include musical outreaches conducted by the MEC worship band, an inter-denominational worship song contest (Sawti Ilak), and an upcoming art exhibition by Lebanese Christian visual artists.

The MEC also serves international teams who come to minister in Lebanon, by connecting them with opportunities to serve, throughout Horizons' extensive church partnership network. We strive to leave no gift behind, by helping people use their gifts and invest them into the lives of others. This is why the MEC's offerings are so diverse, from coding to evangelism, from media to refugee work, and so much else in between.

In the years to come, the MEC and the BIM will continue partnering to create and host new training and outreach events. Additionally, the two ministry centers plan to send missionaries to one another, to mutually learn and serve in their very different mission fields. We pray that just as the Lord has blessed the MEC to help unite churches and raise up new spiritual leaders in Lebanon, he will bless BIM to facilitate miraculous growth in the Church in Kosovo and across the Balkan region.



God Answers Your Prayers

Our God is generous! He loves his children and delights in giving us good gifts (Matthew 7:11). At Horizons, we have seen the work of his hands bless people in both simple and big ways. We spent time reflecting on things we've prayed for over the last year and collected

updates to share only a few of the many ways God has moved in many ministries around the globe.

To receive our prayer calendar, sign up for our newsletter at horizonsinternational.org/newsletters.

After moving this last summer, Khalil and Julia Abdelahad have seen the hand of the Lord at work in amazing ways. The new Horizons team they established has been ministering in many cities and is serving and supporting over 20 churches. Over 80 people have come to know Christ!

God has been protecting his people in Tyre. Ministry has continued and Hezbollah has not given them any trouble—even when they have meetings or events. This is very encouraging.

While the economic situation has continued to worsen in Lebanon, God is still providing and the believers are lacking nothing. God has blessed our workers in Lebanon through your prayers.

Many have started attending church and at least 70 new believers have been baptized. These people remain in contact with believers and have been asking many questions. We thank God for these changes in people's lives!














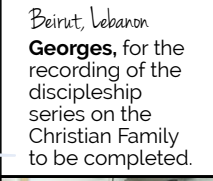


Translation has made steady progress! The translator has since moved to a new location with better access to electricity. They have also joined Horizons staff and the MEC team is excited to use their work in online evangelistic videos.

Proofreading the Engage Course in Arabic is complete and the layout phase is underway. God is at work to mobilize the Middle Eastern church for missions.

Filming of the main content for this discipleship series was completed on December 7th, 2022! Join us in prayer that this series would impact families across the region.

Renovations for the Nabaa Ministry Center have been finished—and ministry is even more active and effective than before. For a time after the pandemic, participants could only come to one discipleship class per two weeks, but they now can attend weekly!

Prayer Requests from 2022

<p>Beirut, Lebanon The Lebanon Crisis Fund, for continued spiritual fruit and sustainable long-term impact.</p> 	<p>Beirut, Lebanon Khalil and Julia, as they plan to open a new ministry and support churches in Ukraine.</p> 	<p>Beirut, Lebanon Tamar Majoulia, for our workers in Lebanon as they face extreme inflation and shortages.</p> 	<p>Zahle, Lebanon Pastor Imad Aubrey and the Zahle team, as they serve in mercy ministry and social media.</p> 
<p>Spain Scott and Amy, as they work with Arab immigrants in the area to teach them Spanish/English.</p> 	<p>Tyre, Lebanon Laya Yamout, for safety for those serving in the area, which is dominated by Hezbollah.</p> 	<p>Beirut, Lebanon For effectiveness in proofreading and layout of the Engage Course in Arabic, to train local believers.</p> 	<p>Denver, CO The Dukes, for Abbas from Iraq in jail in Texas, who has become a Christian and wants to tell many.</p> 
<p>Beirut, Lebanon Georges, for the recording of the discipleship series on the Christian Family to be completed.</p> 	<p>Beirut, Lebanon MEC Care Virtual Cohort, as it equips churches in Christian counseling and family care.</p> 	<p>Beirut, Lebanon Pierre & Gigi, that God would continue to bless the MEC's virtual cohorts & training initiatives.</p> 	<p>Beirut, Lebanon MEC LAB, praise God that over 25 students are learning languages at the center and online!</p> 
<p>Beirut, Lebanon For the speedy renovation of the Nabaa Ministry Center so that ministry can resume.</p> 	<p>Beirut, Lebanon Sawti Ilak, the MEC's worship song competition, for successful planning of its second year.</p> 	<p>Beirut, Lebanon While the first Arabic Bible we sent to Abbas was stolen by other prisoners for cigarette paper, we sent him a new copy and he has read through the New Testament many times in the three years he has been in prison. Abbas wants his Muslim family to know Jesus and Richard Duke is in contact with five of them.</p> 	<p>Beirut, Lebanon While the economic situation has continued to worsen in Lebanon, God is still providing and the believers are lacking nothing. God has blessed our workers in Lebanon through your prayers.</p> 

God has blessed the mercy ministry. The team in Zahle, Lebanon, have recently seen three people come to Christ, including an owner of a coffee shop and two people on their death beds.

Praise God that these virtual and in-person initiatives have trained over 300 local believers in a wide variety of ministry skills and in developing godly character.

The MEC LAB has grown to over 60 students!

The 2nd annual Sawti Ilak was a great success! It was well-organized, well-attended and encouraged unity among the Church.

Members from over 20 churches in and around Lebanon have been trained in biblical counseling!

While the first Arabic Bible we sent to Abbas was stolen by other prisoners for cigarette paper, we sent him a new copy and he has read through the New Testament many times in the three years he has been in prison. Abbas wants his Muslim family to know Jesus and Richard Duke is in contact with five of them.

UPCOMING MARCH ROUNDTABLE: **A CONVERSATION WITH GEORGES AND PIERRE HOUSSNEY**

Join us for our upcoming Zoom call on Wednesday, March 15, at 4pm MT, hosted by Founder and President Georges Housney and his son, Executive Director Pierre Housney.

Amid exciting new opportunities for Kingdom growth, the Lord has continued to expand Horizons' ministries worldwide. Find out more about how the Lord is bringing about an incredible harvest in war-torn Ukraine, how the Middle East Center for World Missions (MEC) is equipping Lebanese churches to reach Syrian refugees and Lebanese families with the love of Christ, and how the Balkan Institute for Missions is replicating the MEC model in Eastern Europe.

Connect with Georges and Pierre as they share these exciting updates in an open and conversational time of fellowship. Take the opportunity to ask questions, share your thoughts, and join with us in prayer.

Digital Roundtable:

**Online Zoom
meeting**

**Wednesday,
March 15, 2023
4pm MT**

We look forward to seeing you there!

horizonsinternational.org/roundtables



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