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TRANSFORM

Autumn
2021

Langham Partnership News



Following Jesus in the Thai culture

Scholar multiplies
ministers of hope
in Brazil

Congratulations
Elie Haddad!

Word on the
World with
Chris Wright

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Like many mission organisations we can benefit greatly when friends make a final gift that continues to bless the ministries they have generously supported in life. Once you have made proper and primary provision for family and friends this can be a very effective way to go on making a difference to the church on earth when you have joined the church in glory! If you would like to consider this option in your will please let us know and we will send you a helpful legacy leaflet. Contact Simon Foulds: simon.foulds@langham.org

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Langham Partnership's Vision and Mission

Langham Partnership's Vision is to see churches equipped for mission and growing to maturity in Christ through the ministry of pastors and leaders who believe, teach and live by the Word of God.

Our mission is to strengthen the ministry of the Word of God through: nurturing national movements for biblical preaching (**Langham Preaching**); fostering the creation and distribution of evangelical literature (**Langham Literature**); and enhancing evangelical theological education (**Langham Scholars**), especially in countries where churches are under resourced.

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Greetings from the National Director:



Dear Friends

I am writing as the heated, messy and dangerous evacuations from Kabul airport dominate our media. Today, credit is being given to troops circulating through the crowds at some personal risk as they offer a preliminary check on the paperwork individuals hold: do they have the right passport or correct letter of commendation? Some of the more poignant images include people brandishing their UK passports. There are also those who finally recognise that after a week of queuing in the heat with their family they are never going to be allowed onto a flight.

For those visiting, working or even living in that city and country, perhaps their citizenship was not of much concern until recently. Now it is of critical importance. The pain and fear in remaining is being contrasted with the perceived freedom and protection of leaving. Their situation is desperate and hope is limited. Imagine the responsibility for an extended family.

Paul ends his letter to the Philippians (a Roman citizen writing to a Roman colony) with a reminder that, 'our citizenship is in heaven'. This does not insulate him (or us?) from pain and despair in the world. After all, Paul had all the privileges of Roman citizenship and look how much God still took him through! These same pressures currently face many of our Langham family around the globe - several examples in this Transform. But, Paul had the hope and security that eventually his true citizenship would be recognised. In the words of the hymn, 'this world is not my home, I'm only passing through.'

Evidently this expression grew from a negro spiritual which became a 19th century hymn which, adapted and updated, is still in some modern hymnbooks. They have been covered by many (including Jim Reeves!) but I remain challenged by their expression in a 1972 album by Larry Norman, 'Only Visiting this Planet'. Spotify (excellent resource which keeps me up-to-date!!) reminded me of the lyrics to his 'Readers Digest' which fades out to that same refrain. To my mind, his 'Six O'clock News', a Vietnam

reflection, sounds even more prophetic in this era of 24hr news channels.

At its worst 'only passing through' can lead to a lack of concern, even complacency, which needs the godly correction of His exhortation to stand with and love the alien, the dispossessed, the refugee. Those who minister to such groups in all areas of the majority world form the focus of Langham's



mission and ministry. To further stretch the Kabul situation into metaphor, Langham is helping ministers to ask all to 'pre-check their citizenship papers'! Hopefully this is being done in such a timely way so any necessary correction can take place and 'eventual evacuation' approached with confidence.

But at several points in scripture we are warned that our own exit from 'alien territory' will most likely be painful and pressurised. We will need our own faith and the hope and security of our citizenship, even as we seek to introduce this to others. Thank you for your support in all the current urgency and pressures of Langham's work.

With Christian greetings

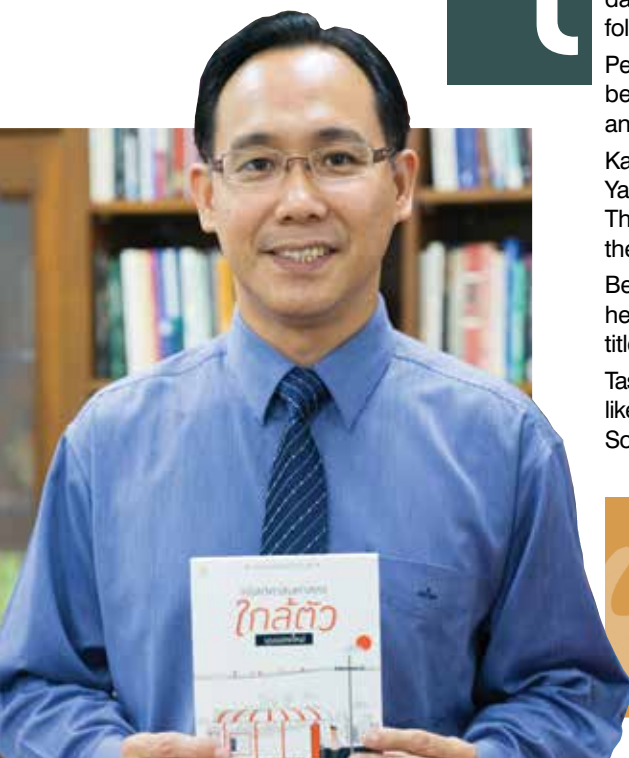
John Libby
National Director,
Langham Partnership (UKI)



Following Jesus in the Thai culture

Around the world, Langham identifies key Christian publishers to impact culture. In Thailand, Kanok Bannasan is one of those key partners. But why is Kanok Bannasan so crucial?

Langham Graduate Dr Satanun Boonyakiat with his book 'Thai Christian Theology' (published by Kanok Bannasan).



hai Christians, who make up just 1% of the population of Thailand, face a daily reality of isolation and rejection for following a 'Western religion'.

People in Thailand think Christians are betraying the King, the Buddhist religion and that they've been brainwashed.

Kanok Bannasan, managed by Tasanee Yanasiddhi, provides essential books that Thai Christians need to follow Jesus in the Thai culture.

Between 2014 and 2019, Langham helped Kanok Bannasan publish 14 titles.

Tasanee said: "Christian literature is just like the foundation of the Christian life. Some people say they only need the Bible.

But sometimes it's hard to understand. Christian literature can help them to understand the Bible more and more."

The impact of just one book

Langham Graduate Dr Satanun Boonyakiat, Professor at Payap University, Chiang Mai, said Buddhism is entrenched in the culture. One of the biggest challenges facing Thai Christians today is to honour Thai culture but stand firm in the Christian faith.

Together, Langham helped Dr Boonyakiat to write, and Kanok Bannasan to publish, 'Thai Christian Theology'. The book's aim is to equip a nation of Christian leaders and pastors.



One of the biggest challenges facing Thai Christians today is to honour Thai culture but stand firm in the Christian faith.



Dr Boonyakiat explained: “When I learned that theology is actually an effort of God’s people to find out teachings, ways of life, ways of doing ministry that are in accordance with God’s truth, and can respond fruitfully and effectively to their own context, to their own questions, the struggles of the people, this is the thing that I want to communicate to the Thai people.”



Pastor Wittaya Wuttikraikrieng, who said without Kanok Bannasan he can’t imagine where they will get such helpful books.

The book starts with stories that Thai people can easily understand and connect with, and many appreciate the resource.



Pastor Wittaya Wuttikraikrieng, from Sathorn Church Bangkok, said he can share what he has learnt from this book with his congregation. Without Kanok Bannasan he “can’t imagine where we’re going to find books that are really helpful like this”.

And lay leader Wisan Suwannarat, of First Church of Chiang Mai, encouraged Langham supporters that the production of this kind of literature, contextually in any culture, is crucial – especially in the Majority World.

Heavily affected by Covid-19

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a devastating effect on Christian Publishing houses around the world. Kanok Bannasan was heavily impacted, as bookshops shut, Christian conferences were postponed and sales slowed.

But they were able to continue to use social media and other tools to market books and sell to customers online.

Writing last year, Tasanee said: “The world has changed in many ways, but we know that God is still in control of all things.”

Through your support, many Christians in Thailand are being helped in their faith.

Tasanee said: “The thing that you’ve done impacts the life of the people, and moreover you impact the life of the pastor, and the pastor will impact more and more members. How important are the books that can impact another’s life!”

The Church in Thailand thanks you for supporting the development of books that bring Christ to the Thai culture.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a devastating effect on Christian Publishing houses around the world.



Tasanee Yanasiddhi (front left), the General Manager of Kanok Bannasan.

Watch a video about the work of Kanok Bannasan in Thailand [filmed in 2019]:



uk.langham.org/get-involved/videos



What is the impact of just one leader in Brazil gaining a PhD through your support of Langham? You may be surprised by the answer!

Scholar multiplies ministers of hope in Brazil



ministry for the downtrodden and outcasts of Brazilian society. These include prostitutes, homeless people, drug addicts and at-risk children. Now operating from its own building and using a range of innovative strategies, Refúgio focuses on programmes for children and adolescents. Refúgio interns Lucas and Vitor described how the centre had been a lifeline for them.

In the late 80s, **Dr Antonio Barro** studied for a PhD at Fuller Theological Seminary as a Langham Scholar. During this time, he conceived the idea of a seminary in Brazil that would train leaders to be active in the transformation of society. And so, the **'South American Theological Seminary'** was founded in 1994. Since then, it has trained thousands of people, who are not just pastors: counsellors, activists, street evangelists and missionaries, have all come through SATS' doors. Marcio enrolled at SATS because he has a heart to address the difficult issues facing Brazilian society. Unlike the typical SATS student, Marcio was a tough character and showed up

sporting a pretty radical look for a Bible College student. "He came with tattoos, piercings and a ponytail," notes Antonio. Yet his appearance was no barrier to Marcio earning a Bachelors, Masters and PhD in Theology. Marcio believes a strong theology and understanding of the Bible is relevant to every problem of every individual in every community.

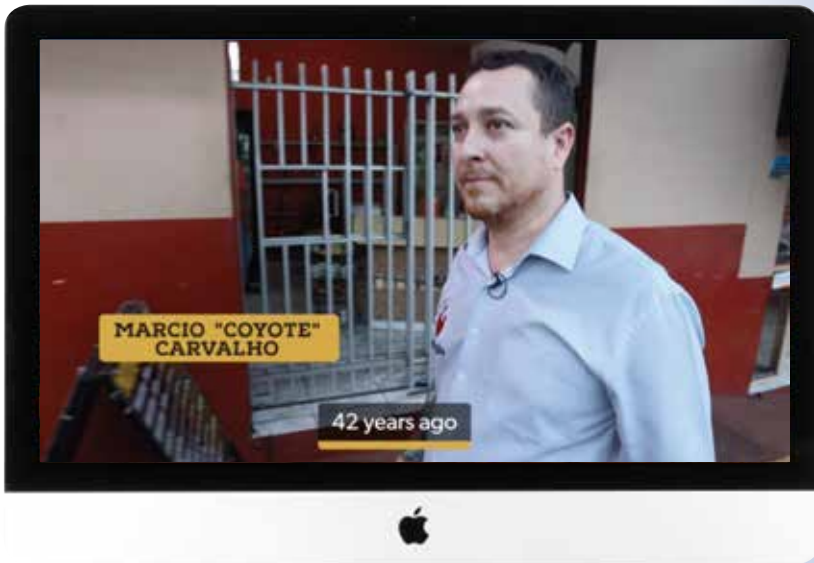
A ministry for the downtrodden

In 2000, Marcio founded Refúgio in Cambé, Brazil, near Londrina. What started with street evangelism and meetings in the garage of his parents' house has grown into an outreach



Marcio (left) with Langham Graduate Antonio (right) in Cambé, Brazil





Watch a video about Antonio Barro, Marcio and the 'Refúgio' ministry in Brazil [filmed in 2019]:



uk.langham.org/get-involved/videos

Lucas explained: "At night we couldn't go out of our homes because of the fights and the shooting. So if Refúgio was not here, I wouldn't be here doing this interview.

"I would probably be trafficking, or in jail, or dead. So Refúgio means everything to me."

Before the pandemic, Refúgio provided free activity classes - such as dance and karate - for over 250 children, with over a hundred on the waiting list.

Hit hard by the pandemic

During Covid, many of the activities were suspended. But, the centre raised money in order to distribute food baskets and toys to hundreds of vulnerable families in the region.

The pandemic has hit Brazil hard: more than half a million people have died, the second highest death toll worldwide.

Conrado Scheller, the local Mayor, said that the children who attend the centre "have hope now".

"When they come to Refúgio, they can now see a future."

Marcio is just one of SATS' graduates - there are many, many more. These include: Henrique Camargo, who founded Eco Ministries, providing classes and counselling for 180 students and their families.

And fellow SATS graduate Sergio Brant, started a ministry caring for cancer patients. SATS was founded by just one Langham Scholar. And so far, more than 250 Langham Scholars have returned to the Majority World to serve. So imagine what God is doing - through your support - to transform societies across the Majority World!



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To discuss leaving a gift in your will, contact Simon Foulds: simon.foulds@langham.org

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Congratulations Elie Haddad!

In this issue of Transform, we are congratulating Elie Haddad, President of Arab Baptist Theological Seminary in Lebanon, on gaining his PhD earlier this year.

Elie left Lebanon towards the end of the civil war in 1990, and spent 15 years in Canada in secular employment.

But he was involved in an Arabic-speaking church there and felt called to return to Lebanon to serve. After completing a Masters in Theology, he and his wife went back to Lebanon, where he became Provost of ABTS, then President.

Recently, Elie wrote a challenging article about the traditional understanding of the local church in light of the pandemic. It was first published on the Institute of Middle East Studies blog.

Extract: More Than Just a Building: What Puts the “Local” in Local Church?

I understand the local church to be a group of redeemed people on mission with God in the world. This expresses

itself in the gathering of the church to worship, fellowship, get equipped, and be on mission as a community, and in the dispersing of the church into the world to serve God and neighbour on behalf of the church.

One of the main features of the body of Christ is unity. We find ourselves in an age of multiple expressions of a local body that are frequently distinguished by denominational politics, leadership and power dynamics, different styles and forms of worship, and diverse views on doctrine. To the outside observing world, do they see this tapestry as a sign of unity or disunity? By unity, I am not advocating for conformity, but do these church bodies somehow provide support and accountability to one another? Or does each one represent an independent autonomous body functioning on its own? Does the outside

world see us as one body or several disconnected bodies in conflict and competition with one another?

... I know that this is not a topic that can be handled by one blog post. There are many more issues at play here. These are only some personal reflections. But, seeing how everything is being disrupted at this time of pandemic, and that we have been forced to question many of the things that we used to hold dear, it may prove helpful for us to discuss how we may find better ways to experience communal life together beyond our traditional lines.

From voices.langham.org

Watch a conversation with Elie Haddad from last year:

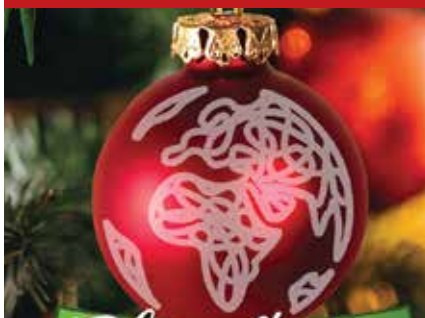


<https://uk.langham.org/event/elie/>



Advent with Langham

■ In December, look out for our online Advent Calendar, featuring Langham friends from around the world. We'll also be hosting a special Advent Langham Live call in December. Email uk@langham.org if you do not already receive invites to Langham Live.



Join Langham Live for global fellowship and prayer

■ Thank you to those of you who have joined us for our monthly Langham Live prayer calls on Zoom. Nearly 400 people have attended so far, to hear from our friends around the world and – in breakout rooms – lift their work to the Lord in prayer. Many have told us how much they appreciate these times of fellowship with brothers and sisters in far flung parts of the world. These monthly 45-minute calls are continuing into the future: if you would like to join us, email uk@langham.org to receive the monthly invites.



New Langham Service Centre in Carlisle



John Libby, LPUKI's National Director, shares exciting news:

■ 27th August 2021 was a significant date for Langham. Our three-year project to deliver new fit-for-purpose premises (the Langham Service Centre) arrived at 'Handover Day'! Our Strategic Plan had defined the need for twice the size of premises for warehouse and offices, and staff had put up for long enough with queues for the kitchen and other facilities as well as the noise and distraction of many people working together in a

confined space. The crucial decision to purchase and develop rather than renew another ten-year lease will result in very significant savings each year (enough to sponsor two or three more Scholars?) as well as the accumulation of a Langham asset to serve future vision. Please pray that these premises will be a focus of love and joy. Pray that this might help

The new premises in Carlisle is not only more spacious but will offer financial savings in the long-term.

raise Langham's profile locally in Carlisle and nationally, and beyond as our Programme streams benefit from better support. Please also pray that by the end of the calendar year, we might complete raising funds, so that we might boost the present £1.3m towards the £1.8m total – and therefore have no requirement for the facility at the bank!



The former office and warehouse space at the Langham Service Centre was very cramped.



Chris Wright reflects biblically on current global turbulence.

“Though the earth give way...”

Inevitable and irreversible. That is the verdict of the report in August by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The world's climate has undeniably changed and while we may be able to stave off the worst case (warming beyond 2°C) by prompt and radical action, we cannot now go back to the way things were even 50 years ago. The most dramatic thing I read in scientific comment on this fact is that all the achievements of the human race for the past 10,000 years (that would include all the civilizations of biblical times and earlier) have happened in a global climate that is gone forever – no matter what the world's leaders do or don't accomplish at COP26 in Glasgow this November.

Meanwhile the Covid-19 pandemic rages on, claiming millions of lives and livelihoods, and will likely not be the last. Comparable zoonotic pandemics, where viruses jump from animals to humans, are almost certain to occur with greater frequency. Such will be the long-term impact of our human folly and destructiveness. The world becomes increasingly unsafe as we reap the consequences of our own idolatrous folly of many decades. We are not going “back to normal” any time soon, if ever. And then there is Afghanistan.... Our hearts bleed. Our knees tremble.

Where can we turn in the Bible in such times?

The prophet Habakkuk also lived at a terrifying time in history. It was a world in which the idols of injustice and lies plagued his own country, Judah, and the idols of military power and violence dominated the international world through Assyria and Babylon. What do we learn from Habakkuk about how we should live? (It would be good to turn to Habakkuk in your Bible, since I can only give references)



Photo by Callum Shaw on Unsplash

First of all, like Habakkuk, we need to live

1. As people who look for God at work in the world (Hab. 1)

In chapter 1, Habakkuk wants to see God in action and cries out to him to listen and do something about all the evil he sees around him. Habakkuk pleads with God to explain what's going on! Why are the wicked in his own country so dominant and successful? Why is God doing nothing about it? Doesn't Hab. 1:1-4 sound exactly like the world today?

But God answers him, “Look wider. Look at the nations. I am already present and active. I am at work in the world, but in ways you may not like, or even understand.” The phrase in Hab. 1:5-6, “I am going to do something...” (NIV), is literally, “I am working a work.” God is there and God is at work.

Actually, though, God's answer to Habakkuk's first complaint seems to make things even worse, for God says he is raising up the Babylonians to punish Judah – and Habakkuk knows the kind of people Babylon will be if they attack his country! Catastrophe is coming (Hab. 1:7-17).

And yet, having asked the question, he now knows and discerns that God is still active and sovereign in his world. It's still very scary, but it's in God's hands. So like Habakkuk, we need the courage of discernment: to know and trust that God remains sovereign in the world of history and nature. We need to listen to the news with this perspective in mind. “Look at the nations and watch...”. Watch out for God at work.

And that means that we must live, secondly,





2. As people who live by faith (Hab. 2)

“The righteous person will live by faith” (Hab. 2:4). Habakkuk means that those who have come into a right relationship with God through faith must continue to live by faith – by faithful trust and obedience to God, even in the midst of the evils of our world, trusting that God will in the end put things right forever.

For in the rest of chapter 2, God assures Habakkuk and us that God will ultimately deal with the wicked, including all the idolatries that were rampant in his world as in ours. The original target in these verses is the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar. But the list of offences for which God will bring judgment is amazingly modern. Look how the five woes are listed in ch. 2. Aren’t they familiar?

- piling up wealth through extortion and theft from other nations (vs. 6-8)
- building security for themselves while impoverishing others (vs. 9-11)
- building cities on the foundation of bloodshed and slavery (vs. 12-13)
- humiliating their enemies (vs. 15-16) and destroying God’s creation – forests (“Lebanon”), animals and land (v. 17)
- all of the above being dimensions of fundamental human idolatry: the rejection of the living God (vs. 18-19; see also Rom. 1)

But against all of this, God pronounces “Woe” – that is, God will ultimately call such behaviour to account. God will judge the earth and its peoples with equity and

justice (Pss. 96, 98). We may not know how or when, but the Judge of all the earth will ultimately do what is right (Gen. 18:25), either within history in his acts of judgment or ultimately in the great rectification of the final judgment, when God will deal with all wrongs and put all things right, before he makes all things new in the new creation. Then indeed “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea” (v. 14).

Trust me, says God. Go on *living by faith* - faith in God’s sovereign justice, just as much as in God’s sovereign grace. Both call for our faith.

How can we sustain such faith in the midst of the terrors of the world around us? Habakkuk also challenges us, thirdly, to live

3. As people who know the story of God (Hab. 3).

In chapter 3 Habakkuk rehearses in vivid poetic images some of the great episodes of the story of his own people Israel – those mighty saving acts of God in their past. Habakkuk knows the story he is in, the story that we now read (just as he did) in the scriptures of the Old Testament. And as he reminds himself of that story through this powerful “worship song”, that’s what gives him hope and faith even in the midst of his anger and fears. And so it should be for us. We should draw hope from not only knowing the story so far (from the Bible, including the N.T. part that Habakkuk did not know), but also knowing where the story leads and how it ends (in Rev. 21-22).

And that is what makes the work of Langham Partnership so vital. For it is through the faithful preaching and teaching of God’s Word that believers come to the assurance, comfort and hope of knowing God’s sovereign purpose and faithfulness that guarantee the story’s ending. Know your Bible!

And so finally, the very last verses of Habakkuk inspire us to live

4. As people who are on mission for God

Habakkuk finishes his book, not in a happy-clappy mood. No, he is still terrified by what lies ahead (3:16) – and he was right to be, though he is determined to rejoice in God (3:17-18). *But*, even as he faces the prospect of a world under the judgment of God and all the suffering it will entail, he remembers his own mission. He is “Habakkuk the prophet”, after all (1:1). That’s his calling and his task. So his last words are:

The Sovereign LORD is my strength;
He makes my feet like the feet of a deer,
He enables me to tread on the heights (3:19)

In other words, he is not going to just sit back and wait for God to intervene! No, he will run into action, to continue his ministry as a prophet, depending on God’s strength. “The heights” means the places of idolatrous worship of Baal and all the social evil that went with it. And Habakkuk’s mission, like ours, was to expose and oppose all the idolatry that produces terrible injustice, violence and suffering, and to call people to repentance. And he plans to get on with that mission, with energy and determination, in the strength of his Sovereign Lord.

What’s our mission? What’s yours? We live in a frightening, violent and unpredictable world. But in that world, we are still called, like Habakkuk, to be people and churches of discernment, people of faith, people of the Bible, and people of energetic missional engagement in word and deed.

JOHN STOTT LONDON LECTURE 2021

A photograph of a woman and a young child standing in a field of tall, green, leafy plants. The woman is wearing a grey t-shirt and has sunglasses on her head. The child is wearing a red t-shirt and a straw hat. The scene is outdoors and appears to be a garden or a field of wildflowers.

Loving Our Future Neighbour

Thursday 11 Nov | 7pm

How wide and deep is our mission in the world? And what responsibility do we bear as a holistic witness to our descendants?

In this year's John Stott London Lecture, drawing directly on Stott's writings on creation care and her own ongoing research on human-environment interactions in Asia, Dr Laura Yoder will show that creation care is a vital part of Christian life and witness, holding an integral place in our everyday discipleship.

Through the work of groups like A Rocha, and the faithful service of ordinary Christians in their diverse vocations, we are called to love our future neighbour – those yet to be born, who will inherit what we make of God's created world. Earth-keeping, then, becomes an essential

aspect of our Christian witness, revealing God's sustaining love for all creation across all time.

Dr Laura Yoder is Director and John Stott Chair of Human Needs and Global Resources, and Professor of Environmental Studies at Wheaton College, Illinois. Her research highlights the sociopolitical aspects of our common ecological issues, drawing on years of grounded fieldwork. In 2021, she completed Living Radical Discipleship (Langham) and John Stott on Creation Care (IVP).

This year's lecture will be live-streamed online. Visit uk.langham.org/jsl2021 to register.