

Langham partnership news

Eager to Preach

'I am so eager to preach the gospel' — taken from Romans 1:15, was the title chosen by the Vanuatu organising committee for the launch of Langham Preaching in the Pacific.

Easter Monday saw over 100 pastors, elders and church leaders arriving at the Scripture Union campsite at Pango Point on the Vanuatu island of Efate for this first Pacific Preaching programme. These men and women represented six denominational groups and a number of para-church organisations working in Vanuatu, coming from seven of the main islands of Vanuatu. There were also four men from Papua New Guinea and two from the Solomon Islands, who are now forming local working committees in order to launch level 1 programmes next year in these countries.

Every day the programme was "full on" — running from 7.45am through till 9.00pm. Only possible with the purchase of a new generator enabling us to have adequate lighting and enough electricity to power the sound amplification system (particularly necessary in times of heavy rain on the tin roof!). LPA donated the generator to Scripture Union for use at their Campsite which will help with their future ministry.

Each day began with devotions led by a different local pastor or leader and it was wonderful as the week progressed to enjoy these times together. The mornings included basic teaching on understanding and interpreting the Bible, moving from text to sermon and later in the week, also on Taking the Bible as a Whole and Planning your

Preaching. The afternoons saw the sequence of individual study, group workshop and plenary feedback sessions with all the given passages from the Book of Acts. Then in the evenings David Cook or Chris Wright would preach from the same passage studied during the afternoon.

From the start we emphasized to participants that this was a long-term programme. The group workshops were organised geographically, so when we had the session on 'Developing a Movement for Biblical Preaching in Vanuatu', it was natural for them to meet in the same groups. There was enthusiasm expressed for setting up local Preachers' Clubs, each group appointing a convenor and we have heard they are already beginning to meet. **Please pray with us they will continue to encourage each other and so serve a great purpose under God.**

On the final night one of the Vanuatu church leaders thanked us for "coming along side and helping to repair their boat", one of the women elders told us "it was like for her stepping off the bush track and beginning to walk on the main road".

We returned from Vanuatu with a strong conviction that Langham Preaching Pacific region has been well and truly launched and has exciting potential in the years ahead.

Please help us continue these strategic partnerships in the Pacific region — Level 2 in Vanuatu in 2009 as well as Level 1 launches in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands also planned for 2009.

Chairman's Word

The recent Langham preaching seminar in Vanuatu has opened a new chapter in the life of LPA. This newsletter reports on the success of that seminar and on the very positive response received from seminar participants.

The seminar was the result of long term planning, much prayer and the willingness of Australian Christians to support LPA in this initiative. LPA now is ready to follow up the initial Vanuatu seminar with Vanuatu seminars stages 2 and 3, which will be conducted in 2009 and 2010. The seminar delegates in Vanuatu included representatives from PNG and Solomon Islands, who have urged LPA to initiate preaching seminars in their own countries in 2009.

These are genuinely exciting developments. The preaching seminars provide an opportunity to assist leaders in churches across the Pacific region to faithfully teach God's Word. Similar seminars conducted across the majority world have enhanced the effectiveness of the ministry of the participating churches in the countries concerned and have assisted the growth in maturity of church leaders and members. LPA thanks those supporters who made the Vanuatu seminar possible. We now invite all of our supporters to prayerfully consider the wonderful opportunities opening up in the Pacific area and to extend your prayerful interest and financial support to allow LPA to respond to these opportunities.
Trevor Cork



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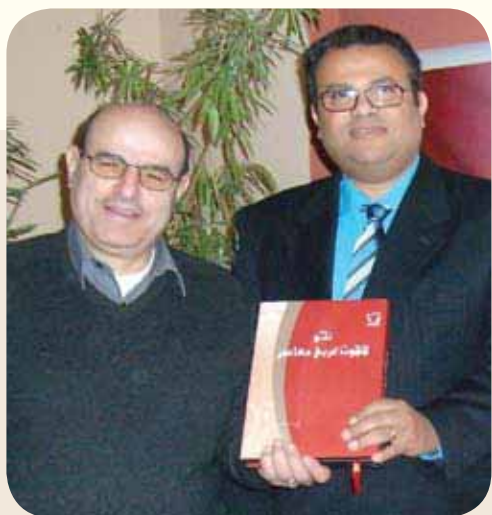
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Langham Literature

New Books for Ancient Believers

January 2008 saw the launch of the **Arabic Contemporary Theology**. There have been Arab believers since before the followers of Jesus were even called Christians (a nickname that was invented in Syria). They were there on the day of Pentecost and the Christian church has continued in the Middle East throughout the past 2000 years. Some of the rich tradition of Arabic Christian theological writings from a thousand years ago are being rediscovered today. But a distinctively evangelical Arabic Christian voice has not been heard addressing its own theological concerns in today's world within significant book-size publications — until this year.



Beautifully produced as an A4 size textbook of 500 pages in two column Arabic, the **Arabic Contemporary Theology** is the fruit of a three year project by a group of 10 Arab Christian theologians in Egypt and Lebanon, some of whom are

Langham Scholars. From clear biblical foundations, it tackles some of the sharp issues that Christians face especially in the Middle East. Issues such as the Old Testament concepts of covenant and land; the meaning of Jesus' identity as a Jew; Christianity and women; and salvation and other faiths.

Andrea Zaki Stephanous, Director of Dar El Thaqafa (the book's publisher) is a Langham Scholar who has driven the project from the beginning with significant investment from Langham Partnership. He says, 'Our whole hope for a reference book like this is to create a debate, to open Arab Christians to the challenges around them, and to strengthen the church's spiritual life.'

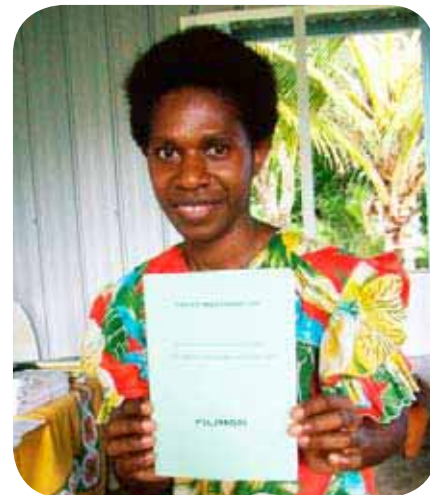
Another project that is helping and strengthening the Arab Christian community is the **Arabic Global Christian Library**. Now consisting of six books, it will reach into seminaries as textbooks on basic Christian doctrines, but will also be distributed widely among pastors and preachers across the whole Middle East and Arabic speaking world.

The whole project represents exciting co-operation between all three Langham Programmes. It is of course a Literature project, but it is being driven forward by a Langham Scholar, and it will serve the cause of biblical preaching around the region.

Andrea concludes, 'Without the support of Langham Partnership and the help of God, these books would never have happened.'

Vanuatu Bible Commentary Project Update

At the moment we are heartened by the progress made and yet daunted by the scope of the project. We are completing Philemon and have first drafts nearly complete for Galatians, Philippians, and I Thessalonians, and some progress on Colossians and Mark. Everyone has found writing a commentary to be more work and harder than they first thought it would be.



b Sophia Silas with her Bislama Philemon commentary.

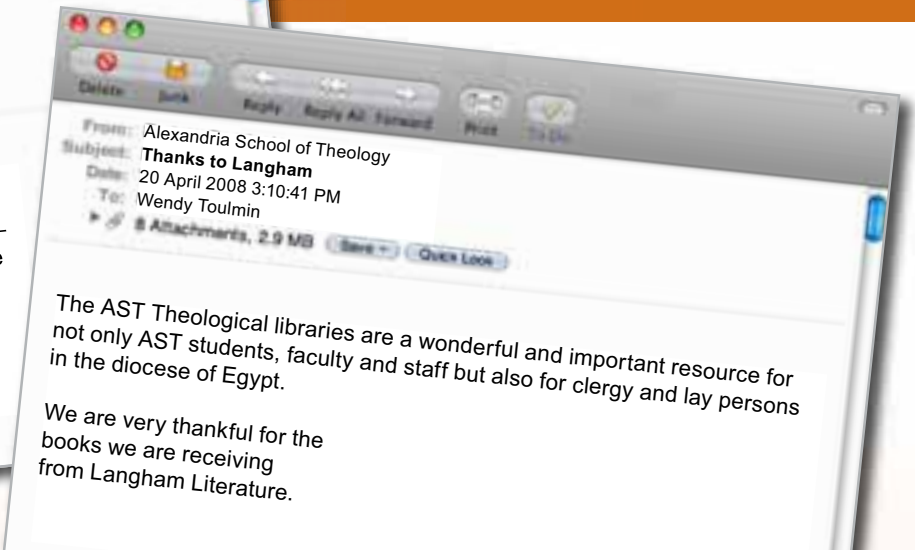
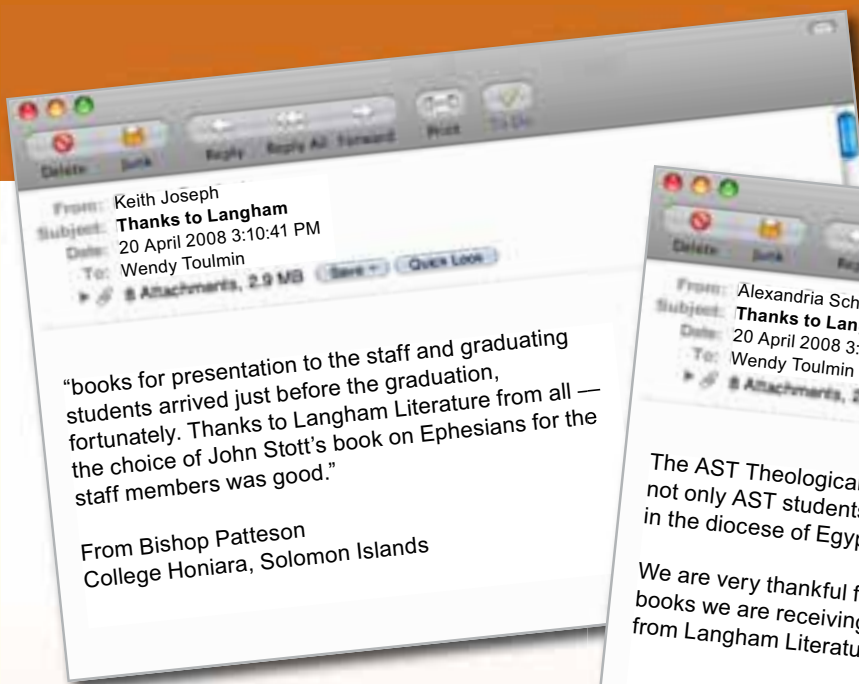
The Bislama Writers' Workshop in January was enthusiastically received, but too short. Long term, we need to have more niVanuatu people with biblical skills who have a flair for writing and the ability to help others write well. We need a niVanuatu person trained in linguistics. And we particularly need ni-Vanuatu people with good exegetical skills to critique the content, cultural interpretations and local applications of the commentaries.

We really appreciate Langham's interest in and support for this work!

[This is why the degree program is needed at Colleges like Talua and why Langham Preaching Conferences can make such a strategic contribution ... and that is why this is a long term project!]

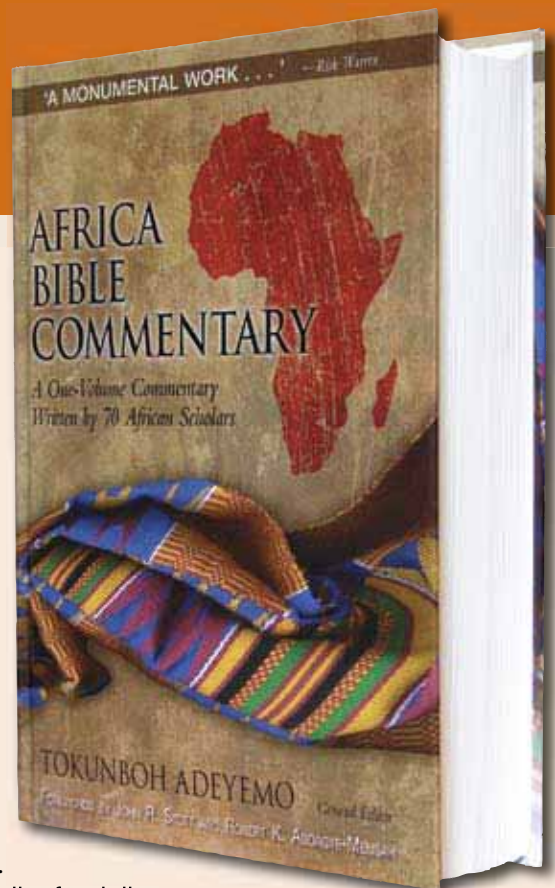


b Participants at the Bislama Writers Workshop.



Vanuatu Preachers Welcome Books

We are grateful to Langham Literature that full consignments of three books arrived on time and were received with great enthusiasm by the 104 delegates at the first Pacific Preaching Seminar in Vanuatu.



Help Us Equip African Pastors to Faithfully Preach God's Word

This month (May 2008), Koorong is teaming up with Langham Partnership Australia to distribute as many copies of the Africa Bible Commentary as we can to pastors in Africa .

You can join us in this mission by donating at any Koorong store or with a mail order. Or, to donate at koorong.com, please quote #273901. Koorong will match your donation dollar for dollar.

Just \$30 will provide one Africa Bible Commentary. Your \$15 — plus Koorong's \$15 — will put a commentary into the hands of one African pastor.



Langham Scholars

“I am in debt to God first and Langham second”

Most Langham Scholars’ eyes light up when they talk about their doctoral study supported by a Langham grant. But **Andrea Zaki Stephanous** positively sparkles as he describes the difference it has made in his life. Andrea did his PhD in Manchester, England, in the field of religion and politics. Chris Wright met him recently in his home country Egypt and asked him about it.

“My PhD programme absolutely transformed my life,” Andrea began. “It was a paradigm shift for me. First it gave me a deep appreciation of the importance of education and adapting a proper scientific approach to problems. Secondly it equipped me with the skills I need in my role now. By the grace of God I serve in a top position in my church and country, and in that role I have to deal with intellectuals and officials. I would not know how to do so without the experience and skills of the PhD. Thirdly it has empowered me in my job, as a professor, publisher, writer, speaker. I am invited both by the state and other organisations to give papers and presentations on a range of social and political issues as well as theological ones. Being academically equipped gives my church as a whole respect, in a culture where religious leaders are often despised as people of slogans only. Absolutely all my work as a leader in church, seminary, and society, has been transformed by the academic skills and challenges of the PhD work.

“And yet at the same time, as you go through the PhD you always affirm to yourself that you are a child in the world of learning. And even afterwards, I never feel that I am a ‘Scholar’ – when you know how much there is that you don’t know! I don’t feel worthy of that title. There is still a very long way to go.”

So what exactly does Andrea do? Prepare to be astonished. He carries an amazing portfolio of responsibility. His other roles include: Professor at the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Cairo; TV Presenter; Chair of the Council for Service and Development for the Synod of the Nile; Vice President of the Protestant Council of Egypt and International Deputy Director for the Middle East for the Lausanne movement. “And yet,” says Andrea, “I like to keep up my first love as a researcher and writer. This is a crucial part of what I do. I set aside time weekly for that.”

It would be hard to think of a better example of a rounded ministry of head, heart and hands, than the work of Langham Scholar, Andrea Zaki, in Egypt.

“I would not be as I am now without God’s grace and the support of Langham,” he concluded. “That is from my heart.”



b Andrea Zaki Stephanous and his wife Hala

A Teacher With A Missionary Heart

That’s the vision that Matthew Michael has for himself. Matthew has just reached the end of his first year on the PhD programme in Jos, Nigeria, as the first Langham Scholar to be supported there. He is one of a group of five who are the first enrolment in the doctoral programme of the Jos ECWA Theological Seminary (JETS). ECWA is the Evangelical Church of West Africa.



Matthew began his ministry as a missionary church planter with ECWA. in the mid 1990s. He took his first degree in missiology, and his zeal is still very apparent. Even during his PhD studies, he engages in student ministry, taking some of his fellow students to the campus of the University of Jos and relating to village students there every Saturday and Sunday.

Matthew’s other main passion is the Bible. He has been specialising in the Christological interpretation of the Old Testament, but with the particular goal of reaching the new generation of Africans with biblical teaching about Christ that is culturally rooted and relevant.

For four years before starting his doctoral studies, Matthew had already been teaching several courses at JETS, on Hebrew and Old Testament studies. He is also on the faculty of another ECWA seminary at Kagoro and will probably move to that faculty after his PhD. He is a highly valued member of the upcoming ECWA leadership, and finished both his BA and MA studies with top grades in all classes.

“I was so impressed with Matthew,” writes Chris Wright, “and the way his enthusiasm for his studies just fizzed out of him as he talked about the topics he is researching and writing on. But then I discovered another reason for the joy in his voice and the sparkle in his eye. He got married just a couple of months ago, in December!” His new wife, Juliana, is doing a postgraduate degree in Law at the University of Jos.

Matthew is one of a growing number of Scholars that Langham is supporting to do their PhD in Majority World contexts.

Latest News From Langham Scholar Ma’afu Palu — Studying in Australia

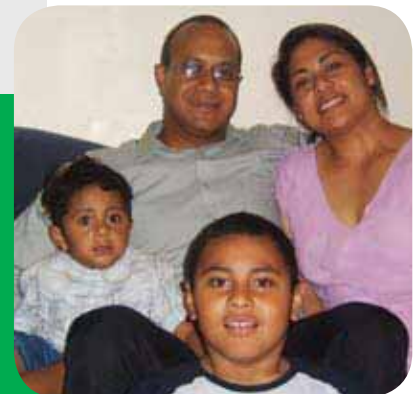
Ma’afu is at the final stages of his PhD at Moore College, Sydney. If all goes well, he’ll finish at the end of this year. He is still leading the Wednesday night Bible discussion consisting mainly of non-Christian non-Church Tongan men, as well as preaching often on Sundays.

Ma’afu was part of the recent Vanuatu Pacific Preaching Programme and from the 20th to the 24th of April he along with Greg Anderson from Moore College returned to Vanuatu at the invitation of the Talua Bible Training School as guest lecturers. Ma’afu dealt with the topic of how best to read the Bible from the context of the Pacific.

Elizabeth and the boys are going well. Both Elizabeth and Ma’afu are involved in a group which meets once a month to pray for the Pacific. The group’s vision is not only to provide the Pacific with faithful Bible teachers but also to raise funds to support those who will work for the gospel in the Pacific.

Please join us in praying with them:

- † We > RRWeRe YVh Z] SVRS]Ve` }_ZY off his thesis.
- † We X UJZ VhZ eVZ]gVdR UWc their kids (Tevita and Freddie) to grow up and become believers.
- † We eVgZ]_ We eVARIZ TRh V]] c that many faithful teachers and pastor will be raised for the Pacific.



Consider supporting the Langham Scholars Programme — a strategic investment in the future of the Majority World Church.

Response Form

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BSB 032-837 **Account Number** 14-4002

[See Website for Online Donations](#)

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