

A brief history ...

The Anglican chaplaincy of Dubai and Sharjah was formally constituted on 5 April 1970. At this stage, Sharjah was linked to Ras Al Khaimah by a sand track. Due to rough seas, this sand track was only accessible at low tide. By the end of 1977, more and more expatriates were settling in Ras Al Khaimah, and the joint ministry between the chaplaincy of Dubai and Sharjah, and the Mission to Seafarers had become too much for one priest to manage. In the bishop's opinion, a new restructuring and re-staffing of this joint ministry venture was evident, despite the lack of funds.

On 13 October 1984, the Reverend Dennis Gurney arrived in the UAE to continue the ministries already established at Holy Trinity in Dubai, and St Martin in Sharjah. Every three weeks he drove, with his family, to the northern emirates of Ras Al Khaimah and Fujairah to lead home group meetings which he began to nurture. In particular, these took the form of worship, junior church gatherings, and Bible study, hosted by a family in their home. On 3 March 1987, Bishop Brown was granted a long-hoped-for audience with the Ruler of Ras Al Khaimah, His Highness Sheikh Saqr bin Mohamed Al Qasimi. After much fruitful conversation, the Ruler told the bishop that he would always be welcome in Ras Al Khaimah. The bishop noted that the Sheikh's eldest son, also present, used the word 'sha:rik:in', meaning sharers or companions, and therefore he had been accepted by the Ruler's family. The bishop was very grateful to receive this privilege.

On 22 June 1997, a new St Luke Worship Centre began operating in the area of Al Nakheel. Although located on a large site, the facilities were limited. However, the chaplain saw great potential for further development. On 27 November 2009, Bishop Michael Lewis blessed the site and laid the foundation stone for the new Church of St Luke in Al Jazeerah-Al Hamra; some 30km away from the existing Worship Centre in Al Nakheel. Just over two years later, with construction and completion overseen by the Chaplain, the Reverend Nelson Fernandez, the new Church was ready for use. On 9 March 2012, the bishop, in a service of Solemn Eucharist and Blessing, consecrated the Church.