

Langham partnership news

Langham Preaching launches in the Pacific!

Langham Preaching is soon to enter its sixth year of operations, and is thankful for invitations to develop preaching programmes in over 70 countries around the world. It is presently actively involved in 30 countries, with plans to begin work in an additional 20 countries.

In 2008, the first steps will be taken for the development of preaching training in some parts of the Russian Federation, including an initiative in Tatarstan for 30 local pastors and preachers. In addition, pioneer activity will begin through the Mekong Project, designed to equip small teams of trainers from countries such as Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia. We also hope to see the launch of a small pilot project for Chinese pastors, which will be hosted in Hong Kong.

In response to invitations from a number of Pacific Islands, Langham Preaching is launching the first Pacific training programme in fellowship with leaders in Vanuatu. Plans are underway to invite over 50 pastors and lay preachers for a level 1 seminar, to be held March 25-28, 2008.



Small delegations from Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Tonga will join the event. Our hope is that these delegations will with assistance from LPA be able to launch training initiatives on their own islands in due course.

Langham Preaching is committed to work with national leaders in the development of indigenous preaching movements. The conducting of various preaching programmes are steps in the wider strategy of providing support, encouragement and training for pastors and lay preachers country by country. In addition to the three-level seminar programmes, in many countries small preachers clubs, regional networks, day workshops and provision of literature all support and encourage the commitment of pastors and lay preachers to Biblical preaching.

Facilitators for the 2008 event include David Cook, Principal of the Sydney Missionary and Bible College, who is regularly involved in the training of preachers, and Dr Chris Wright, International Director of Langham Partnership International. The event will be supported by Langham Australia, whose staff and Board members will also be closely linked to the developments in the Pacific in the years ahead.

For the future, it is our objective to secure programme leaders from Australia and New Zealand to roll out the preaching programme. Langham Australia and Langham New Zealand will work in partnership to develop initiatives in other Pacific Island nations. Langham Literature will support the programme, not only through the provision of literature that is appropriate for each of the seminar levels, but also through the support of indigenous writers and publishers.

**Jonathan Lamb
International Programme Director
Langham Preaching**

Chairman's Word

In March 2008 Langham Preaching will conduct its first training programme in Vanuatu for preachers in the Pacific area. It is our hope that this pilot programme will be followed by initiatives in other Pacific Island nations.

LPA has agreed to raise the bulk of the funds required for these initiatives. Given the vast distances within and between Pacific Island nations, the travel costs for the delegates will be substantial.

Our newspapers and other media consistently remind us of the challenges that are faced in many Pacific Island nations. LPA believes that the training of preachers and teachers in the churches of the Pacific Island area is an important initiative that will greatly benefit each of the nations concerned. I invite you to consider becoming a supporter of this initiative.

In addition to the preaching programme, LPA has agreed to financially support and facilitate the Bislama Bible commentary project, which is the subject of an article in this newsletter. This project, which has been initiated at grass roots level, will generate a vital resource for biblical preaching and teaching in Vanuatu.

This newsletter records some of the initiatives being taken by Langham Literature to encourage and develop indigenous writing, and the publication of books written by majority world authors, in the majority world. The proposed translation of the Africa Bible commentary into Kiswahili is an important initiative in this context. However, Langham Literature is also assisting the development of publishing houses in the majority world that will be able to produce and distribute quality Christian literature.

Langham Partnership has experienced significant growth across the world over the last 10 years. At present, all requests for assistance, particularly in the Literature and Preaching programmes, cannot be met. The three interlocked programmes of Langham Partnership International – Scholars, Literature and Preaching – constitute a unique and invaluable ministry to the majority world. The importance of the work is evident from the snapshots provided in this newsletter. I commend the work of Langham Partnership to you and invite your continuing prayer support and financial support. Trevor Cork



Langham Literature

Bislama Bible Commentary Project — Vanuatu

A team including Ps Sophia Silas from Malekula in Vanuatu and Dr Andrew and Rosemary Williamson, Missionaries with the Australian Presbyterian Church, has this year been working to prepare commentaries on Philemon, Philippians, Mark and Colossians. The idea has been to produce some sample commentaries in Bislama which can serve as models for the writers who start work next year. As we work on them we gain an idea of what style guide questions will arise, and what particular issues writers may face.



Ps Sophia Silas with Andrew and Rosemary Williamson.

Early October we printed a trial run of draft copy commentaries on Philemon and Philippians. These sold well at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu, which also officially endorsed the project. We are hoping for some feedback from this initial run. The idea of the run is to raise awareness of and interest in the project, and to show that we mean business.

Scripture Union Vanuatu has agreed to issue the final publications under their name. This is a good partnership as Scripture Union is well respected in Vanuatu as an inter-denominational, gospel-centred, relevant organisation.

Plans are underway to **hold a Bislama Writers' Workshop** January 28-30 2008 for a selected group of pastors and a bishop who are interested in writing commentaries, individually or with a group, in Bislama. Few people in Vanuatu have much confidence about writing in Bislama, even though it is the language most people use for everyday communication outside of their own home villages, where they speak one of over a hundred local Vanuatu languages. One of the aims of the Bislama Writers' Workshop is to help people overcome their reticence to write in Bislama, by showing them the conventions currently in use for writing in the language.

We expect to introduce the participants to writing standard Bislama, with particular emphasis on avoiding English structures which do not communicate for people who have not had much education. We will also discuss how to go about writing a commentary — which again is not something people are familiar with and how to make the writing appropriate for people in Vanuatu. We will introduce the process of producing a commentary as well as the process to allow small groups to work together under a team leader to produce a commentary.

The workshop will take place at **Talua Ministry Training Centre**, which is an institution for training lay and ordained gospel workers for

Vanuatu from various denominations. The Principal, Ps Fiana Rakau, is 100% behind this project, and has made time available for us to meet so that the lecturing staff can attend if they wish. Talua will provide sleeping accommodation for the participants, but we will need some help with transport costs, as inter-island travel in Vanuatu is relatively expensive, and some money for food costs. Most pastors have a putative salary that is never realised.



Talua Ministry Training Centre.

The Next Step

In May 2008, we plan to hold a Commentary Writing Workshop for two weeks at Talua which is on the island of Santo. In preparation for the workshop, individuals will have spent several months in studying their texts, reading commentaries that we make available to them, and preaching those texts. The workshop time will be spent producing the commentary: discussing what should and should not go in the commentary; actual writing; critique of that writing; and further research in the Talua library as required. Some writers will be working on their own, and others will work together on the same commentary under a commentary team leader.

Since Talua has the best theological library in the country, the Commentary Writing Workshop will be held there. The two-week workshop will probably not see the completion of those particular commentaries, but they will move them forward, help participants find the most useful resources, and give the commentary team leaders the main materials they need to finish the commentary whether personally or through further direction of group members at a distance.

Rosemary Williamson

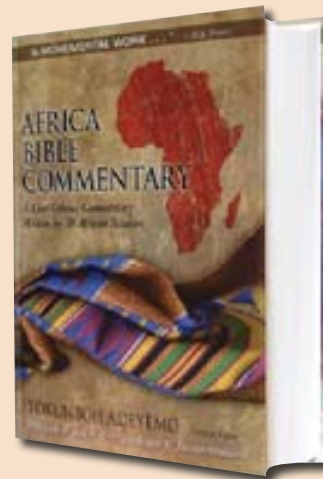


Langham Partnership has agreed to support both the Bislama Bible Commentary Project, including the salaries of some of the local writers, as well as the Bislama Writers Workshop taking place January 2008.

Please consider if you could support these exciting projects for Vanuatu.

Translation of Kiswahili Africa Bible Commentary Begins

Since its launch in 2006, the *Africa Bible Commentary (ABC)* the first-ever one-volume commentary written by Africans, for Africans, has sold 65,000 copies (12,000 in the West and 53,000 in Africa). This project has been seven years in the making, with more than \$1 million raised to make this project a reality. Tens of thousands of African Christians now have a comprehensive tool for serving the African church. Recently, the ABC has moved forward in translation.



The ABC Kiswahili project launched in August of this year, started the process for translating the entire ABC into Kiswahili. Langham Partnership is supporting WordAlive Publishers in Nairobi who is managing the work, with plans to publish in mid-2009. Langham Literature also supported the intense, hands-on training of Paul Karaimu, a key editor with the project.

“The publication of the ABC was long overdue and it has become a vital resource for pastors, in churches, homes and theological institutions,” said David Waweru of WordAlive, who is heading up the translation project. “We have seen a trend in which many institutions purchase the commentary for their graduating classes. Many copies have also been purchased by missionaries based in Africa, hoping to understand the African point of view and perspectives in the interpretation of the biblical text and contemporary issues.”



David said that the encouragement and financial support provided by Langham Partnership has helped to establish a definite timetable for the project and to get the work started. Kiswahili is the most widely spoken language in Africa with an estimated 90 million speakers; it is also among the least resourced of the major African languages. The ABC Kiswahili is a long-awaited drink of cold water for the Kiswahili-speaking church, as it will utterly surpass all else available.

A translation team comprised of seven people at the Masters and Ph.D. levels from both Tanzania and Kenya have started the project, including Dr. Aloo Mojola, one of the most experienced Bible translation consultants in Africa. The translation will take 20 months, with the aim of printing between 10,000 and 15,000 copies in June/July 2009. There are plans to launch the translation in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in September 2009.



Dr Aloo Mojola, the Translation Consultant for the Kiswahili ABC project speaks to the translation team during the training seminar held in Nairobi August 2007.

“The wide acclaim of the *Africa Bible Commentary* across the continent (and the world), the enthusiastic reception and acceptance by pastors, Bible students and Christians has given us greater boldness to have the ABC translated in Kiswahili,” said David.

Further language translations are planned, including French, Portuguese and Amharic, in order that most Africans can be served. LPI is partnering with Serving In Mission (SIM) to bring a Portuguese edition (which is requested also in Brazil) and an additional \$50,000 investment is needed. The next opportunity for the ABC is the possible production of a Study Bible — distilling the whole ABC into notes, and setting them with the entire Scriptural text.

Please Pray For

- the entire translation process to be smooth and for the health and strength of the translation team.
- The successful completion of the translation within 20 months.
- Resources required for the production of the initial 12,000 - 15,000 copies of the Kiswahili ABC.

Global Christian Library reaches the Middle East

The last couple of months saw the publishing of 5 significant theological books which will help Arabic church leaders. The Arabic Global Christian Library consists of 5 titles including: Evangelical Truth, Hope for the World, The Human Condition, A Time for Mission and The Bible and Other Faiths.

This has been an ambitious project funded by Langham Partnership and undertaken by Dar El Thaqa Communications House. It will not only increase the material available to laypeople but will also make a significant contribution to theological discussion amongst Arab Christian leaders and pastors in the Middle East as they engage with their local cultures.

Roughly 10% of the population of Egypt is Christian, the majority belonging to the Coptic Orthodox Church. There are approximately half a million Christian Protestants experiencing persecution and needing leaders who are well equipped to handle the adverse situation that they face. In many cases a strong evangelical vision is absent on both the theological and societal levels. Issuing and distributing books tackling these issues to theology students, scholars and a number of influential church leaders in the Arab world will help them adopt a new Christian vision and develop their theological understanding. These books may also initiate debates around the issues they tackle in churches and church activities.

The Global Christian Library will be offered to the public at very low prices as well as being distributed to 500 known theology students and theologians in order to equip them with theological materials that would in turn raise their theological awareness and thereby contribute to their theological understanding.



Time For Re-connection

The Langham Partnership Regional Council for Southern Africa met for the first time in September in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. Representatives came from Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Among them were three Langham Scholars: Fidelis Nkomazana (Botswana), Lazarus Phiri (Zambia), and Victor Nakah (Zimbabwe). For them, it was a time of re-union, and re-connection with Langham after (for Fidelis) more than a decade of serving back in their home country.

Fidelis Nkomazana completed his doctorate in Church History in Edinburgh in 1993, and warmly remembers the fellowship and support he received. Since then he has been teaching in Botswana University, and is now Head of the Department of Religious Studies. That, however, is only part of his many-sided ministry as a significant evangelical leader there. He is on the board of Prison Fellowship, contributing to their ministry of rehabilitation and help for prisoners. He leads youth camps and speaks in schools with Scripture Union. He has written a series of textbooks for Religious Education and runs a programme for training Sunday School teachers.



Three Langham Scholars

Fidelis is certainly a Langham Scholar making a difference! He found the Regional Council a great experience of fellowship with others in the region, and was appointed to its Executive Committee as Secretary and the Co-ordinator for the regional Fellowship of Langham Scholars.

The Regional Council was an opportunity for Mark Hunt (LPI Chair), Gene Green (a member of the Scholar Committee of Langham Partnership / JSM in the States) and Chris Wright to visit the Evangelical Seminary of Southern Africa (ESSA), with Bill Houston, former Vice-Principal. ESSA runs a post-graduate seminar for evangelical students studying at Masters and Doctorate level in the Theology Department of the nearby University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, in Pietermaritzburg. This group includes some Langham Scholars, and we are grateful for the fellowship and encouragement they receive from ESSA in this way.



It was encouraging for Langham staff and board members to meet with Scholars during one of their seminars. Afterwards the group were very impressed with a visit to the ESSA library, which (partly with support from Langham Literature) is one of the best-equipped seminary libraries in Southern Africa.

Close to the end of his own journey John Stott calls for “incarnational evangelism” as the way to turn the world upside down



Walking slowly and clutching a sturdy wooden cane, 86 year old Rev Dr Stott looks every bit the statesman that, in 2005, Time magazine called “One of the 100 most influential people on the planet today”.

Having successfully passed the baton of leadership for the international church growth ministry he founded, the LANGHAM PARTNERSHIP, to the current International Director, the Rev Dr Chris Wright; John Stott is now enjoying a well earned retirement in leafy Sussex. However, the opportunity to speak again at the Keswick Convention 2007 was enough to draw out another one of those memorable sermons so many have come to expect from this grand orator.

John Stott clearly explained that the essence of what God is doing in the church today is the work of transforming His people into the image of His Son. Leading his audience from the past reality of predestination (Romans 8:29) through to the present work of transformation (2 Cor 3:18) and culminating in a glorious future (1 John 3:2) when we will discover that ‘we will be like Christ’.

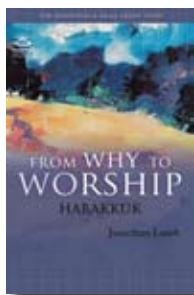
In vintage Stott style, John took the Keswick Convention along a clear and well crafted journey through the evidence for this central purpose of God – to turn the world upside down by transforming His people into the image of His Son. But, he added, it’s the church’s lack of cooperation with this central purpose of God for His people that has been so damaging to our world.

Incarnational evangelism or entering into other people’s worlds with Christ-likeness, Stott noted, is essential to the church’s walk in the 21st century. However, our evangelistic efforts often lead to failure simply because we fail to look like the Christ we are proclaiming. Quoting John Poulton, Stott noted that, “The most effective preaching comes from those who embody their message. What communicates now are people, not words or ideas but rather personal authenticity, that is, Christ-likeness”.

To download this sermon go to the Langham Partnership Website.

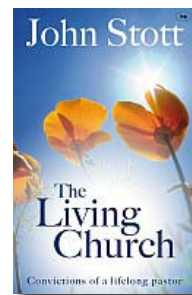
Jonathan Lamb examines Habakkuk

Asking the demanding question of whether we can rejoice in the Lord whatever our circumstances. Would God be enough if we were to lose everything else? Would we be able to say, with Habakkuk, that although we had no means of support, no food, nothing to drink, we would rejoice in the Lord? This is a challenging book. Jonathan brings Habakkuk’s prophecy to life, showing how we can take God with us into our darkest times. Habakkuk wrestles with God: he shouts his questions, roars his unhappiness and then he waits and listens. Let Habakkuk take you through your daily life, with all its pains and problems, and find for yourself that the Lord is enough.



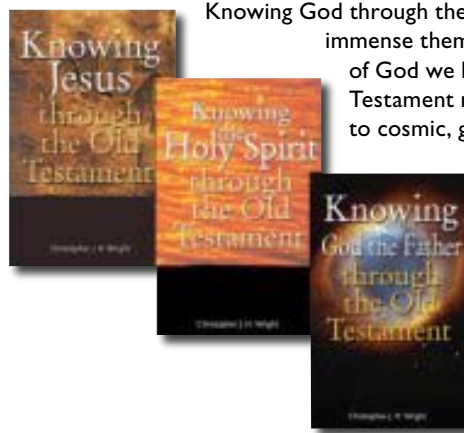
What exactly is a living church?

Author John Stott explains, “We need more radically conservative churches: ‘conservative’ in the sense that they conserve what Scripture plainly requires, but radical in relation to that combination of tradition and convention that we call ‘culture’. Scripture is unchangeable, but culture is not”. John Stott unpacks the Bible’s wisdom rigorously with a teacher’s skill and applies it faithfully with a pastor’s heart.



The Chris Wright Trilogy

Chris Wright has concentrated a lifetime’s Old Testament study into this inspiring trilogy. Knowing Jesus through the Old Testament explains how we cannot truly know Jesus without knowing the culture from which he emerges - its texts weave the tapestry in which he traced his own face. Knowing the Holy Spirit through the Old Testament shows how the Spirit breathed life into creation, spoke through the prophets and anointed the kings. Knowing God through the Old Testament is an immense theme. The knowledge of God we learn from the Old Testament ranges from personal to cosmic, governing our whole worldview.



Please pray ...

- for Chris Wright, International Director of Langham Partnership, and his wife Liz – for wisdom and grace in his very strategic position and with his demanding schedule;
- for the International Programme Directors – Jonathan Lamb (Preaching), Pieter Kwant (Literature) and Meritt Sawyer (Scholars) – for godly and wise decisions affecting many countries in the majority world;
- for Ma’afu & Elizabeth Palu and their sons – Langham Scholars studying here in Australia – that as he continues with his PhD research and writing Ma’afu will embody John Stott’s prayer for Langham Scholars – “while being a competent teacher of theology, will truly know and worship the God he talks about”;
- for Langham Partnership Australia’s Executive Officer, Wendy Toulmin – for wisdom in her many responsibilities;
- for our Langham Australia Board and for our newly appointed Board of Reference members – Rev Dr Peter Adam (Principal Ridley College), Rev Dr Ross Clifford (Principal Morling College), Rev David Cook (Principal SMBC) and Rt Rev Robert Forsyth (Bishop of South Sydney).

Please give ...

- to this very strategic ministry.

Online donation facilities now available on the website



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Dr Chris Wright in Australia 2008

March 19 Melbourne

- Ridley College (03 9207 4800) and
- Holy Trinity, Doncaster (03 9840 2577)

March 20

- BCV & Pioneers Mission Conference Day (03 9735 0011 or 03 8814 4444)

March 21-24 (Easter weekend)

- Belgrave Heights Easter Convention (03 9752 6855)

March 24-28 Vanuatu

March 29-31 Sydney

- Public meetings with friends & supporters (0416 126 368)

LANGHAM PARTNERSHIP AUSTRALIA

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- Give a one off gift of \$ Please make cheques payable to Langham Partnership (Aust) or complete card details below.

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Card Type / Mastercard

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Date

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You may wish to arrange with your Bank to set up Periodical Payments from your account directly to the Langham Partnership Bank account or to transfer monies directly via Internet banking. The details you will need are:
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Bank and Branch Westpac, Springwood NSW
BSB 032-837 **Account Number** 14-4002

[See website for online donations](#)

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