



LANGHAM'S CONTEXTUAL WORK IN THE PHILIPPINES

When Typhoon Haiyan slammed into the Philippines in November 2013, killing at least 6,300 people, damaging 1.1 million houses, and disrupting the livelihoods of almost 6 million people, Langham Scholar Athena Gorospe mobilized a group of volunteers from Asia Theological Seminary (ATS) to help.

Athena led the group from the Manila-based school where she serves as Director of Contextual Theology to one of the devastated islands and provided a unique kind of care. Instead of joining volunteers already clearing rubble and providing medical aid, Athena and her team sat with those who were left, listening to survivors grieve, and providing desperately needed spiritual care.

Athena had come to faith at age 11, but it was the years of the Marcos dictatorship (1965-1986) which tested and shaped her faith. "My classmates were out [protesting], but ... I could not relate my faith to what was happening in society." That desire drove Athena to a deeper engagement with the Bible, then to complete an M.Div. degree at ATS, and in 2000 to enter Fuller Theological Seminary's PhD program as a Langham Scholar, and finally back to her current work at ATS in contextual theology.

Langham's work in the Philippines is shaped by this desire for cultural relevance. In 2021, the Philippines – Asia's only officially Christian country – celebrated the 500th anniversary of Christianity's arrival, when the Spanish explorer Magellan landed on Cebu Island. When Spanish rule was replaced by American colonialism (1900-1946), many evangelical missionaries arrived, working especially through hospitals and schools. Today, the Philippines faith population reflects its history: 83% Catholic, 3% evangelical Protestant, 5% Muslim, and many proliferating cults.

The 2021 anniversary of Christianity's birth in the Philippines was dismissed by then-president Duterte as irrelevant and as the commemoration of an event that led to Filipinos' colonization and subjugation. Many thoughtful Filipino evangelicals grieve that after 500 years Christianity has not changed Filipino society in fundamental ways and remains irrelevant in the lives of most people. Corruption

in government and the legal system is pervasive, with many poor and helpless people caught up in the fallout.

How should biblically faithful Christians respond? Young Christians share that this generation of Christians has lived through so many crises that they are exhausted and have retreated into a resigned apathy. Partly in response to that malaise, Rico Villanueva, Langham Scholar and Asia-Pacific Regional Commissioning Editor for Langham Literature, co-edited Langham Global Library's *Faith and Bayan: Evangelical Christian Engagement in the Philippine Context* (2022). The book lays out why passive acceptance of a profoundly unjust status quo is not the Scriptural prophetic model, and why the work of evangelicals like Athena and Rico is so crucial. These evangelical leaders seek to explain what the Bible says in the face of injustices such as a corrupt legal system, the targeting of helpless people by the government, the sexual trafficking of young people, and the growing issue of exploitation of the huge number of Filipinos working overseas.

Rico has also written several other books, including *It's OK to be Not OK: Preaching the Lament Psalms*, and is General Editor of the *Asia Bible Commentary* series.

As it does in many other countries, Langham assists with publishing and providing books for Filipino pastors, equipping them to address a widespread problem in the country: church attendance may be growing, but teaching is often shallow, and laypeople have a weak understanding of Scripture, and thus a shallow relationship with God. Books are generally available, although expensive, in the major cities, but in outlying areas, most pastors have almost no access to good theological books. Langham's video about the effort to meet this need can be seen at <https://vimeo.com/273601109>

The ripple effects of grassroots ministry by Langham Scholars can be seen in the experience of Moises, a prosecuting attorney in the Department of Justice, Manila. His classes with Athena Gorospe at ATS first opened his eyes to the connection between his Christian faith, and a gospel-shaped vocation. "Before entering ATS, and being under Dr. Gorospe, I just viewed my work as simple work.

After entering the seminary and learning about what Scripture says, I developed compassion,” he says. “That revolutionised the way I handle cases. She was instrumental in opening my eyes when it comes to the concepts of justice and mercy. She enabled me to read Scripture and apply it to my line of work. I’m just overwhelmed by the work of the Lord that I’m now being used by God to administer justice to the vulnerable.”

Langham Scholar Dr Rolex Cailing (PhD, Torch Trinity University, South Korea) returned to the Philippines with a vision to equip local pastors to integrate the Bible with their local culture. He says that community immersion is not a popular model with many Filipino pastors, who he says often try to avoid the pain of real life with Prosperity Gospel preaching, and simplistic theology. Rolex teaches the pastors he mentors that God doesn’t smooth over or minimize our pain but wants us to bring our anguish and questions to Him. “You can’t just jump in and say ‘God has a purpose for this tragedy’ – and you’re talking to someone who just lost three kids. But, by being there, living with them and listening to their cries, you are sending a message that God is alive and in control. For a theologian like me, it is transformational to be immersed in the community of the dispersed and displaced, and also for the people

observing your ministry,” says Rolex.

After Typhoon Haiyan over 2,000 homeless people descended on Rolex’s home province of Rizal. The church he founded, Life Reach Ministries, reached out to support many of them. Rolex partnered with other organizations to help the displaced community meet critical needs. Rolex is part of the Langham Preaching network in the Philippines, locally run by 20 facilitators, with almost no outside assistance. During May-August 2022, two Level 1 and two Level 2 seminars trained 75 and 67 pastors respectively, 80% in person. The 13 Preaching Clubs are strong and well run. Pastor Larry Bautista says: “Langham is a very big help to us and our workers who were not able to study in seminary. Though I studied in seminary, I still learned new things in Langham. This helped me to truly study the passage to become faithful, clear and relevant.”

Your support of Langham Scholars, Literature and Preaching is helping to equip the men and women who are helping to build the Filipino Church. The Philippines continues to be the top source of new immigrants to Canada, many of whom are coming to Canada with a vibrant faith and encouraging the Canadian Church in turn. John Stott would have been delighted to see this trend.

Langham Canada Helps Ukraine Director

In order to respond to the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, Langham Canada will now directly help to support Roman Soloviy, Director of the Eastern European Institute of Theology in Lviv, Ukraine. He is the editor of *Theological Reflections: Eastern European Journal of Theology* and serves as Langham Literature Regional Commissioning Editor. Roman directly engages in training pastors for the region and resourcing them with contextually relevant theological and biblical materials. Langham Canada is privileged to be able to help carry the burdens of our brothers and sisters in Ukraine, even in such a small way.

“The vast majority of Ukrainian Christians have chosen ‘to share ill-treatment with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin’ (Hebrews 11:25 NRSV),” explained Roman. “In times of great suffering, followers of the crucified Messiah cannot preach

the gospel at a safe distance from a hellish reality. Those who haven’t seen sunlight for months, hiding in basements from Russian bombs and rockets; those who flee; those who seek healing for their physical and mental trauma; those who lost all they had built and their loved ones; and those who have been victims of physical violence do not need triumphant preaching or endless moralizing. They need Christ, who will drink with them the bitter cup of loneliness and abandonment and who will go with them all the way to the end. That is the Christ we try to preach and embody in acts of solidarity and self-denial, descending, as He does, to the last depths of human suffering.”

Thank you for your support that enables us to strengthen Langham’s presence in Ukraine and offer practical encouragement to leaders like Roman.



Langham Canada Statement on the Death of Queen Elizabeth II

The entire world senses that with the death of Her Majesty Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada, it is not just the passing of a great person and great monarch, but the passing of an era. For seventy years, she reigned over the United Kingdom, Canada and the Commonwealth as an exemplary Head of State, bringing incomparable dignity, grace, and devotion to duty to an immensely difficult task. From the very beginning of her reign, she promised before God to serve her people. She is so outstanding in our era because she kept her promises, and she genuinely understood leadership as servant-leadership.

Langham Partnership has a personal connection to the Queen. Our founder John Stott was a Chaplain to the Queen. When he reached the (normal) retirement age of seventy, Her Majesty conferred on him

the very rare honour of naming him an “Extra Chaplain”, so he could continue in her service. He was a house guest at Sandringham, and preached to the Royal Household. Her deep and lively Christian faith shone through in her public life, and she testified to it every year in her annual Christmas messages.

In his splendid tribute, Rev. Canon J. John said: “Physically, the Queen was a small woman but the title Majesty was totally appropriate for her. She was a little lady with a very big God... This was a woman who recognized that the only way to rule an earthly kingdom was to seek a heavenly one.”

Now Her Majesty has received her eternal crown. May she Rest In Peace.

Around the world with Langham Partnership International:

A year-end snapshot (all numbers reflect ministry for the year ended 30 June 2022)

Canadian donors help make Langham ministry possible around the world. We want you to see the direct impact of your financial gifts and prayers during the past year.

Langham Preaching

- Held **276** in-person and virtual preaching training seminars in **63** countries in need of solid biblical preaching (34% online). There are 104 Langham Preaching Movements in **89** countries around the world.
- Equipped **9,813** pastors and lay leaders to teach God's Word (**1,400** local indigenous Facilitators and Preaching Club coordinators). Training has been led by **669** local Facilitators, equipped and working in teams to train others, with **1,143** preaching groups of **7-10** pastors and leaders.
- Held **8** global or regional consultations, forums or leadership meetings, involving at least **98** leaders and/or coordinators from across the world to review, learn, train and plan.

Langham Literature

- Supplied **14,635** Bible-centred books to **700** Majority World seminaries and colleges across **79** countries to help students grow in Christ. **11,154** of these books were supplied to **693** colleges free of charge through the Library Grants program.
- Distributed **32,722** Bible-centred books to Majority World pastors, students and ministry partners in need of study materials, of which **18,971** were supplied free of charge to participants at, or Coordinators of, Langham Preaching seminars and/or clubs.
- Distributed **18,270** Bible-centred books to partner Majority World publishers.
- Worked with **23** indigenous publishers, in **20** different countries, in the production of **36** local language titles, through the awarding of Publisher Grants (to 19 publishers), and/or through provision of mentoring and advice. Additionally, **14** local writers in **12** countries were supported through Writer Grants.
- Published **50** books, including **26** Langham Global Library books, **15** Langham Monographs, **4** Langham Preaching resources, **3** Hip-

pobooks and **2** LivresHippo books. **38** of the books published were by Majority World authors or contributors, **15** by Langham Scholars.

- Supported the publication of **3** Bible Commentaries (Latin America Commentary Portuguese translation, Africa Commentary Amharic translation and the Second Edition of the Slavic Commentary in Russian) and actively worked on **19** other Commentary projects.

Langham Scholars

- Supported **85** PhD students from **44** Majority World countries in theological doctoral programs, **22** of whom were newly appointed during the 2021-22 academic year.
- Celebrated the graduation of **7** Scholars, all of whom have returned to serve in the Majority World. They will go on to help shape their nations with a biblical worldview as they teach in seminaries, start salt and light ministries, and serve in responsible government roles – and join a fellowship of **over 325** graduated Scholars serving around the world. Two recent graduated Scholars studied in Canada: Chandra Wim at Wycliffe College (now back in Indonesia), and Emad Botros at McMaster Divinity College (now back in Lebanon).
- Supported **5** current doctoral and **3** postdoctoral Majority World Scholars with study residencies for short-term periods of study, or research and writing, in centres with access to excellent library resources and a research community.
- Supported the involvement of **8** Majority World postdoctoral Scholars, in an International Research and Training seminar (IRTS), **9** Francophone African postdoctoral Scholars in Francophone IRTS projects, and **6** Scholars in a new Asia IRTS.
- Held **3** in-person and **15** online Regional Scholar consultations for current Langham Scholars. Held **2** in-person Regional Forums for graduated Scholars. This provides opportunities for Scholars to network, receive pastoral care, share research, and collaborate, so they can more effectively serve the Church and theological institutions.
- Langham Scholars had at least **38 books and 10 articles** published, **10** of those by women.

Langham International Director Visited Canada

Langham Canada hosted our international director, Rev. Tayo Arikawe, for four days in June 2022. This was Tayo's first visit to Canada, and part of an extended North American visit. He was able to visit Wycliffe College in Toronto and McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton, where Langham Scholars are studying, and met four of our Scholars.

Tayo met with Bishop Stephen Andrews, Langham Canada board member and principal of Wycliffe College, and Dr Stan Porter, principal of McMaster Divinity College, to thank both schools for the wonderful academic training they have given Langham Scholars over many years,

and to look forward to what we can do together in the years to come. During a lunch with about 30 friends of Langham in Markham, Ont., Tayo was able to share his vision for Langham, and met later with the Langham Canada board. No first-time visitor to southern Ontario can leave without also visiting Niagara Falls! It was great to welcome Tayo to Canada, even for such a short visit, and we look forward to his next visit, when he can meet more friends of Langham from across our beautiful country.



Langham Canada Scholar Update

For five years, Langham Partnership Canada supported Langham Scholar Chandra Wim at Wycliffe College in Toronto. Chandra returned to Indonesia in 2021, and in 2022 was awarded his well-earned PhD. He is a fine example of how an investment in a Langham Scholar pays dividends for decades.



Wim is on the faculty of Southeast Asia Bible Seminary (SEABS) in Malang, East Java, much better known in Indonesia as SAAT (Seminar Alkitab Asia Tenggara). It is a Christ-centred, non-denominational school in the evangelical tradition, founded in 1952 by Andrew Gih, a colleague of the extremely influential Chinese evangelist John Sung. SAAT has 294 enrolled students in its two programs: 165 and 129 in Bachelor and Master of Theology respectively. Most will become pastors, but some will become Christian educators, ministry leaders, or missionaries in the Asia-Pacific region.

Wim assumed direction of SAAT's Th.M. program in 2021, in addition to teaching classes in systematic theology, historical theology, Contemporary Issues in Theological Studies, and Faith & Culture

Relationship. His passion is to impart the love of Scripture and the richness of the Christian theological tradition (and their tight relationship!) to his students, to equip them to be pastor-theologians in their future ministry. Wim is also active in the Fellowship of Indonesian Langham Scholars (FILS) and co-edited the FILS's forthcoming book project on salvation in the Indonesian context.

Karmelita Suryanto, Wim's spouse, is also a Wycliffe graduate (M.A. in Theological Studies, 2019). Their two children, Glorianne Wen (10) and Gregory Wen (7), are currently being homeschooled, while their fluency in Indonesian returns, but Wim shares that they are adjusting well to Indonesian food and culture, after so many formative years in Canada.

"I am forever grateful for Langham Canada and its faithful donors for providing funds for my studies at Wycliffe College so that I could get a rigorous theological training and a doctorate in theology," shares Wim. "This is huge for me personally but also for my sending seminary, which needs more theologically adept faculty members to serve the growing churches in Indonesia. More than just offering financial aid, however, Langham provides pastoral care, academic support, and global networking opportunities with evangelical scholars around the world. I often tell my students about my experience with Langham in this way: 'I applied to Langham for money (for my degree), but what I get is a family (for a lifetime)! How awesome!' So, thank you for supporting me and many scholars like me. The Lord bless you!"

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