"YOU HAVE COME BACK"

Stan Mooneyham revisits Amila in Ethiopia

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Source

Most Ethiopians know nothing about America’s Thanksgiving Day, but they know something about God. And some know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Many of the drought victims who know Him praise Him as the Source behind the source of aid they now receive. And many who do not yet know Him do at last see something of His compassion.

On Prayer Day (October 1), World Vision people prayed specifically for victims in Ethiopia (and elsewhere), and for those who minister to their great physical and spiritual needs. We intend to continue praying as we work. We hope you will too.

David Olson

Surma children now receive nutritious meals several times each day.
“I HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN . . .”

Life revived, laughter restored

by W. Stanley Mooneyham

“She’s coming,” someone yelled.

I had been dozing in the shade of an acacia tree on the bank of the Kibish River in southwestern Ethiopia, resting from the oppressive heat.

Roused by the cry, I climbed the embankment separating once-fertile fields from the bone-dry river. At the top of the short ridge, I could see a puff of dust in the distance. Someone was running toward me across the barren field.

I hoped she would remember me. I hoped she would be pleased that I had gone home and told millions of my people about the plight of her people, the Bume (Boo-may).

Certainly, I was pleased. A massive outpouring of love and compassion had allowed us to expand a miniscule $35,000 relief program to a staggering one of $4.5 million to help five million people in Ethiopia. I give much of the credit for the vision of that program to one courageous woman—Amila.

You remember Amila. She was the woman who came to me during my first visit to this remote corner of the world and demanded that I do more than just talk about starving people. I had come to this home of the nomads—right at the point where Ethiopia, Sudan and
Kenya share a common border—to survey the devastating effects of a three-year drought.

The land was parched. The cattle were dead, their carcasses rotting in the sun. With the loss of cattle and subsistence crops, the people were starving. All they had to eat were bitter leaves and dry roots scavenged from hillsides far beyond the horizon. In a land where a day’s average temperature often soars above 90 degrees, scavenging for food in distant places—with no water to quench thirst—is often deadly in itself.

I had seen the need and was ready to return home to share it with others. I planned to meet with our Ethiopia director, Tesfatsion Dalellew, that night in Addis Ababa, and devise a relief plan.

Then out of the crowd came Amila. She had a different idea about what my plan should be. And her voice sounded to me like the voice of God.

“When we saw the plane coming this morning, we thought you were bringing food,” she said accusingly, waving a bony finger close to my face. “We walked with empty stomachs to this relief center and we didn’t get anything. We saw only you.”

Her eyes pierced my soul with conviction. I knew I couldn’t leave this hungry, disappointed woman and 16,000 other villagers with vague promises about a relief program someday. So I told her we’d have food there the quickest day possible, and I promised

As I rested on the riverbank, waiting for Amila, I flashed back on all the good news I had to tell her. About an airplane. About nurses. Supplemental feedings. Resettlement villages. Cotton cloth and blankets.

Normally, World Vision doesn’t buy airplanes for its programs. But after seeing the needs of the Bume people, and then returning a few months later to see the same kind of terrible need among their neighbors, the Surma, I was convinced we needed to help the RRC distribute food and supplies. Because of strong initial response to our plea for help for these people, we were able to purchase a De Haviland “Twin Otter” airplane. And with pilots supplied by our sister agency, Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF), we were able to bring the plane to Ethiopia.

Just this morning, as I arrived at the airport in Addis Ababa, MAF pilot Dave Schlener met me. As we talked, he told me the Twin Otter has a short takeoff and landing capability—specially suited to rough runways and difficult weather. The plane, freshly painted with the symbols of World Vision and the RRC, can carry 22 passengers or a payload of 2.2 metric tons.

“We are now making six runs a day between our base camp at Mizan Tiferi and the village of Mardur where the Surma people live,” Dave told me excitedly. “We are trying hard, sir, to become more efficient so we can make seven runs a day.”

My heart warmed instantly to the dedication of this young man and his copilot, John Polonenko. Later in the day I would meet Bill Larick and Steve Fredlund, also pilots working in partnership with our team. Even before we had lifted off from Addis, I was thanking God for our decision to work with MAF, combining our relief expertise with their competence in flying.
We flew from Addis to the crew's base at Mizan, where we picked up several nurses. Then it was on to Mardur. The medical team is vital to the relief program because malnutrition leaves in its wake a series of devastating diseases. So as soon as we had put together a plan to rush food to the people of Ethiopia, we had also started recruiting medical personnel.

Joan Smedley is an Australian, formerly with the Church Missionary Society, who worked among the aborigines in her own country for 20 years. I talked with her at Mardur as she tenderly cared for an emaciated infant.

"When you were here several months ago, there were 11,000 people waiting for food at this camp," she reminded me. "Now there are only 1000, and they are the seriously ill. Because of World Vision's quick response, the others are receiving food rations which make it possible for them to go back to their homes in the bush between distributions."

I asked Joan about conditions among those people who remained at the camp.

"Many are still sick, like this baby. He may not live. His mother's milk is all dried up. She, too, is in poor health, probably related to all those months without food."

Joan said that at Mardur she had learned firsthand just how precious water is. "To clean wounds and mix formulas and medicine, we need clean water," she related, "but there just isn't any. We either have to bring water on the airplane each day or use the local supply which comes from a stagnant pool about half-a-mile away. When the pool isn't dry, the water is muddy and contaminated, so we have to use purification tablets."

Joan's colleague, Grace Ampah from Ghana, also talked about the challenges of treating patients here. "It is difficult to diagnose a person's problems given the language barrier," she noted. "We sometimes need a person to translate from English to Amharic, the national Ethiopian language. They, in turn, tell someone who speaks Amharic and the Surma language. Then we have to go through the process again in reverse, all for a simple explanation like 'I have a headache.' Thank God for His grace that supplies us with patience."

Another nurse from Ghana, Esther Manieson, explained the meaning of the big yellow bowls I saw in the hands of scores of children. Every child with such a bowl was entitled to three—sometimes four—meals from the World Vision-supervised supplemental feeding program.

As I wandered through the camp, Esther was teaching several naked children how to stir the mixture of grain and powdered milk that was

**It was obvious that our aid had made a profound difference in the once morgue-like atmosphere of Mardur.**

Some of the Surma people are learning to raise and eat vegetables.
cooking in a huge black pot over an open fire. Waiting patiently in line were many children, probably as many as one-third of the 600 children in camp. When the gruel was completed, they would get a portion of that life-sustaining mixture.

"The children and mothers are so thankful we have arrived with the special feeding program," Esther told me. "You know, the other day I heard one child laugh. A deep belly laugh. Lord, that was a beautiful moment for me. Just to hear a child laugh!"

I understood.

The first time I visited Mardur, there was nothing but silence. The silence was eerie because 11,000 people were there, waiting quietly for food intended for only a few hundred people. Most knew they had not registered in time to receive what little food was available, but there was no place else to go. So they sat silently outside the compound, awaiting the slow, torturous death of starvation.

I will never forget the frustration and anger I felt at being present where one human being was dying each hour simply because they had nothing to eat.

But this day, just a few months later, I found Mardur to be a different place. The moment I climbed out of the Twin Otter. Patches of green were evidence that some rain had fallen, if not enough to break the drought. A few plots of corn had stalks five feet tall. The children walked more energetically; one was even running. It was obvious that our aid had made a profound difference in the once morgue-like atmosphere of Mardur.

On my previous visit, I had had an encounter much like the one with Amila down at Bume. This one had been with a dignified elder of the people. He had hobbled out to the middle of the runway to say good-bye to me.

"Don't forget us," he implored.

I assured him I would not forget. And in the dirt I drew him a picture of our World Vision symbol.

"When you see a plane returning with this symbol, you will know that I have kept my promise," I told him.

This day, some four months later, I was hoping I would still find the old gentleman alive.

I had already asked about two other people. One was a sad-eyed young mother suckling a dying child. The child died even before we left Mardur that first day. Now I was told that the mother, too, died just a month later, leaving three children who had been taken to the resettlement village.

Then I asked about an old woman—65 pounds of skin and bones—who had collapsed at my feet. "She, too, is dead," the camp leader told me.

So when I asked about old Dokuba Walazog, I expected to hear that he also had been buried in a simple hole about a mile from the camp, along with the others.

When someone said they would go get him, I felt excitement begin to rise inside me. Of the three people, he was the one I least expected to see alive.

A few moments later he came, walking slowly with the aid of a stick, but still standing upright and proud. As before, he wouldn't let the younger men help him. Seeing me, he smiled ever so slightly and said gently, "You have come back."

His simple words flooded my heart. How I thanked God he was still alive so I could share with him what God was doing to help the Surma people.

"Yes, I've come," I told him. "Remember I told you when the plane came with the symbol of the globe and cross that it would be from Christian brothers and sisters who cared, and it would mean that I had kept my promise because they made it possible."

"I remember," he said. "I even have this blanket from your airplane."

The gray blanket with red stripes was draped over his thin body. Dokuba then told me he was living in a little shelter by himself. Several family members, including three wives, were living just outside the camp. When the ration of five kilograms (11 pounds) of food per person per month was passed out—usually corn, powdered milk and fafa, a high-protein grain mixture—he and his family received their ration together.

As we sat on a bench near his hut, I examined Dokuba's leg. It was very swollen four months ago. Now the swelling was gone. Although badly scarred, it looked like it would heal.

I walked away from Dokuba thinking about some of the younger people and wondering what their future might be. Beyond relief, what could be done to help the Surma in the long term?

Seeing me, he smiled ever so slightly and said gently, "You have come back."

A hearty reunion

for Stan Mooneyham and

Dokuba Walazog
The Ethiopian government, thankfully, has embarked on an experimental program which may answer some of my concerns. They have transferred 500 Surma to Mizan Tiferi for agricultural training.

When we stopped there to pick up the nurses, I had visited the center accompanied by Bekele Asfew of the RRC. We were briefed by a camp leader who told us the people were learning to grow carrots, cabbage and different leafy vegetables. Normally the Surma grow crops suited to their nomadic lifestyle—maize, millet and some sorghum.

The camp leader told us that at first the Surma were resistant to any changes in their centuries-old lifestyle. "Once they tasted some of the vegetables they had grown, however, they changed their minds," he said.

As Mr. Bekele and I moved on, the sounds of children reciting words from a blackboard drifted through the center of camp. Children and women are learning at school in the morning while the men are working in the fields. In the afternoon, the men take classes in reading and writing, as well as in agricultural techniques.

I asked the government official what would happen to these people when they left there.

"We hope they will go to resettlement areas in Kaffa province," he said. "Will the government supply the land?"

"Yes, that is our plan. Some of the people say they would like to grow coffee, for which Kaffa province is famous, as a cash crop. Others want to continue being herdsmen. So we will put them into different projects and let them do what they want."

As we were leaving the camp, Mr. Bekele showed me some of the hundreds of blankets and shovels World Vision had supplied to the people being resettled. I was glad to know we were taking part in this important experiment in the future of the Surma people.

I was impressed by the vitality of the Surma young people and touched by their simplicity. While at Mardur, I sat in the shade of one of the huts to rest briefly and was immediately surrounded by eight or ten youths. With no interpreter present, I could not converse with them, so they talked among themselves. They stroked the hair on my arm, obviously intrigued by it since the Surma have almost no body hair.

One of the camp leaders walked up and listened to their conversation.

"Do you know what they are saying?" he asked me.

I assured him I didn't. Here's what he told me:

"One of them said to the others, 'This man is our father.' When they inquired how this could be so, he asked them, 'What does your father do for you?' 'Why, he gives us food and shelter and takes care of us,' they replied. 'Since that is what this man does for us, then he is truly our father,' " the first one responded with what he was sure was irrefutable logic.

It was a tender moment for me as we came to the end of my return visit to Mardur.

Then it was on to Bume and another emotional reunion. On the 45-minute flight, Tesfatsion and his relief assistant, Solomon Lulu, told me that 88,000 tons of grain were still stored in Addis for shipment to needy people throughout southern Ethiopia. In all, the World Vision project would help more than 120,000 persons by providing 20,000 blankets, thousands of yards of cotton cloth, 120,000 pieces of children's clothing, 1,225 metric tons of wheat, 100 metric tons of fafa, 140 metric tons of dry skim milk, and enough maize to feed another 30,000 drought victims.

Even as we talked on the plane, my anticipation at meeting Amila again was mounting. As soon as the pilots had shut off the engines, I jumped onto the hard desert floor and began walking toward the center of the

Surma people line up for medical clinic at Mardur.
Bume village. A large group had gathered, maybe a thousand people, to receive something being passed out from a storehouse.

Tesfatsion asked a man who greeted us what was going on. "We are distributing 2250 blankets and cloth for 8000 people today," he said. "It was supplied by World Vision."

What made this so amazing was that we hadn't announced to anyone our intention to visit Bume. In fact, permission had not been granted until just before we took off from Addis Ababa, because the leader of the country was visiting Gamo Gofa province and no outside air traffic was permitted.

"I just accepted it that God had arranged for us to arrive during this distribution. It certainly was not the first time that one of God's serendipities had brightened my day."

Immediately I inquired of the village chief about Amila. She was in Kenya, I was told, on the other side of the Kibish River, planting sorghum. Since it was quite hot, we decided to wait at a shady spot on the riverbank while some boys ran to get her.

I was resting and reflecting at that spot when the shout came that Amila was on her way.

Now, as the puff of dust became larger, I could see that she was waving a green branch. It stood out beautifully against the otherwise brown countryside. She was still running. She had run all the way from her field, in stifling heat, just to greet me. I was deeply moved.

We came together in a customary Bume greeting of clasped hands. Although winded, she said over and over, almost in a whimper, "Abba, Abba, Abba." Like the Surma young people, this precious woman still considered me her father.

A few moments later, after drinking water from one of my bottles and getting seated in the shade, we talked.

"I'm very glad to see you," I said. "How have you been?"

"The children are sick," she said. "I'm sorry. What were you planting in Kenya?"

"Sorghum. Far away there is some water."

"I have not forgotten our time six months ago," I replied. "I will never forget you either," she said.

"Many, many people all over the world, most of them mothers, heard your plea for food and clothing for your children. Because of your courage to confront me that day, thousands of people are being helped all over Ethiopia."

She nodded and smiled. As we continued talking, Amila's eyes never left mine. Someone brought a blanket and a bolt of cloth for her from the distribution center. I explained this was a gift from people who love God and love her.

I think she understood.

I wish I could tell you that our whole conversation was one big, happy reunion. But that would be naive, for there is still heartbreaking need throughout Ethiopia. And an even greater outpouring of love is required to meet those needs. Amila reminded me of this.

"Our water is muddy. Many children are still sick and hungry, like mine," she said. "We have skin sores because there is no animal fat to oil our leather clothing. Nor is there any oil for our hair. And there is still little food here at Bume. Some in my village will eat today; some won't."

"We will continue to help," I replied. "We want to see our children grow up with fathers and families together. I am very happy that you have come to see us again," Amila said.

It was time to leave. Amila walked me back to the plane and posed for a photo. It would have been even more fitting for her to christen the plane. If it hadn't been for Amila, I might not have been forced to think big enough to include an airplane in our plans.

Clasping hands again, we said good-bye.

As our plane circled Bume and Dave dipped the wings in salute, I saw Amila still waving. I thought about our first parting when she had told me, "Go in peace." That time I had left Bume full of uneasiness at the hopelessness and hunger I had seen.

This time I felt better. Life has been revived. Hope rekindled. Laughter restored. It felt glorious to be a part of that.

Having returned and seen it, I could now go in peace. □

If you would like to help the Ethiopian people, please use the return envelope from the center of this magazine.
Praise to God, immortal praise,
For the love that crowns our days.
Bounteous source of every joy,
Let thy praise our tongues employ.
All to thee, our God, we owe,
Source whence all our blessings flow.

Anna Laetitia Barbauld, 1772
"As a Mother's Day gift to myself, I decided to become a child sponsor through World Vision. God has been so good to me, and so much is being done for my ministry that I wanted to do something for others."

So writes Victoria Booth Demarest in a letter to her distant cousin, Dr. Carlton Booth of World Vision. She and her daughter Evangeline were assigned as joint sponsors of Maria, a nine-year-old girl from Brazil who had been abandoned by her parents.

New Year's Day 1982 (or New Year's Eve 1981, according to her father's calculations) will be the 93rd birthday of this woman whom hundreds call their spiritual mother. And she's likely to give birth to yet others before she's a hundred.

Mrs. Demarest, named "Mother of the Century" last May by a community organization in Tampa Bay, Florida, treasures both kinds of motherhood. She is the physical mother of six, stepmother of two, grandmother of six besides the three children of her stepson, and great-grandmother of six, plus one through her stepson.

"It is a great privilege to be a mother," she says, "for a mother has a special opportunity to influence future generations for the glory of God. Though it can mean great suffering as well as joy, it should be accepted as a gift from God and returned to Him in service."

With two sons who were veterans of World War II, she has known suffering in the loss of three other sons—two in young childhood and one at age 20 in a rifle accident in Guam. In 1946 she founded an organization called the World Association of Mothers for Peace.

One of those she calls spiritual sons is Raul Jordan, death-row inmate at an Arizona prison. In June 1980, after reading his letter (in a prison publication called The Fortune News) describing life on death row, she wrote him and sent a New Testament and a copy of her devotional book, Alive and Running. Her kindness and concern had a profound effect on him. He received Christ and also shared the Bible and her book with others. In a letter to her, he wrote, "You are the Mom I never had and I love you like a real mother."

Mrs. Demarest was born near the Arch of Triumph in Paris, France, as the city bells rang in the New Year. Her mother had her consecrated Victoire, a French name meaning "victory." But her grandfather, always happy for an excuse to hold a public meeting to "throw in the net" for the Lord, and having little patience with any language but English, had another consecration service to rename her Victoria.

Through the years she has always been grateful that her mother gave her...
a name with such meaning, for it has not allowed her to be a quitter under any circumstances, including shipwreck and trainwreck.

She is a granddaughter of William and Catherine Mumford Booth, who founded the Salvation Army in England a couple of decades before her birth. Her mother, Catherine Booth-Clibborn, the oldest Booth daughter, pioneered the Salvation Army movement on the continent in Holland, Belgium and Switzerland as well as in France where the people lovingly called her La Maréchale ("field marshall").

Her father, Arthur Sidney Clibborn, was from Northern Ireland and was a descendant of British royalty as well as of Quaker lineage which included William Penn and seven of the barons who forced King John to sign the Magna Charta.

In 1918 Victoria married Cornelius Agnew Demarest, whose ancestors were French Huguenot and Dutch. An organist and choirmaster, her husband became a partner in ministry as well as in homemaking.

Mrs. Demarest has always had a vital interest in the use of the arts in God's service. "The creative arts are a gift from God and should be returned to Him in service," she says. "So often artistic gifts are used as tools of the devil rather than as tools of the One who created them. But they can be a wonderful vehicle for the truth of the gospel, especially for those who don't go to church."

Her own evangelistic career was enriched by her accomplishments as composer, author, linguist, playwright, poet and monologist. At age 14 she had an overpowering experience of God's presence and inventoried the gifts He had given her. She vowed at that time to consecrate all her gifts to be used only in the service of God. And at almost 93 she is still writing, composing and preaching. She says of her own music, "In the last years I have composed what I consider my very best songs." Through the years she has composed over 100 sacred songs and hymns, the best known of which is "Hymn of the Last Supper."

Mrs. Demarest studied harmony and piano in Paris and began composing at a very young age. When she came to America at the age of 23, her mother asked her to compile a songbook. Her songs and those of other members of the family were included with other popular gospel songs in a series of four "Victory" songbooks used by herself, her mother and her brother William in their evangelistic campaigns. She is presently collecting the songs of her lifetime, including some which have never been published, and she hopes to find a publisher for her book which she is entitled My Soul Sings.

She has written several plays and presented them in one-woman dramatic recitals, impersonating as many as 23 characters to "create the illusion of a complete cast." Her most powerful drama is King David, written during more than 50 years of exhaustive research. Although it has never been produced as a complete drama, she is still hoping that one day it will be, as it has been described as "superb drama" by some who have read it or seen her perform it in recital.

Her other writings include a poem titled "I am thy prophet still" (written at the age of 74) and several books. In God, Woman and Ministry, she offers suggestions to anyone confused by the dilemma of women's rights, and encourages women and girls to recognize and be faithful in using whatever gifts God has given them for ministry.

She is still writing books. The Greatest Week in History (about Holy Week) is scheduled to be off the press in the spring of 1982 (Abingdon Press, Nashville).

At a women's conference in which Mrs. Demarest spoke, one participant commented on her 92 years—and on her continuing strength "to stand in witness to His Spirit's power, calling young women to faithfulness to the Spirit's work through them."

Mrs. Demarest has given over 70 years of her life to the Lord, much of that time as a "roving ambassador for Christ," preaching in four languages in 14 countries and 48 states of the U.S., as well as directing city-wide union evangelistic missions.

Like the several of her nine siblings who went into the ministry, she began "preaching" as a young child. She preached her first "official" sermon in her early twenties when she had to fill in for her mother, who had become ill.

Although she has been unable to preach much in recent years, she celebrated her 90th birthday with a "Throw in the Net" event in St. Petersburg, Florida. The offering was designated to help the hungry people of the world.

Though some might refer to her as a Christian feminist, she says, "The first priority of a Christian is not to seek the rights of woman or of man but the rights of God and humanity. Men and women should mutually respect and admire each other. We can't take each other's place."

During her ministry, someone said that her grandparents' apostolic flame was rediscovered in her. The flame is still burning. □

Ruth Monson is a freelance writer who lives in La Verne, California.
LET IT GROWL!
Learning on empty

by Judy Young

To identify with the hungry, nearly three dozen teenagers in Bessemer, Alabama, decided last December to fast for 30 hours. Leaders of their church, the Hopewell Church of God of Prophecy, would help them learn about the world’s needy people during their fast. Friends and family would sponsor them, and the money they raised would help support hunger relief through World Vision. Their “Planned Famine” (a World Vision program for churches and other groups) is described here by Hopewell’s former youth director, Judy Young.

7 A.M.—Hour 1

It has begun! I’ve looked forward to this with mixed feelings. Can I really go without solid food for 30 hours? Me, the one who carries a glass of iced tea around all the time? But what about this feeling of excitement at being able to do something so worthwhile with such a terrific group of teenagers. Someone really thinks I can do it. An anonymous sponsor gave me an envelope with five one-hundred-dollar bills in it. Wow—$500 for the anti-hunger fund! Please, God! Help us. Give us all strength, and please, bless our efforts.

12 Noon—Hour 6

As I drive along the highway, every billboard I see seems to advertise food. Yuk! What I wouldn’t give for a glass of iced tea! Please, God, be with all the Hopewell Church young people who are going through the school cafeterias right about now. Help them to get past the hamburgers and fries and M&Ms.

3 P.M.—Hour 9

Yea! Break time! I didn’t know a small glass of orange juice could taste so good. I guess I had never really paid that much attention before, but at this moment I’m savoring every drop.

4 P.M.—Hour 10

Oh, no! My daughter Kristi just came home from school asking for a snack. Can I give her cookies and milk without taking some myself? My stomach just made its empty presence known. GROWL!

7 P.M.—Hour 13

We are gathering at the gymnasium of Bessemer Academy now. The young people look hungry, but happy. My stomach is really beginning to complain. Hold on; just 18 more hours to go.

9 P.M.—Hour 15

I see 32 faces eagerly listening as Dr. Harold Hunter explains what the Bible has to say about helping those in need. God, please give us a greater desire to learn, so that we can better serve.

The feeling of hunger seems to have vanished for a while as the sacred presence of the Lord settles down on us. What a feeling of worship in this gymnasium! I look around and see hands raised in worship to God. Hunger forgotten for the moment. Just an atmosphere of praise to God. Thank you, Lord, for allowing me to be a part of this.

10 P.M.—Hour 16

Break time! Yea! I wish this small glass of orange juice was a roast beef sandwich. But thank God for the orange juice.

12 Midnight—Hour 18

We’ve just watched a movie about world hunger. I really thought I was hungry until I saw the little children in the movie. After this is all over, I look forward to a hamburger or something more substantial than a glass of juice. But those children have nothing to look forward to. My thoughts went to Kristi and Wendy, my own precious little girls. How quickly I rush to wipe away their tears when they’re hurt, and how soon I rush to fix a sandwich or bake cookies when they ask. Oh, God, what if I couldn’t feed them? How could I bear to see tears in their eyes from hunger? Thank you, God, for good health and a good job, to provide for our little girls. My words seem so hollow; but, oh, how I thank you for shelter and food and warmth on this cold night. Oh, how I thank you.

1 A.M.—Hour 19

Where do young people find all their energy—and after 18 hours of no food! Please, let’s go to bed. My eyes want to close tightly and say “nite-nite.” If I could just go to sleep, maybe I could forget that I’m hungry. With my luck, I’ll probably dream about food. Just think, in six hours I’ll get to taste toothpaste. Wow!

7 A.M.—Hour 25

The sun is peeping in. It’s been a long, hard night. I believe I could live with the hunger, but the cold seems unbearable. There’s no way to get comfortable on the hard floor. Believe me, I tried every position possible.

The kids are still in good spirits in spite of their hunger. The boys are already playing basketball, and some of the girls have started volleyball. They all think they’re dying from lack of food, but (one thing I noticed) they were all quick to head for the nearest mirror to see how they looked as they rolled out of their sleeping bags. Terrific kids!

Somehow, orange juice does nothing for my stomach this morning, but I could do a terrific commercial for Close-Up toothpaste.

9:30 A.M.—Hour 27½

I’ve decided that volleyball on an empty stomach is not my favorite
thing. My whole body aches now, and
my stomach is growling in three differ­
ent keys. I didn't know so many good
 commercials could come to mind.
"Oh, I wish I were an Oscar Meyer
wiener—everyone would be in love
with me." Maybe I should just brush
my teeth again.

How cruel! Someone just gave me a
piece of chocolate candy, and I'm not
allowed to eat it. Temptation.

11:30 A.M.—Hour 29½

Time is drawing to a close. It
doesn't seem possible that there's only
one and a half hours left. I'm so proud
of the young people. I've heard no
harsh words, seen no hurt feelings.
Thank you, God, for allowing me to be
a part—no matter how small—of such
a wonderful group.

We've played hunger games and
talked about the needs of those
around us. As we prepare to take part
in Communion, help us to realize the
seriousness of this need around us.

12 Noon—Hour 30

I can't believe it! With the help of
sponsors, the offering now stands at
$1500. And more is coming in. Thank
you, Lord!

I listen to the kids as they tell what
they are feeling. At this point none of
us feel hunger, really. But maybe we've
gained an insight into how much we
really have to share. We think that we
have so little in material things, but
derived to those in other places,
we're rich!

We're grateful, Lord, that none of
us have suffered ill effects from this.
Please help us remember our
discomforts vividly. Don't let them
ease their way out of our minds. Help
us to appreciate more what we have,
and to share our bounty—really share.

My heart feels like it will burst as I
watch my kids walk down to take part
in Communion. How can I make you
understand my feelings? An enormous
gymnasium; ping-pong table setting;
dirty, tired young people; but how
sweet is the presence of the Lord! It's
true—He has visited us, made His
presence known! What a glorious
feeling! This is truly a holy place.

Want your youth group to go through
a Planned Famine? World Vision will
supply all the materials and instructions
you need. For more information, write
Planned Famine, World Vision, 919 W.
Huntington Drive, Monrovia, CA 91016.

Kenyan Christians:
the miles we have come

by James Mageria

What do you know about the
Christian believer who is a Kenyan?
In Kenya we have many opportunities
to learn about Americans because of
all the books that have been written.
But there are few books about us,
and most of them are written by
non-Kenyans.

My grandfather was one of the first
Kenyans to respond to the preaching
of the Church of Scotland in 1908. We
had a Church of Scotland mission
around my area, which is at the foot of
Mt. Kenya.

Missionaries who came from foreign
nations had to leave their parents,
friends, property, and everything else
that was familiar. They came to a place
that had no hospital or roads (but
plenty of mosquitoes and other bugs)
and knew they might have to die. They
had to sacrifice a lot, and we
appreciate that very much.

Many of these Christian missionaries
took a holistic approach. They cared
for the people's souls by preaching to
them. They cared for their bodies by
building hospitals and dispensaries,
and by establishing a health care
program. They cared for their minds;
formal education in Kenya was started
by missionaries. That's why we in
Kenya are very appreciative of what
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by missionaries. That's why we in
Kenya are very appreciative of what
happened through these people who
obeyed the command, "Go ye and
make disciples of all nations."

I don't know if it comes across that
we're rich! We're grateful, Lord, that none of
us have suffered ill effects from this.
Please help us remember our
discomforts vividly. Don't let them
ease their way out of our minds. Help
us to appreciate more what we have,
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My heart feels like it will burst as I
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gymnasium; ping-pong table setting;
dirty, tired young people; but how
sweet is the presence of the Lord! It's
true—He has visited us, made His
presence known! What a glorious
feeling! This is truly a holy place.
Then there were rules: You should not dance. Sing hymns only. If you feel very strongly that you must dance and you cannot be stopped, then it is okay if you do the Scottish Highland dances. The Scottish dance was considered Christian while the Kenyan traditional dance was considered pagan and devilish.

Of course the Lord, in His love, would not let these attitudes continue. He planned to put this kind of faith to test. During the struggle for independence in the 50s, people began to say, "We don't want anything white." The fertile land and the places where we produce most of the food were white highlands. Any Kenyan who went there was arrested. On the list of things that were to be driven away with the white people was the Christian faith, because that was alien. The reasoning was there. The Christian came and gave you the dress, and you threw away your own costume. The Christian came and gave you his dance, and you threw away your own dance. The Christian came and taught you a new language. Now we don't understand you; you belong to them. So Christians were lumped together with colonizers.

It was during this time that I was saved. Although I had been brought up in a Christian family, the Lord showed me that I had to face Him. And I did so at a time when, if we said we were saved, we'd be shot or beheaded or hung, because we had collaborated with colonizers. I had to choose, and many of us had to choose, whether to follow Christ and face these dangers, or deny Him and stay on the safe side.

I remember well the day I met Jesus. It was Monday, March 21, 1955, at 5:30 in the evening. I was 14 years of age, and I had heard the call. The Lord said, "If you say yes you may die; yet if you don't say yes, you will die sometime anyway. So the question is, which side do you want to die on?" And I said, "I want to die now in Christ."

I asked the brethren to pray with me, and the Lord gave me such a hope that, instead of being intimidated, I found myself in the streets preaching and holding the Bible. I had a small Bible in my pocket when we went to school. I couldn't wait for the break time to come so that I could share my faith.

One of my friends, in fact, suffered for his faith. He was beheaded. His head was fixed on a pole and put by the side of the road to scare us off, to make us deny our Lord. But when our friend's persecutors came to us, we said, "How happy he is now; he's resting with the Lord. You are not intimidating us. Why don't you just cut our throats and we will join our friend? I'm sure Jesus will save you, too, and you will join us later." They said we must be crazy.

Thank God that we were crazy for Him, and that the faith of Kenyan Christians is still fervent today. That's why we are having the Lord walk strongly among us. evidenced by a spirit of love, peace and unity that

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**The question is, which side do you want to die on?**

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*This design is from a cloth pattern by Maridadi Fabrics in Nairobi, Kenya. Formerly assisted by World Vision, Maridadi offers job training to women living in extreme poverty.*

*Nairobi, the capital of Kenya*
many parts of Africa are not experiencing The testimony and witness of Christians in Kenya has not been a soft one. It has not come easy.

I later joined the police, and my friends said it was wrong because the police were the people who were arresting Kenyans and taking them to the white man's jail. "You must go be a teacher, doctor, or somebody like a pastor, because you have been preaching to us all along," they said.

When we were praying, the Lord said, "Look, if you have two rooms, one with a lot of good light and another one without light, and I tell you that you are the light of the world, which room should you go into? Should you go to the floodlit room or to the dark room, so as to light it? Where we least expect the Lord to be, that's where we are supposed to go so that the Lord can be there and do His work through us.

As a policeman I found that, with the Lord's help, I was able to witness even to criminals. For instance, I told them that they had been arrested for stealing, and that the Bible says, "Thou shalt not steal." I added that the difference between the human court and the Lord is that if the judge finds you guilty, he will fine you and commit you to prison. But the Lord will find you guilty and convict you, then set you free. Often the response I got was, "The last time I was arrested I was beaten up, but here you give me good words."

Later, I went into business. I thought, It won't be as difficult as the police force; it's going to be comfortable.

I had to choose . . . whether to follow Christ and face the dangers, or deny Him and stay on the safe side.

Instead I got the shock of my life. I found the devil was right there waiting in the front office with new temptations. And difficult ones: Greed for money. Loss of love for the people with whom you are dealing.

I am in the shipping business, and I've found the temptation of corruption to be very strong. To get your goods out of customs, the common practice is to find out "who matters," and who likes what, and give it to them. Then when they see your documents they clear them quickly.

That's what they told me when I joined the company. They said, "That's how we do it. It is a means of business promotion." (Some nice words they put there to baptise your feet.) I said you can call it anything you want—business promotion, expedition fees—but to me it is corruption. Then I gave my testimony to my associates and to the custom officials. They all said, "You know this is not a church, James, neither is it the police force where you follow the laws. These business practices are a fact of life." I said, "No, they are a fact of the devil. The fact of life in God is that you should not commit this sort of sin."

Soon the crooked officials found that holding our documents did them no good. In fact, if they kept our documents for no reason, we were going to report them, and they were going to get into trouble. Now, whenever they see our documents, they get rid of them. They move them quickly and clear our goods.

So my work at the shipping docks is very easy. The Lord does it. I don't have to pay anything. I'm glad to say that many of the business people are now seeing this as the way to do business.

Along with these troubles of everyday living and witnessing, we have another major problem with which the Lord can deal. In Kenya we have had a few well-meaning, good-intentioned, but paternalistic missionaries. These missionaries are like a person trying to teach his son to ride a bicycle by always running alongside the bicycle and not letting go. If he doesn't let go sometime, his

James Mageria is a member of the board of directors for World Vision International.
son will never know how to cycle, and the father will die of exhaustion! It is not in the best interest of the son or the father.

We are really trying with love to make changes, and it is very difficult for us Africans because our culture demands that we respect the elder, even if he is wrong. By the time we come around to telling him he's wrong, we have gone a long way. He is of a different culture and does not understand the miles that we have to cover to reach him and say, "Please will you let me off; I can balance now."

We need to understand each other, but we have a long, long way to go. We need each other, but we need to change our approach. We need the African church to establish its own balance and move ahead.

When we Kenyans go to our own people, they don't see some outsiders coming to give them this and that, telling them how to eat with a fork and knife, which they really don't need. They see friends like James Mageria, their son, who has loved them from the start, and who is coming to teach them a new idea about supporting themselves so as to be more useful to God.

The Christians of Kenya have had a difficult journey. And it continues. We must work hard. It is not easy. But it is an opportunity to do everything in the name of Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father.

Pray with us and understand us at your end. Know that we appreciate Western Christians very much. Continue loving us and let us love you. We may not do it the same way you do, but I can assure you it is real. We can touch it, and we know the Lord is with you and with us.

**NEWS UPDATE**

World Vision International has just decided to send substantially more food aid to Poland at a cost of $250,000. The food, designated for children and the elderly, will be distributed by the Polish Ecumenical Council over a four-month period. Watch next month's magazine for more details.

Massive food shortages in crisis-riddled Poland prompted a joint emergency shipment of 25 tons of wheat flour, butter, sugar, cornmeal and other foodstuffs by World Vision International and a Swedish church. Responding to the gradually worsening shortfall of food within Poland, World Vision and the Stockholm City Church of Sweden cooperated in the $40,000 project.

"Where thousands of people had lined up to buy food, there are now no lines, because the stores have no food," said Pat Chavez, director of World Vision's office in Stockholm. "Rationing has been imposed, but how can you ration what is not there? Rows and rows of shelves are empty. The people suffering most are children and the elderly."

The emergency shipment, consisting of four large truckloads of food, reached 16 Polish cities, including the eastern cities of Gdansk, Elblag, Olszczyn, Warsaw and Lublin, which have been hardest hit by the shortages. In each city, the foodstuffs were distributed through local churches.

The shipment, which also reached the cities of Krakow, Katowice, Krosno, Rzeszow, Prezemysl, Szczecin, Zilona, Gora, Wroclaw, Lignica and Opoli, included powdered milk, rice, cheese, spaghetti, canned meat, yeast, salt, oil, cocoa and baby food. Some vitamins and basic medicines were distributed as well.

Daniel Ciszuk, Polish-speaking pastor of the Stockholm church, made an initial survey of the situation in Poland and headed up the project's distribution committee.
Last month I began introducing our group directors and asked them to describe their duties and relationships to you, our supporting partners and friends. The second in this series of reports is from Bill Kliewer, our Director of Communications and newly-appointed Associate Executive Director.

"The straightest line between you, our dear friends, and the realities of a suffering world, is created by accurate and effective communication. This is one of the underlying objectives of our Communications Group. It is a simple concept, but a very complex task.

"We must accurately tell you the story of those who suffer from physical darkness and physical need. Their needs are so real, and many cry out because of hunger, disease and drought. Most are confused and lonely without the hope Christ offers.

"We must accurately describe to you how funds are being used by World Vision staff to alleviate this suffering. It is our task to tell you the story of holistic development—our approach to evangelism and physical assistance.

"We must communicate effectively so that you will have an opportunity to watch, read and listen. The message must be skillfully stated so that you will feel as close to the point of need as possible without being there. We have found that by creating this 'straight line' of reality for you to the world of need, you care and respond by giving and praying.

"We must communicate to you in a cost-effective way. Our relationship with you as a contributor is a sacred trust. Our spending of money to tell you the story of progress and continuing need must be done in a way that will be challenging and thought-provoking but not expensive.

"Good communication means good people. We thank God for the highly skilled Christian communicators on our staff. They are involved in a broad spectrum of activity from television programming to personal visits in the homes of our friends here in the United States.

"However, after all is said and done, we want our faith in God to take us above and beyond our skills and expectations. We approach our communication task with prayer so that we might effectively tell what God is doing in so many ways around the world."
VOICES (Volunteer Outreach in Community Enrichment Services), developed by Ron and Linda Wilson, has helped resettle 1500 Indochinese refugees in Des Moines, Iowa. The network of 55 volunteers teaches English to the refugees and helps them get established in their new setting. This includes orientation in grocery shopping, finding a doctor, housing, schools or employment.

You can help reach the world’s unachieved peoples for Christ through the “Loose Change Frontier Fellowship.” Begun by Dr. Ralph Winter, director of the U.S. Center for World Mission, the program urges Christians to set aside their loose change every night as an offering for frontier missions and to pray for the unachieved as well. For more information, write U.S. Center for World Mission, 1605 E. Elizabeth St., Pasadena, CA 91104.

Tentmakers Inc., a group of over 50 Lutheran young people following the ministry example of the Apostle Paul, work at part-time secular jobs while serving as lay ministers to the youth in Midwest churches. After an intensive two-month training period, the “tentmakers” devote two years of service to their congregations.

ISSUES, a publication of Jews for Jesus, is available free of charge to any Jewish person interested in learning more about Jesus. Designed to deal specifically with such questions as “Is Jesus the promised Messiah?” and “Why didn’t He bring peace to the world?” the magazine is available from Jews for Jesus, 50 Haight St., San Francisco, CA 94102.

Spiritual Counterfeits Project, (SCP), an evangelical clearinghouse on cults and new religions, has added a telephone information service that refers callers to persons in their area who can provide additional aid. Call (415) 527-9212 on Mondays, Wednesdays or Fridays from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. (Pacific time). For information about other SCP services, write P.O. Box 2418, Berkeley, CA 94702.

“Jesus,” a film on the life of Christ, has been translated into 39 languages by Campus Crusade for Christ International. More than 10 million people (mostly in Asia) viewed the film last year. It was produced by the Genesis Project.

Christian Conciliation Service, an arm of the Christian Legal Society, is working with Christians involved in legal disputes to establish a conciliatory way of dealing with conflicts—not in court, but in Christian community. Clients can choose either mediation or arbitration, and may be represented by counsel or speak for themselves. For more information, write Christian Legal Society, P.O. Box 2069, Oak Park, IL 60303.

Refugee sponsorship is the subject of a proposal adopted by the General Council of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA). The statement resolved that the districts of C&MA should encourage and organize local church sponsorship of refugees, assistance in locating housing and employment, and help in covering the costs of resettlement.

Alternatives, a non-profit organization working for more responsible lifestyles, has prepared a packet of materials to help churches celebrate Christmas in ways more relevant to the purpose behind Christ’s birth. The celebration ideas offer creative alternatives to commercialized gift-giving and suggest ways to give to those who are truly needy. For information, write promptly to Alternative Christmas Campaign, P.O. Box 1707, Forest Park, GA 30097.

MAP International (formerly Medical Assistance Programs) has distributed at least $200 million in medicine and health supplies in its 27 years of service. Over 200 pharmaceutical and health supply companies donate the products to MAP, who then provides such items as antibiotics, vaccines, vitamins and bandages to medical missionaries working in underprivileged countries.

Whose Birthday Is It Anyway?

Satirical cover from an Alternatives brochure

Former “Galloping Gourmet” Graham Kerr is helping to feed the world’s hungry through his project LORD (LONG Range Development for the World) under the auspices of the evangelical organization Youth With A Mission (YWAM). Quarter-acre “micro-farms” are established overseas by LORD and then worked by needy couples who eventually can buy the plot of land with the profits from the sale of the food produced.
Emergency relief in Lebanon

Several relief efforts in war-torn Lebanon are receiving World Vision funds. Pharmaceuticals are being given to government-supervised clinics throughout the war zones, especially in the Bekaa Valley and along the “green line” dividing East and West Beirut. The Contact and Resource Center, a Christian service agency in Beirut, is handling the distribution. Both Muslims and Christians are among the injured who will benefit from the drugs.

World Vision donors are also funding a service center staffed by Lebanese Christians. The center will provide emergency care and counseling for 2000-2500 people, mostly Lebanese Muslims, who are handicapped by war-related injuries.

The Lebanon YWCA is getting World Vision’s help in purchasing an ambulance for the Zahle Red Cross. Lebanon has an acute shortage of ambulances. Trained volunteers from the Zahle Relief Committee will operate and maintain the vehicle.

More fighting in El Salvador

In August, a World Vision-sponsored child was severely injured by a hand grenade when the army and insurgents fought near his home. Fighting was also heavy in the capital city of San Salvador during August.

World Vision donors have sent emergency supplies to more than 115,000 Salvadorans surrounded by violence.

Kampuchea report

Lack of rain has slowed progress with the seed rice project in Kampuchea. However, World Vision’s project director Peter Routely is optimistic about its future. In late September, he said, “Local cooperation is excellent, arrival of materials has been timely, and no major difficulty has yet shown itself.”

During August, many of the southern provinces were affected by drought conditions. As a result, much of the seed planting was delayed, and some seedlings died for lack of moisture. The food situation was aggravated by heavy rains elsewhere which caused the Mekong River to overflow, particularly into eastern provinces along the river’s southern reaches. That flood destroyed over 185,000 acres of cultivated land, further reducing prospects for a good wet-season rice crop. The dry-season rice crop will be planted in November.

World Vision responded to the government’s request to provide aid for victims of the Mekong River flood. The relief goods—including blankets, sleeping mats, mosquito nets and clothing—were distributed by Kampuchean officials.

Angola visit

World Vision’s Stan Mooneyham visited Angola in mid-October to plan aid for drought victims there. Watch next month’s magazine for details on the new project.

Panama flood aid

Flood victims in Panama City began receiving World Vision’s help in September. Eight hundred displaced people from Barrio Viejo Veranillo, adjacent to the Panama Canal, were given food, clothing, cots, utensils and bedding. The project was coordinated by AEPAD, a new volunteer Christian relief and development organization made up of 30 Christian professionals. They offered medical, social and spiritual assistance to the flood victims. Panamanian churches also contributed.

Sisters try traditional Hmong needlework at Ban Vinai refugee camp in Thailand, where World Vision offers vocational training. They fled Laos with six other brothers and sisters after Communists killed their parents.
Somali malnutrition decreases

Further improvement has been made in the nutritional status of children at the Las Dhure refugee camp in Somalia. After a survey in October 1980 showed the malnutrition level to be nearly 40 percent, the figure dropped to 17 percent in February this year and 11 percent in the latest survey, taken in July.

World Vision’s Dr. Milton Amayun reports that a recent vaccination program will protect refugees at Las Dhure from any large-scale measles epidemic for the next two years. The camp medical program has effectively moved from emergency, curative care into preventive medicine and community health education.

Work continues on the joint World Vision/Oxfam water program in the camp. By mid-August, six solar water pumps had been installed with four more to follow. Tests have shown that the water from the new wells is good.

Please pray for:

- **people in Ethiopia** who continue to suffer from drought and hunger.
- **Polish citizens** who have little to eat. Pray also for Stan Mooneyham as he leads evangelistic meetings this November in three cities of Poland.
- **ways to help** the needy and lonely near you this Thanksgiving.

Islam: Unlocking the Door

A new documentary film for your church or group

One in every six people on earth is a Muslim. Yet only two percent of the North American Protestant mission force is working among them.

Here’s a film that deals honestly with those attitudes that prevent Christians from reaching out to their Muslim neighbors. It uncovers the myths that have hampered Christian-Arab relationships, and bares the fears of Christians and Muslims alike towards one another. And it deals with the proper approach to sharing Christ with Muslims.

“This film ... is for the whole church. It’s interesting. It’s fast-paced. It’s one that will motivate people...” —Mel White

Islam: Unlocking the Door

*16mm *color *35 minutes
$25 service fee covers postage, handling and cleaning

I would like to schedule your Islam film for one of the following dates:

1st _________________ 2nd _________________ 3rd _________________

□ $25 enclosed

Name of church/group
Shipping address
City
State Zip
Your name
Your phone number ____________________________
Area Code

Send to Regional Office Director, World Vision, Box O, Pasadena, CA 91109

Is God calling you?

Why not work in an environment where your efforts can be directly related to saving lives and spreading the Good News? Consider these areas of service and send your resume to John Spencer, International Human Resources, 919 W. Huntington Dr., Monrovia, CA 91016.

Associate Director—Child, Family and Community Development
Is God calling you to help World Vision define and set standards for our Christian development ministry to poor and needy children and families in communities overseas? We are looking for a creative person with excellent conceptual skills who can communicate ideas and concepts in a non-directive manner in cross-cultural settings. The person we need has extensive experience in small-scale community development projects overseas and has evaluative skills to help us learn from our successes as well as from our failures. The position requires a college degree, a minimum of four years overseas development experience and at least five years experience managing others.

Director—Communications Resources Division
World Vision International is currently seeking a creative and highly skilled individual to provide leadership in international communications operations. The successful candidate will utilize a knowledge of international communications strategies and the provision of media services to plan, coordinate and manage the educational, public relations and global communications aspects of this function. Applicant should possess a college degree with at least 15 years experience in international communications involving international media agencies, government and non-government voluntary agencies to facilitate the global impact of World Vision’s ministries. Preference will be given to individuals who have developed key contacts.
Lebanon’s “very existence is threatened,” says Patriarch Antoine Pierre Khoriaiche, head of Lebanon’s Catholic Maronite community. Calling his nation a battleground for conflict between Israel and other nations, Khoriaiche wants the U.S. to help establish a homeland for the Palestinians. Without such a solution, he fears, Lebanon will soon collapse.

Christian theologians from Latin America, Asia and Africa will gather in Seoul, Korea, next August for the Third World Theologian's Consultation. Their purpose will be to scrutinize both Western and Third World theology and to suggest for each region an alternative biblical, evangelical theology.

The global “brain trade” was the topic of concern at a recent UN conference in Paris. During the 60s and 70s, a quarter of a million university graduates educated by underprivileged countries moved to the West. The emigrants are typically young, bright and ambitious. Their exodus leaves Third World nations with a shortage of trained experts.

Christians in China “ask for your prayers and good will, but that's all,” concludes Dr. Alan Walker, director of world evangelism for the World Methodist Council. Having returned from a China visit, Walker reports the church is doing well without foreign influences. He says the number of Christians in China has “at least doubled” since 1949. Recently, 30,000 Chinese people enrolled in seminary correspondence courses.

Both “soft” and “hard” social ministries are the church’s responsibility, according to Dr. Martin Marty, a Lutheran pastor-historian. “Soft” ministries, such as running hospitals or resettling refugees, generally “do not upset or intend to upset structures of the existing world.” Marty says Christians are less adept at controversial, “hard” social ministries that challenge structures guilty of perpetuating injustice.

Merger plans have been announced by two longtime mission agencies, the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) and Andes Evangelical Mission (AEM). SIM began work in Africa in 1893, and AEM has been working in South America since 1907.

White emigrants from Britain and Zimbabwe are surging into South Africa, to the dismay of black leaders. Many whites say the newcomers — 40,000 this year alone — are essential for bolstering their position in a nation which has five blacks, coloreds or Indians for every white. High unemployment in Britain is one reason cited for the emigration boom.

Honduras has closed its western border to keep out Salvadoran refugees, reports the Los Angeles Times. Captured refugees are said to be turned over to Salvadoran security forces. UNHCR officials estimate that some 200,000 Salvadorans have sought refuge in Central American countries and Mexico.

Uganda is still reeling from economic and social troubles. According to New African magazine, raging inflation, corruption and the absence of basic commodities are making life difficult for many Ugandans. Skirmishes between guerrillas and government forces continue to victimize innocent civilians. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees reports a new influx of 55,000 Ugandans into neighboring Zaire and Sudan.

One million American children will have received medical treatment in 1981 as victims of child abuse. Jim Mead, founder of “For Kid’s Sake” in Los Angeles, says yearly totals will show that five million children have been abused, and 5000 of them will have died as a result. Hong Kong, among other places, reports a similar increase in the problem.

Hundreds of Cuban refugees still in U.S. detention camps are losing hope. The government considers nearly 1800 Cubans in Atlanta penitentiary “excludable” under U.S. immigration law — though charges of previous criminal activity are often unfounded. Another 700 refugees languish at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, while camp officials try to find sponsors for them.

“Economic refugee” is a simplistic label that ignores political, religious and racial opposition compelling victims to seek asylum in other lands. So argues Leo Cherne, chairman of the International Rescue Committee, in the Journal of Refugee Resettlement. “Are we to believe,” writes Cherne, “that those . . . risking the lives of their beloved children and venerated parents are on some vast job hunt?”

Charitable giving will drop by $18 billion over the next four years because of President Reagan’s tax cut, according to a study by the Urban Institute. High-income earners will be less likely to donate money which formerly would have gone to the government anyway. The predicted decline comes at a time when nonprofit agencies are being asked to make up for the cutback in government aid programs among the needy.

The nuclear arms race has become “still more savage,” according to scientists from 40 nations who met recently in Canada. At the 31st meeting of the Pugwash movement, described as one of the most pessimistic ever, the scientists called for an immediate moratorium on new weapons deployment and for serious negotiations on limiting nuclear weapons in Europe.
On thankful giving

There is no reason why doing good shouldn't feel good. Many of us have become so wary about good works ("lest any man should boast") that we do them—if we do them at all—out of a dull and compelling sense of duty. That way we are not allowed to take any credit or feel any joy.

Good works should be and can be joyful. God loves a cheerful giver (2 Cor. 9:7). I find no such promise for the cheerless giver, whose gift—while it may accomplish good—does not fill a void in his or her own life. Granted, there are skilled manipulators, even well-intentioned ones, who prod people to give by telling them how much they will get back or how happy they make God, instead of presenting the need and letting the response take care of itself. And certainly, giving can be ego-directed, if one gives simply to feel good or to get off an uncomfortable hook.

But some Christians are so fearful that pride may infiltrate their good works (knowing that we don't and can't earn salvation), they minimize the danger by avoiding good works. They have not discovered the difference between taking pride and finding joy. The receiver needs to receive and the giver needs to give. Neither need can stand alone. While doing one’s best does not necessarily call for the creation of a new national holiday, knowing one has done it produces a measure of the joy that helps to make us whole persons.

The Bible says a lot about joy, including that strange verse which tells us to "consider it pure joy... whenever you face trials of many kinds" (James 1:2, NIV). The reason being, of course, that "the testing of your faith develops perseverance." It does no credit to God for Christians to walk around with the look of terminal misery on their faces.

Consider the verse on which I was brought up: "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24, KJV). The word "rejoice" implies an act of the will—"be joyful." There is something positive about it. You don't sit there waiting for someone to suffuse you with joy. Rejoicing is something you do. "We will rejoice; we will be joyful."

And all this time we have been going on the assumption that if it made you feel good, there was probably something wrong with it. The gospel is the Good News, not the bad news our cultivated cheerlessness would suggest. "Grin and bear it" is not a biblical admonition. We act as if, were we to let down our guard and be happy, we would tempt Satan to prove that life is a burden, not a celebration.

Lest we attract his attention like Job did, we keep a low happiness profile.

And the results are not merely neutral; they are negative. Suppressing the spontaneous joy which arises from doing good, we become susceptible to pride. (Being creatures of emotion, we cannot, after all, simply feel nothing.) The publican who went up to the temple and prayed ostentatiously was getting kicks that he should have found in his otherwise exemplary lifestyle. He was a methodical and even meticulous giver, but, clearly, he didn't get any fun out of his giving. Pride was all he had left.

Where is the balance between pride and joy? Jesus said, "When you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men." (Besides, that way you'll get on a lot of mailing lists!) "I tell you, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing" (Matt. 6:3, NIV). But there is no reason why your right hand can't know what your right hand is doing; you don't have to hide your joy from yourself.

I received a letter from a caring contributor struggling with some of these problems. "Because my husband and I give, and we generally give more than a tithe, we don't have new clothes or a TV like our friends, and we don't know if we'll ever be able to afford a home of our own. Materially we are 'poor' compared to all our friends. It is hard to give when I don't get encouragement from those around me, and it's even harder when I wonder if God really cares about my 'works.' Does He care about my struggle to give? I guess I know deep inside that He cares and is pleased. But no one tells me that."

It is important to be aware that God cares. About Cornelius, the Bible says, "He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly. One day he... saw an angel of God, who came to him and said... "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a remembrance before God." (Acts 10:2-4, NIV). God knew.

But even if heaven kept no record, the joy of doing something kind, something generous, is in the doing. In the knowing that good works are better than evil works. That love—even when it tears you to pieces—is better than aloofness. That the shared loaf somehow becomes more nourishing than the loaf unshared.

There is also the satisfaction of knowing that, because of what one does, blind who would be cold are clothed, and the Good News is preached to someone who would never have heard.

Giving is also a gift to the giver. Cheerfully (the word in the Bible literally means "hilariously") done, it brings us close to the heart of God.

And that's a good feeling.

President, World Vision International
Send the Christmas gift that gives twice

1. As a card, it gives your friends a unique demonstration of your thoughtfulness and appreciation of them.

You can’t buy much these days for $10. Even when you can afford more, aren’t there always some people on your shopping list who seem to have everything? Well, you can give your favorite neighbor, work associate or relative a meaningful gift for just $10... a gift that uniquely expresses your appreciation... and simultaneously gives food and medicine to a suffering child.

Right now in East Africa—Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia—12 million people are in a desperate struggle against death. War, disease, and the worst drought in 15 years have combined to create the greatest human-need crisis of our time. This Christmas, in the Las Dhure refugee camp in Somalia, the heart’s desire of thousands of children is merely to survive.

For each $10 order, you will receive a 5 x 7 inch color Christmas card and envelope to sign and mail to your special friends. The card, on the inside, says:

As a gift to you, because you are so special, a contribution has been made to World Vision to help bring joy this Christmas to a needy child in the Las Dhure refugee camp in Somalia, East Africa. May the love, peace and joy of the Christ child’s coming fill your heart throughout this Christmas season and in the year ahead.

Your gift is tax deductible and will be acknowledged by a receipt. Fill out the coupon and mail it with your check or money order to: Christmas Cards, World Vision, Box O, Pasadena, CA 91109.

2. As a contribution, it gives a week’s worth of food and medicine... life itself... to a suffering, hungry child.

Please send me _____ cards and envelopes. Enclosed is my check for $_______ ($10 for each card/envelope ordered).

Name ____________________________
Address __________________________
City ____________________________ Zip ________________
State ____________________________

World Vision Account No. (if known) ____________________________

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This label is to be used on the enclosed envelope.

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