



CANADA

Langham[®]
PARTNERSHIP

Fall 2021

OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTNER WITH THE CHURCH IN THAILAND

McGilvary College of Divinity in Chiang Mai, in Northern Thailand, is the academic home to three Langham Scholars. Satanun Boonyakiat has taught there since 2000; Witthaya Phuttharaksa is currently studying at Wycliffe College, Toronto, and Itthaphon Duangnapha at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, IL. The city of Chiang Mai has been a major Christian centre in Thailand since missionaries Daniel McGilvary and his wife Sophia arrived in the area in 1867, among the very first outsiders ever to reach this region.

Nan Inta was a well-known zealous Buddhist scholar and temple abbot, close to the Thai royal family, and became a close colleague of Daniel McGilvary, the first recorded Christian convert in the area, and the first Thai to be baptized in Northern Thailand. His journey out of Buddhism opened the door to Christian missions in Thailand.

Today, Christians represent only around 1% of the Thai population, making it one of the least evangelized countries on earth. Thai culture is closely intertwined with Buddhism, so leaving Buddhism is seen by many as rejecting one's national identity. In 1990, as part of a national celebration, 300 million statues of Buddha were erected throughout the country. Thailand is proud of the fact that it was never colonized by the West ("Thailand" means "land of the free"), and Christianity is perceived as a Western religion. This background makes it especially hard for Christians living in a culture which values community very highly. Most Thai Buddhists adhere to a distinctive mixture of classical Buddhism and animism. Modern culture and education are beginning to change these patterns for some westernized Thais, but ancient patterns are still powerful.

Chiang Mai is a centre of Christian work for the entire region, with many Chinese and Laotian people passing through, and numerous Christian ministries located here. Thailand was a refuge for many Cambodians fleeing Khmer Rouge persecution during the 1970s, and many came to faith in the grim refugee camps along Thailand's eastern border during and after those years.

Today, McGilvary College of Divinity has about 108 students, of whom 105 are Thais (from several ethnic groups). The school offers Bachelors and Masters programs in theology, with 11 full-time Thai faculty and three missionaries. Thailand has four other accredited seminaries, all in Bangkok: Thailand Baptist Theological Seminary, Bangkok Institute of Theology, Thailand Pentecostal Bible College, and the largest, Bangkok Bible Seminary.

These schools are critical for the future of the Thai church, producing the leaders essential for its future growth. In 1912, reflecting back on his ministry, Daniel McGilvary's deepest regret was that there was not a greater emphasis placed on cultivating national church leaders: "For the ultimate establishing of the church, and to meet the demands of the age, we must have workmen thoroughly equipped."

A major challenge is the lack of Thai-language materials. There are some Bible commentaries, but some books of the Bible have only one or two commentaries. There is a lack of Thai-language books on important subjects such as a Christian understanding of Islam, or Church history. In many seminaries, much of the material is in English, but in Thailand, few students have sufficient command of English. There is an urgent need to translate more quality Christian books into Thai, and to encourage Thai Christian leaders to write Thai-language books addressing critical issues for the Thai church. Coming from a Buddhist background, for example, many Thai Christians view the Trinity as bewildering or even optional. The recent Thai translation of Tim Chester's book *Delighting in the Trinity*, published by Christian publisher Kanok Bannasan in Bangkok, is one solid response.

Langham Literature supports Kanok Bannasan (OMF) Publishers. As Kanok's manager Tasanee Yanasiddh explains about Chester's book: "It gives a down-to-earth, readable explanation of the Trinity. In addition to exploring the biblical foundations and historical insights of the doctrine of a triune God, the book examines the very practical implications of

this doctrine for the believer's everyday life... there is no title about the Trinity in our community."

Kanok is the biggest and most important Christian publisher in Thailand, founded by OMF in 1952, but by now indigenously owned and managed. Kanok publishes about ten new books a year, many written in Thai by Thai authors – notably, a projected four-volume series *Thai Christian Theology*, by Dr. Boonyakiat, of which the first volume has been published to date (made possible with Langham support). *The Tears of my Soul* is the moving memoir of Sokreaksa Himm, a Cambodian refugee who fled via Thailand to Canada, where Christ saved him (and many other refugees from the genocide) and began a long process of healing, leading to his eventual return to Cambodia to minister to others. His book is read not just by Christians but by students in secular university courses. Thailand is an oral culture, but this does not mean that Thais don't enjoy reading: according to 2008 research, written materials were very important in their conversion for 60% of Thai Christians. Other books include

60%

of Thai Christians report written materials were important in their conversion

Also: Langham Literature is committed to Kanok's ministry, which is profiled at <https://vimeo.com/402722885> and at www.kanokbannasan.org.

How to Read the Bible for all its Worth (Fee & Stewart), and *Sweeter than Honey* (Chris Wright).

Two Langham Scholars working in Bangkok, Dr. Seree Lorgunpai (Thailand Bible Society General Secretary), and Dr. Wiriyapipvarakankoon (New Testament professor at Bangkok Institute of Theology), are the nucleus of the Langham Preaching program for Southern Thailand, together with Sim Churnai, country coordinator. The first training session, in November 2014, in Bangkok, had 50 participants drawn from all major denominations and many parachurch groups. They have run annually since, with 25-40 participants, and with trained national facilitators among the leaders since 2017. Today there are 8 preaching clubs, with 6-14 participants in each. Plans are underway for a Preaching program in 2022 for Northern Thailand as well, spearheaded by McGilvary's Dr. Boonyakiat, as well as a program hosted by a Chiang Mai Pentecostal church.

The Thai church is small and faces significant challenges. But it is growing; 1,000 new churches have been planted since 2000. Langham Scholars has helped prepare several key Thai Christian leaders and authors. Through its work with Kanok Bannasan, Langham is helping to address the hunger among many Thais for Christian literature. We long to see Thais not only come to faith, but to find church homes with biblically faithful preaching, and pastors equipped with good theological and biblical literature.

Langham Preaching Gathering in Africa

The third annual 'Langham Preaching Sunday in Africa' took place on Zoom at the end of June, with nearly 200 people from across the continent attending.

The event (in English and French) also highlighted John Stott's centenary and gave updates about Langham Preaching's impact in Africa.

Femi Adeleye, Director for Langham Preaching Africa, outlined what he is thankful to God for this year, which included: unique partnerships with local churches; preaching clubs that are able to connect with each other despite Covid-19; and theological institutions that have invited Langham Preaching to help equip their students.

Testimonies were shared about the impact John Stott and Langham Preaching have had across Africa for many decades. Bishop Martin Breytenbach, from Limpopo, South Africa, spoke about his gratitude for Langham Preaching's influence in his region. As a result of Langham Preaching training, pastors in his diocese were able to apply the Word of God to issues discussed at a recent Church Synod.

Anglican Bishop Masimango Zakari of DR Congo thanked Langham Preaching for equipping pastors who are unable to attend theological college.

Tayo Arikawe, Langham's new International Director, also addressed the meeting, offering thanks to God for the continuity of the legacy of John Stott in Africa. He added that the West is now seeing the impact of John Stott's ministry in Africa, in what some are now calling 'reverse mission.'

New Centre to Increase International Book Distribution

Langham opened its new service centre for Biblical literature in Carlisle, England in September 2021. Many Langham friends and donors supported and gave to this project, which will dramatically improve the working conditions and the capacity of the book distribution arm of Langham Literature. More books will reach more readers in the Majority World, with the new efficiencies introduced by the new centre.

The modern, spacious centre greatly expands Langham's warehouse capacity, and enables Langham to more than double annual book distribution to ship 295,000 books annually. We thank God for this new centre.

"If you go to a Christian bookstore in the Middle East, in Egypt or Lebanon or Jordan, you will be amazed because we have very few Christian books written in Arabic by Arabs. We need books written from within our own context." -- Dr. Riad Kassis, Director of Langham Scholars, Beirut, Lebanon.

Interview with Tayo Arikawe

Tayo Arikawe is the new International Director of Langham Partnership International. We asked him about his vision for LPI and the role Canada can play.

What has been the biggest surprise for you so far, as you start to lead Langham?

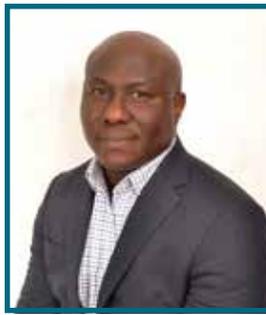
A pleasant surprise is the depth and width of our programs (Scholars, Preaching, Literature) and the ongoing impact across the globe, especially giving so much voice to leaders from the Majority World/Global Church, via publishing/literature.

How would you like to see the work of Langham expand or change in the next five years or so?

I would like to see more integration among our programs. This will mean that we will be able to provide more support to those engaged practically in our programs. Also, to see more diversity in all layers of our leadership, to better reflect the values of Langham.

You will be working at the bird's eye view in some ways with Langham's work, leading the mission around the world. What would you like Canadian supporters of Langham to know?

There is still more ground to cover in strengthening the Global Church. There are still many more commentaries and other resources that will need to be developed, with a view to equipping Majority World churches and leaders, but also giving them a voice to partner [with] and encourage the Global Church; many more pastors that are



passionate and godly but need more training. I'm hoping that we can further strengthen our programs in existing countries while moving into other countries. We need expansion of programs and also of geographical areas of coverage. Please pray for more openings in new areas and more resources to advance our programs.

What are you reading these days that is inspiring you and your work?

I'm reading a book on missions from the Majority World. It's amazing and encouraging to see the many years of western missionary efforts bearing fruit in the Majority World. The churches are growing in leaps and bounds.

Might we see you in Canada one day?

Definitely, I would love to visit Canada when Covid-19 restrictions are lifted. You are on my radar. I'm deeply grateful to you all for your love and support toward the growth of the Majority World Church. This growth has presented some fresh challenges, but also fresh opportunities for Langham. The churches need strengthening and discipleship more than ever, and Langham is strategically positioned to continue to strengthen these churches and leaders, via our programs (Literature, Preaching and Scholars). I'm praying for God's grace to abound toward you all, so that your love, support and generosity will continue to be extended to your beloved family members from the Majority World, toward strengthening and maturing them in Christ. Thank you and every rich blessing in Christ to you all.

Focus on the Impact of Langham Scholars

In our newsletter cover story about Langham in Thailand, you read about Langham Scholars like Dr. Seree Lorgunpai (Director of the Thailand Bible Society), and Dr. Wiriya Tipvarakankoon (New Testament professor at Bangkok Institute of Theology). They form the nucleus of the Langham Preaching program for Southern Thailand. These two scholars exemplify the multiplying power of the Langham Scholars program. Since the 1960s, over 350 Scholars like Lorgunpai and Tipvarakankoon from all around the Majority World have been funded to obtain their PhDs in core biblical studies and theology. Five Scholars are currently studying at Wycliffe College, Toronto and McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, ON; including Witthaya, sent

by McGilvary College of Divinity in Chiang Mai.

- Together, Langham Scholars have helped equip more than 2.6 million church planters, Bible teachers and pastors for their nations.
- Each Langham Scholar equips on average 7,733 students over a lifetime of ministry.

We can measure the impact of Langham Scholars.

Langham Scholars are engaged in transformational leadership and equipped to help their nations. Independent studies have shown that among graduated Scholars:

80% **TRAIN LEADERS**
who launch new ministries, churches or schools

78% **LEAD SCHOOLS**
and expand indigenous theological education by adding degrees, courses, students, or accreditation

51% **START MINISTRIES**
such as churches or schools

35% **EXERCISE GLOBAL INFLUENCE**
by advising local governments and international NGOs

66% **WRITE THE FIRST BOOKS IN THEIR NATIONAL LANGUAGE AND CONTEXT FOR LOCAL BELIEVERS**
including Bible studies, and commentaries, books on theology, pastoring and ethics

(Excellence in Giving, Colorado Springs, CO report, 2015-20)

Congratulations!

In May 2021, Emad Botros officially graduated with a PhD from McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton, ON. Emad had already returned to Lebanon in 2019, where he teaches at Arab Baptist Theological Seminary in Beirut. In September 2021, Chandra Wim successfully completed his PhD at Wycliffe College, Toronto, and will officially graduate in 2022. Wim had already returned to Indonesia in 2020, where he teaches at Southeast Asia Bible Seminary in Malang. This has been a long road for both these men and these families, and we congratulate them on their achievement! Langham Canada is proud to know that God has given us a part in preparing Emad and Wim for Kingdom service in the Majority World.

Langham Literature 2021

Langham partners with indigenous publishers and writers to develop and distribute biblical books and resources, written in the national language and from within the cultural context, to churches, students and libraries. In Langham's financial year ended June 30th 2021, Langham Literature:

- Supplied **16,563** Bible-centred books to **633** Majority World (MW) colleges across **80** countries to help students grow and mature in Christ. **9,582** of these books were supplied to **627** colleges free of charge through the Library Grants program.
- Distributed **13,940** Bible-centred books to MW pastors, students and ministry partners in need of study materials. **5,262** of these books were supplied free of charge to participants at, or coordinators of, Langham Preaching seminars.
- Supported **22** indigenous publishers, in **17** countries, in the production of **55** local language titles, through the awarding of Publisher Grants. Additionally, **13** local writers in **12** countries were supported through Writer Grants.
- Mentored **6** MW editors.

- Published **46** books, including **26** Langham Global Library books, **11** Langham Monographs, **3** Langham Preaching resources, **6** HippoBooks and **10** LivresHippo books. **33** of the books published were by MW authors or contributors, and **7** of these were by Langham Scholars.
- Supported the publication of **2** ground-breaking Bible Commentaries (*The Branch Exposition of the Bible: New Testament and South Asia Bible Commentary - Hindi translation*), and actively worked on **18** other Bible Commentary projects.

Thank you for all your support for Langham that makes this work possible.

What makes Langham distinct?

Whether you've supported Langham's mission to prepare the next generation of Bible teachers for years, or if you're brand new to the Langham family, it is good to be reminded about what makes Langham Partnership distinct. We call them the "Langham Distinctives." The three distinctives also ensure that we maximize efficiency and put every dollar entrusted to us by donors to its most effective use.

These three key distinctives in Langham's approach are unchanging, and they reflect the heart of our founder, John Stott:

■ **Langham listens.**

We enter into countries when we are invited, and we listen as local leaders identify the most pressing issues in their cultures.

■ **Langham equips local leaders.**

We equip indigenous pastors, leaders, publishers and writers, enabling them to multiply disciples in their nations.

■ **Langham focuses on God's Word.**

We help churches become deeply rooted in God's Word so they can provide biblical solutions that address local issues.

YOU CAN BE PART OF LANGHAM'S MISSION!



WILL YOU JOIN US ON MISSION? LANGHAM'S WORK RESONATES WITH GLOBALLY-MINDED CANADIAN CHRISTIANS WHO LOVE AND VALUE THE CHURCH OF THE MAJORITY WORLD. JOIN US.

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