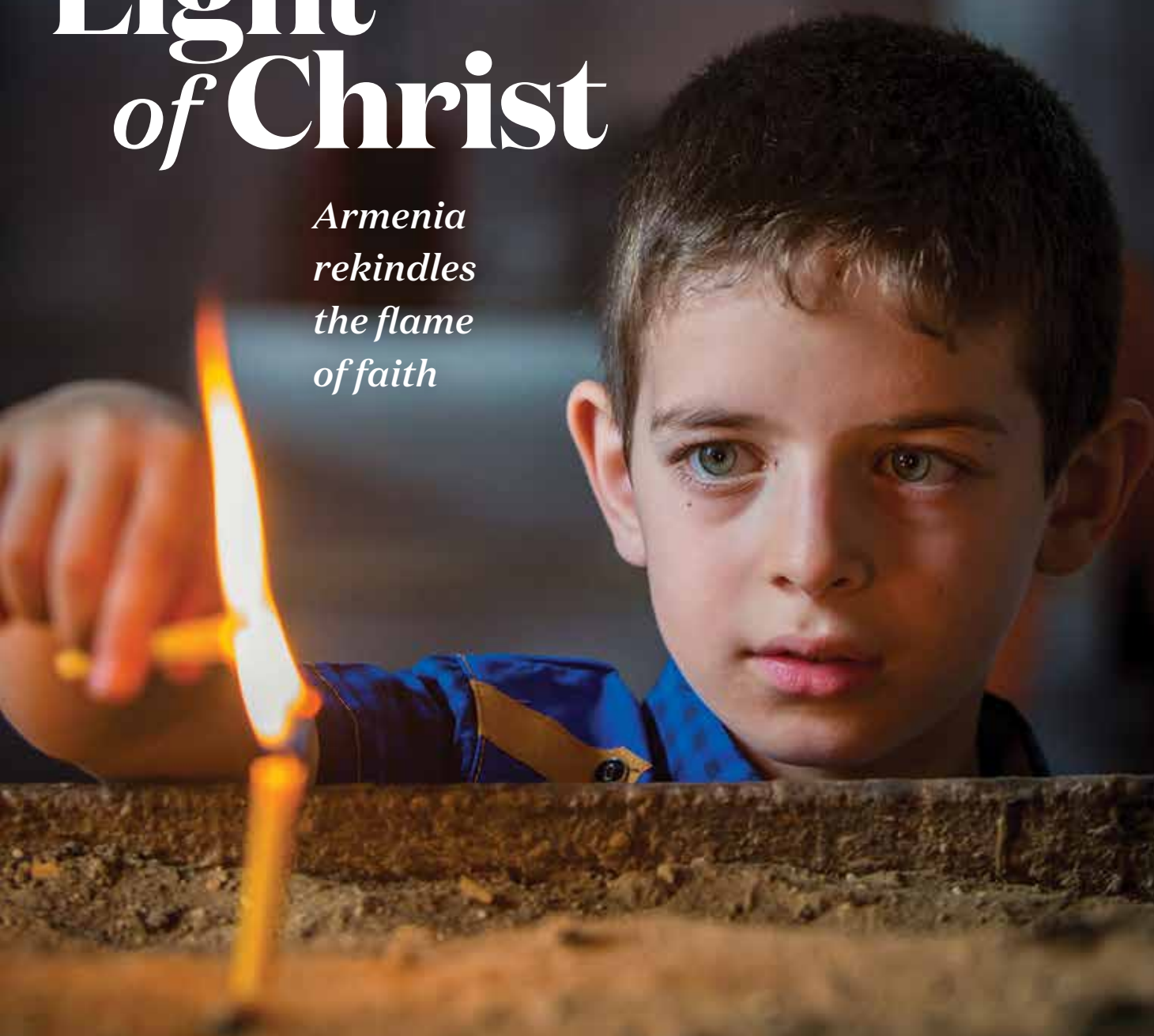


WorldVision

FALL/WINTER 2015

Light of Christ

*Armenia
rekindles
the flame
of faith*



Receive income for life ... *leave a legacy forever*



Dorothy Samson established her first World Vision gift annuity in 1999.

“It’s a double benefit. It gives me good income for life. And I like that the remainder can be used for things I care deeply about, especially helping to build clinics and schools.”

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Age	Rate*
65	4.7%
75	5.8%
85	7.8%
90	9.0%

Your payment rate is based on your age at the time of your gift.

*Rates shown are Single-Life Rates, effective April 13, 2015 (subject to change).

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World Vision, a free triannual publication, affirms people responding to God’s call to care for the poor by providing information, inspiration, and opportunities for action, linking them with children and families in nearly 100 countries where World Vision ministers. In an effort to be careful stewards of our resources, this publication costs 47 cents a copy to produce.

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Young people throughout Armenia are discovering new hope in Christ—and opportunities to serve in his name.

LAURA REINHARDT/WORLD VISION

LEFT

Father Paren Petrosyan, an Armenian priest, pauses during family visits to play with the children.

LAURA REINHARDT/WORLD VISION

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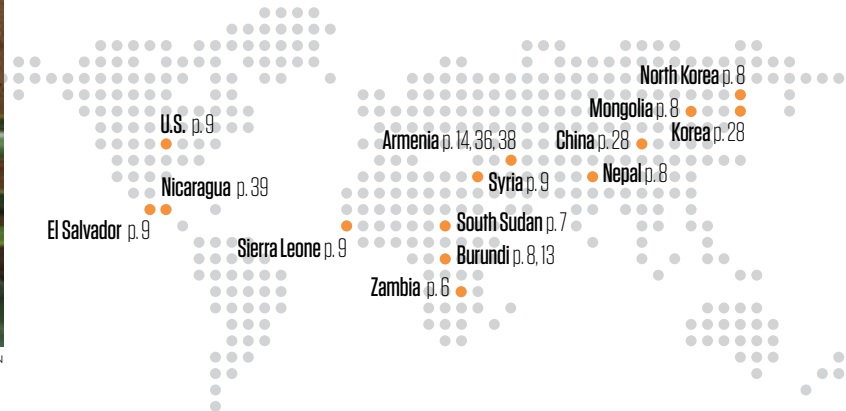
For years, former sponsored child Misha Poghosyan dreamed of transforming his Armenian city through its young people. Today, the 24-year-old's nonprofit organization is doing just that.

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With the right help, malnutrition can turn into a bright smile.



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"The stories help me feel connected to my child and to know that our sponsorship truly does make a difference." —a reader in Kansas City, Mo.

"I'd love an article about what to send in letters and care packages." —a reader in Spokane, Wash.

Great idea—see "Packed With Love" on p. 11 for our tips.

"Could you include maps so I can visualize exactly where the needs are and where the good is being done?" —a reader in Alpharetta, Ga.

We've added a map (above) with each country mentioned in this issue. Thanks for the suggestion!

"Is there an option for an email magazine? We are a mostly paperless household." —a reader in Fayetteville, Ark.

Yes! See the facing page for info about subscribing to our monthly digital editions.

"This magazine gently pulls me out of my comfortable world and reminds me of the millions who are struggling and hurting. I am so thankful for that." —a reader in Nashville, Tenn.

"I should be Googling for the important info that's in this magazine, but I rarely do. This puts it right in front of my face. Thank you!" —a reader in Champaign, Ill.

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WHO WE ARE

World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice.

WHOM WE SERVE

Motivated by our faith in Jesus Christ, we serve alongside the poor and oppressed—regardless of a person’s religion, race, ethnicity, or gender—as a demonstration of God’s unconditional love for all people.

WHY WE SERVE

Our passion is for the world’s poorest children whose suffering breaks the heart of God. To help secure a better future for each child, we focus on lasting, community-based transformation. We partner with individuals and communities, empowering them to develop sustainable access to clean water, food supplies, healthcare, education, and economic opportunities.

HOW WE SERVE

Since 1950, World Vision has helped millions of children and families by providing emergency assistance to those affected by natural disasters and civil conflict, developing long-term solutions within communities to alleviate poverty, and advocating for justice on behalf of the poor.

YOU CAN HELP

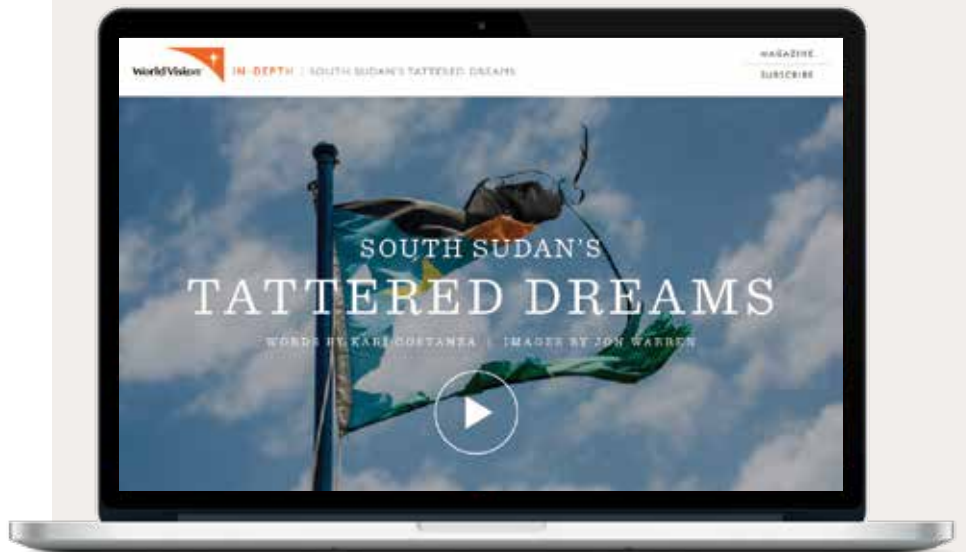
Partnering with World Vision provides tangible ways to honor God and put faith into action. By working together, we can make a lasting difference in the lives of children and families who are struggling to overcome poverty. To find out how you can help, visit worldvision.org.

ALL ACCESS

Read more *World Vision* magazine issues online—**and have them delivered to your inbox.**

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Our issues are packed with fresh, compelling storytelling and imagery about how God is bringing hope and opportunity to children and families living in poverty.



SPECIAL REPORT: SOUTH SUDAN

Writer Kari Costanza narrates stories of need and hope from the field; an expert answers questions about the conflict; and World Vision U.S. President Rich Stearns calls the church to be the hands and feet of Jesus.



JON WARREN/WORLD VISION

CELEBRATING CHILD SPONSORSHIP

Small-town life in Bolivia; urban sponsorship in Bangladesh; and how sponsorship has changed with the times.



ORLANDO DUCAY/WORLD VISION

65 PHOTOS FOR 65 YEARS

Where in the world photo quiz; before-and-after images; and the happiest faces we’ve met over the years.

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Helping the Church Be the Church

BY RICH STEARNS

I'll never forget my conversation with Pastor Morgan Chilulu seven years ago about how his church was transforming lives in Kamfinsa, Zambia. Christian Family Church—with just 120 members, a few wooden pews, and a single light bulb hanging from the corrugated tin ceiling—was caring for widows, orphans, the sick, and everyone in the town affected by AIDS. That day, Pastor Chilulu taught me an incredible lesson about the church.

Christian Family Church provides meals, counseling, childcare, home cleaning, and basic medical care. They connect the sick with hospitals and government services. At the time of our conversation, the AIDS crisis was ravaging communities like his. Their care was incredibly effective, and so many people recovered that they started a jobs program. People who were once suffering on their deathbeds were ready to get back to work. The church started a welding business, a poultry farm, and a preschool, and they had dreams of a farm that could feed the entire community.

Pastor Chilulu's efforts began after a World Vision training program gave him the tools to address the AIDS epidemic. Instead of ignoring the problem and pointing fingers, Christian Family Church learned to have compassion. That's how Pastor Chilulu discovered what the church should be. With profound simplicity, he told me, "A church that lives within its four walls is no church at all."

There are a number of ways in which World Vision works with churches, but one thing remains the same. Wherever World Vision works, we help the church be the church, and that means getting out of the pews and into people's lives.

In Rwanda, I have seen World Vision hand over a community savings and lending program to a local church so they could run it. Elsewhere in Africa, where Christians are a minority, we are helping churches run kids clubs for children to have a safe place to go when school is out. They also learn about health and sanitation—and about Jesus. In Bolivia, churches work hand-in-hand with our community development programs.

Few things are as powerful or as compelling as a church that lives outside its walls. What happened to Christian Family



JON WARREN/WORLD VISION

As Rich visits World Vision's work, he encourages Christ followers to help meet the needs of others—like at this church in Ethiopia.

"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God."

—2 CORINTHIANS 5:20

Church in Zambia happens to churches in the U.S. as well. I think of Springcreek Church in Dallas; Life Center in Tacoma, Washington; or Vineyard Columbus in Columbus, Ohio. These churches are attracting new Christians and the attention of their communities as they find ways to show Jesus' love for the hurting in their own cities and around the world.

In this issue, you'll read about World Vision's partnership with the Armenian church. I remember during my visit there a few years ago talking to the Catholicos, the head of the country's orthodox church. He told me the story of the church's persecution and near collapse at the hands of the communist government. The church was embattled, he told me. It was discriminated against and was prevented from educating the country's youth in the faith. By the time communism fell, the Armenian church was on its knees.

The crisis in the Armenian church was an opportunity for World Vision to do what we seek to do around the world: Help and support churches in the world-changing mission given to them by Jesus. I hope you read this important story beginning on page 14.

I have a verse inscribed on my office wall that I read every day. It's 2 Corinthians 5:20: "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us."

Ambassadors don't stay in the embassy. They get out into the country where they are sent, and they represent the one that sent them. The same is true for Christ's ambassadors. We can't live out our faith inside our protective walls. Our vision is for every church to boldly get out, clothed with "compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience" (Col. 3:12). These are the kinds of compassionate ambassadors that change the world. ●

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Rich Stearns is president of World Vision U.S. and best-selling author of *Unfinished* and *The Hole in Our Gospel*.

FRONTLINES

DANGER ZONE



JON WARREN/WORLD VISION

Two-year-old Nyane's severe malnutrition is apparent to everyone at this clinic in Kuajok, South Sudan—even without the armband that gauges the condition based on his tiny arm's circumference.

Everyone, that is, except his mother. Because Nyibol Akol is blind, she didn't know her son was starving until neighbors told her.

Nyibol and Nyane are two of millions of South Sudanese whose lives have changed for the worse since December 2013, when fighting broke out in the newly formed nation, tribe against tribe, though most consider themselves Christian.

Two million people are displaced, but only one in 10 lives in organized camps; the rest are constantly on the move to evade violence. Because of difficulties in providing aid to a mobile population and disrupted agricultural production, 4.6 million people in South Sudan face alarming food insecurity. The country is on the brink of famine.

Nyibol brought Nyane to a World Vision clinic that provides emergency food—one of many places where World Vision works to serve the people of this fragile country. Listen to Nyibol's story, along with other stories of need and hope in South Sudan, at wvmag.org/southsudan. ●

WORLD WATCH

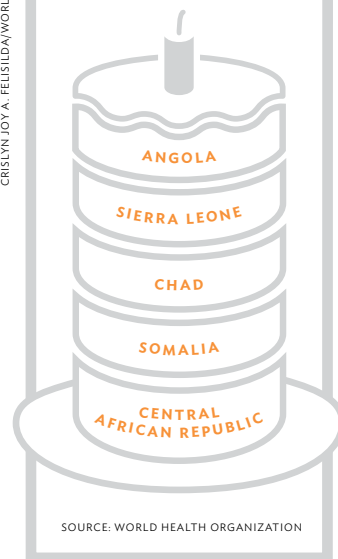


CRISLYN JOY A. FELIUDA/WORLD VISION

NOTHING TO CELEBRATE

The world's worst places to be a child

A higher percentage of children die by age 5 in the following countries than in other nations worldwide. Disease, conflict, and food scarcity make it difficult for children to survive, much less thrive. Pray that children live to see their fifth birthdays in:



NEPAL | QUAKE UPDATE

In the first three months after April's magnitude-7.8 earthquake—and a second magnitude-7.3 quake in May—World Vision's disaster response reached almost 80,000 people with emergency food, water, and shelter. The quake killed more than 8,800 people and destroyed 528,000 houses. World Vision's long-term relief and recovery efforts aim to reach 152,500 people with shelter, water, sanitation, food, health, child protection, and education. Also key: programs focusing on disaster preparedness and risk reduction.

MONGOLIA | HOTLINE HELP

A new national hotline aims to protect children from domestic violence, exploitation, and bullying—and it's working. World Vision partnered with the Mongolian government and a local mobile phone company to set up Child Helpline 108, available to children all over the country. On the other end

of the line is a team of police, social workers, psychologists, and pediatricians ready to respond. In just six months, the hotline received 100,000 calls and successfully intervened in four cases of children at risk of suicide.

NORTH KOREA | DROUGHT

The drought currently gripping

North Korea is the worst in 100 years, the state news agency reports. Rice paddies, the source of much of the country's food, are drying up due to lack of rain. Children stand to suffer the most; according to the U.N., poor nutrition has already caused stunting in almost one-third of North Korean children.

BURUNDI | POLITICAL UNREST

Since April, nearly 144,000 Burundians have fled to neighboring countries seeking safety amid political instability and violence. Two-term President Pierre Nkurunziza announced he would seek a third term, which opposition groups consider unconstitutional. Protests against the

president turned deadly, and a failed military coup added to the unrest. Before and after the July election—when President Nkurunziza was re-elected a third time—surges of people crossed into Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tanzania, and Uganda.

REFUGEE CRISIS | ON THE MOVE

A flood of refugees from the Middle East into Europe has brought the Syrian conflict into the international news spotlight as hundreds of thousands of people make the dangerous journey by land and sea to seek asylum. As World Vision continues serving refugees who remain in Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq, new programs began in September to address the needs of those crossing into Europe. Since the conflict began in 2011, more than 4 million Syrians have fled their country.

WORLDWIDE | DISPLACED POPULATIONS

By the end of 2014, conflict and violence displaced a record 38 million people from their homes worldwide—equivalent to the combined populations of New York, London, and Beijing. The Norwegian Refugee Council report lists Iraq, South Sudan, Syria, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Nigeria as countries with the most newly displaced people. More than 90 percent of nations monitored had residents internally displaced for a decade or more, signaling a trend of long-term life disruption. ●

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

Stamp of Approval | This past summer, the El Salvador national postage service honored World Vision's 40 years of work in the country with a special seal placed on all postage. World Vision provided emergency relief following a 1986 earthquake and helped communities recover and rebuild after the country's civil war ended in 1992. Almost 23,000 children in El Salvador currently have World Vision U.S. sponsors.



KATIA MALDONADO/WORLD VISION

Ebola Award | Maseray Kamara, an Ebola survivor, and her 802 colleagues in Sierra Leone who provide safe burials for those who succumb to the disease were awarded the Bond International Humanitarian Award earlier this year. World Vision-trained burial teams were commended for their sensitivity to local customs and the faith traditions of both Christians and Muslims. Maseray lost her husband and sister to Ebola.

Girls Count | In June, more than 15,000 letters and phone calls from World Vision advocates in the United States helped pass the Girls Count Act. The new law ensures the U.S. works with other countries so all children are registered for birth certificates, focusing on countries where girls are systematically undercounted. Worldwide, one child in three has no birth certificate—meaning the child remains invisible to the government, lacks access to healthcare and education, and is at greater risk for exploitation. ●



SIMON RAWLES/WORLD VISION

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

AFRICA'S FRAGILE PLACES

Four sub-Saharan African nations top the lists of the world's most fragile places—and World Vision works in all of them.

1. South Sudan
2. Somalia
3. Central African Republic
4. Democratic Republic of the Congo

Why are these countries chronically fragile? Read more at wwmag.org/fragileAfrica.

YOUNG ADVOCATES IN ACTION

Children help support a new U.S. anti-trafficking law.



A history lesson—and encouragement from their parents, Adam and Anna—inspired the Goodworth children to support a new law that prohibits human trafficking.

STEVEN SMITH/GENESIS PHOTOS

In 2012, Anna Goodworth decided to teach her children about slavery in their homeschool history class.

Adelaine and Lukas, then 5 and 7, peppered their mother with questions, wondering if slavery still exists today. Anna, who knew about human trafficking from her involvement with World Vision's Women of Vision, answered that slavery does exist. Even the things they bought, she explained, could be made by exploited people.

"My son said he wanted to do another Boston Tea Party and take everything they had that was made by slaves and throw it in the river," says Anna, 36. "Instead of getting arrested, I opted to have them write a letter to the president and our [members of Congress]."

A few months later, the family visited Washington, D.C., and met with their Connecticut congressional members, including Rep. Elizabeth Esty. They urged her to

consider legislation that addresses human trafficking, a modern form of slavery. They also spent time with World Vision staff to discuss how to advocate for an anti-trafficking bill.

Once home, they followed up with their members of Congress. "We made thank-you cards for being on board with this," Anna says. The family hoped it would further encourage them to support the bill.

In 2014, Anna received an email from Rep. Esty's office, explaining that when the family visited her, the new congresswoman was trying to decide what issues to support. The family's visit inspired her to back the anti-trafficking bill—and she asked permission to mention them in a media release announcing her support. That bill is now law.

"It's different when kids are speaking out for kids," Anna says. "They can say, 'They're just like me—they're the same age as me.' It's been very empowering and humbling"

Many of Anna's friends said they'd wait until their children were older to talk about tough issues like human trafficking. But Anna says she would have made different decisions growing up, had she known.

As a result, her kids now are aware and diligent to ask where items they buy were made. They also give up birthday presents to donate money for clean water in developing countries and anticipate with excitement the next letters to arrive from the family's five sponsored children.

"I love missions, and being a young mom, I wanted to get involved in something," Anna says. "I realized that I don't have to just go on a mission trip or volunteer in the inner city. I can do things globally in my own home." ●

—Kristy J. O'Hara

USE YOUR VOICE on behalf of people in poverty at worldvision.org/advocacy.

COURTESY ALYSSA CORLEY



WHY I LOVE BEING A CHILD SPONSOR

ALYSSA CORLEY | AURORA, COLO.

I signed up to sponsor a child with World Vision when I was 18, after a presentation at my college. As soon as I received my packet with Avalina's picture, I fell in love immediately and had a sense of being part of something bigger.

Twelve years later, my heart has changed. I am always looking for ways to give, I have become a much more thankful person, and I see things like fresh water and a door on my home as blessings. I now sponsor three children with World Vision and look forward to the day I can start helping another child.

I love seeing how my dollars can stretch so far in another country. Even when finances are tight, over the last 12 years God has always provided so that I can still send my monthly contributions.

Sponsorship has allowed me to set goals for my life—to help the poor, to love others, and to be resourceful in giving. I have a goal to raise enough money someday to drill a well in Africa, and I'm looking forward to the day that will happen. ●

TELL US YOUR STORY.

Why do you love being a child sponsor? Tell us at wvmag.org/mystory.

DID YOU KNOW?

Your dollars can go further to help more children in need.

Matching gifts: Hundreds of companies match their employees' contributions to World Vision. Find out if your company is one of them at wvmag.org/matchinggifts.

Gifts that multiply: Because of government grants and corporate product donations, some gifts multiply in impact—for instance, a \$60 donation becomes \$420 worth of life-saving medicine for sick children. Watch a video about how it works, and find a list of ways to give, at wvmag.org/multiply.

Your network: Enable friends and family to give to a cause close to your heart, like clean water or the Syrian refugee crisis. Set up your own fundraising page at mycause.worldvision.org. ●

PACKED WITH LOVE

Gifts to sponsored children must be mailed in a 6 inch by 9 inch envelope, so space counts. We asked World Vision's sponsorship experts how to maximize every inch:



EUGENE LEE/WORLD VISION

Consider including:

- Stickers
- Regular and colored pencils (don't forget the sharpener!)
- Coloring books
- Small puzzles
- Notebooks or pads of paper
- Photos of you and your family
- Bandanas
- Handmade items like small paintings or flat craft projects
- Hair ribbons
- Picture postcards of your hometown

Don't include: Crayons (they'll melt in transit), food, jewelry, money, toys like fake spiders or snakes that could frighten young children.

FIND INFORMATION about where to send your package at wvmag.org/sendgift.

'GOD GAVE ME WHAT I NEEDED'

Once on a feeding tube, a Chicago woman runs for clean water.



MATTHEW BOWIE/GENESIS PHOTOS

Elisabeth Morton was one of the last to cross the finish line during the World Vision 6K for Water in Chicago last year, but she collapsed in joy anyway.

Nobody thought she could finish the race, which raised money for World Vision's clean water work in Africa.

"I fell over in tears," the 28-year-old says, "and it was a great feeling to know God gave me what I needed to cross."

The run was about more than reaching the finish line for Elisabeth, who suffers from an unexplained health condition. Starting in 2012, Elisabeth couldn't eat or drink without excruciating pain, and while her diet contained the fattiest foods possible, she lost half of her body weight. Doctors haven't figured out why.

Just before Christmas that year, she was attached to a feeding tube, which was

replaced five times in 17 months. Throughout it all, Elisabeth's faith radiated to the medical staff around her as she confidently prayed for God's sustenance and healing.

Miraculously, in May 2014, she had improved enough for doctors to remove the feeding tube. Slowly Elisabeth regained weight, but her ability to eat remained restricted. Nevertheless, when a friend at church invited Elisabeth to join the World Vision 6K, she decided to run.

She started running that summer, at first one block. Then a second block. She slowly linked those blocks together, building stamina and raising pledges for clean water in Africa.

By the time the November race day arrived, determination consumed her.

"I have clean water," she says. "I have food, even though it hates me. [Some children] don't. I want to give back."

Despite 20-degree temperatures and extreme wind that sent Lake Michigan waves splashing runners as they raced, Elisabeth persevered. When she crossed the finish line, everyone was amazed.

Elisabeth is training to run the Chicago Marathon with Team World Vision and raise even more for clean water. Her medical condition hasn't improved, but she still sees God's goodness in her life.

"It's a testimony that God is bigger and has a plan," Elisabeth says. "He just asks us to submit to him. I learned a lot about having to rely fully on the Lord to keep you alive every day." ●

—Kristy J. O'Hara

LEARN MORE about Team World Vision at teamworldvision.org.

COURTESY VILLERS FAMILY



CHANGE AGENT

NAME The Villers Family

HOME Chagrin Falls, Ohio

PROGRAM Gift Catalog

“It’s a blessing to know that somewhere, another family’s life will be changed because of the Lord’s generosity in our own family.”

—TRACY VILLERS

Tracy Villers has a heart for giving. “My husband, Jeff, often chides me that I would give away the kitchen sink if he let me, and he might be right,” she says.

The couple sponsored their first child through World Vision in 2009. Since then, their family of sponsored children has grown to include two girls, from Bolivia and Honduras, and two boys—one in Zambia and another in Mali, “who shares a birthday and a love of soccer” with their 8-year-old daughter, Mackenzie.

Last Christmas, the Villers decided to give in an even bigger way than usual. The women in their extended family tradition-

ally exchange small gifts on Christmas Day, and “every year, I would inwardly groan at the prospect of having to add this task to my to-do list, because I didn’t feel that the gifts expressed what they were originally intended to express,” says Tracy. At Thanksgiving, she proposed an alternative: Instead of giving among themselves, the women would use their time and money to give to others through the World Vision Gift Catalog.

They collected \$851, several times what Tracy expected. After sharing the news with family on Christmas Day, other family members also contributed to the total.

Together they purchased the “Dairy Trio” from the Gift Catalog—a goat, a cow, and a sheep. “It was especially meaningful to us because we are a farm family,” says Tracy. “Grandma and Grandpa’s dairy farm still stands, even though they have passed on. It’s a blessing to know that somewhere, another family’s life will be changed because of the Lord’s generosity in our own family.” ●

GIVE A GIFT that matters through World Vision’s Gift Catalog, located between pages 20 and 21.



ROBERT CORONADO/WORLD VISION

WHO’S THAT GIRL?

Meet 6-year-old Chania Niyonyishu, from Burundi in the heart of Africa.

Chania, the youngest of seven children, is the “cover girl” of the 2015 World Vision Gift Catalog.

Behind her cherubic smile, Chania’s an observant and inquisitive child. But this cover girl hardly leads a life of glamour.

Instead, she represents the hopes and dreams of millions of children around the world for whom clean water, education, goats and chickens, medicine, and safety from exploitation are real gifts that last.

Chania lives with her family in northeast Burundi’s Masasu Hill, near the borders of Rwanda and Tanzania.

Small as she is, Chania often tends the fields alongside her mother, Zena Mukeshimana, 46. The family gets by on two simple meals each day, which Zena supplements with food from the market

when she’s earned enough money from farm labor.

Reasons to celebrate are in short supply in Masasu Hill, but a Gift Catalog item such as a goat is one cause for hope. Its manure is turned into life-giving fertilizer. Without it, says Chania’s father, Ramadhan Barengayabo, 49, their harvest of beans, potatoes, and bananas would be negligible.

Chania and her siblings also benefit from child sponsorship. World Vision supplies school materials and uniforms for Chania’s school-age siblings, Zena says.

“There are many things I have as dreams for my children,” Zena says. “I want one of my children to be a medical doctor or ambassador ... to see Chania succeeding in school, to study in country, to go abroad. That would be a big gift.” ●

DON’T MISS the Gift Catalog between pages 20 and 21.

Faith Set Free

By Nathalie Moberg

Photos by Laura Reinhardt



After decades of suppression under communism, **Armenia**, the world's first Christian nation, is returning to its roots. The newest generation of believers leads the way, finding new faith in Christ and in each other.



Despite growing up in an impoverished community, 9-year-old Vahag is rich in faith—and energy.



Menua and his mother, Anush Margaryan, treasure every letter and photo Menua's U.S. sponsors send.



Up four flights of crumbling steps, past laundry drying in the dim stairwell, 13-year-old Menua* and his mother survive in a leaky rooftop apartment that was built for storage. His father died when Menua was 4. But that's not the worst of it. Now the young man is losing his sight.

* Last names omitted to protect children's identity.

No one could blame Menua for resenting the life that is his in Armenia's northwestern city of Gyumri. But he holds no grudges. Instead, the quiet teenager confidently points to what he calls his "holy corner," a small shelf where he keeps coveted reminders of his faith in Christ—a cross, small pictures of Jesus, and religious symbols in the Armenian church.

This is where he prays. And Menua prays a lot—for his mother, for his eyesight, and for his dedicated U.S. sponsors, Rick and Rebecca Torossian, who funded surgery to improve his vision.

Rick, who is of Armenian descent, says the couple sponsored Menua because the boy was growing up without his father.

Menua and the Torossians write to each other often, so when the couple heard Menua needed surgery, they were happy to help pay for the procedure. World Vision social workers visit Menua to make sure he has the basics, such as clothing, food, education, and Christian activities. The Torossians also send an extra amount to Menua for his birthday, which Menua and his mother usually use to buy food.

"To think that a birthday present is food is humbling beyond words," Rebecca says.

Although the surgery didn't succeed, Menua has faith beyond his years. He prays his sight will somehow improve. If not, he will continue to steadfastly cling to a different kind of vision: "I keep my eyes on God. He is my leader."



Nurturing the faith of young people like Menua is a priority for the Armenian Apostolic Church, which seeks to rekindle Christianity after it was nearly snuffed out under communist oppression. The church has a strong partner in World Vision, active in Armenia since 1988. Their vibrant, long-term partnership equips church leaders to serve struggling families, encourages young people to care for those in need, provides clubs and summer camps for the most vulnerable children, and supplies a widely used curriculum that teaches children how to live by faith in Christ.

“Seventy years of communism’s unbelief set the church back 1,700 years to the beginning of faith in Armenia,” says Father Nerses Sahakyan, who serves in Gavar, a collection of remote towns in east central Armenia. “The Apostolic church

alone can’t solve all the problems. But the church, working with World Vision, is stronger in serving the community. We’re walking forward together with big steps.”

Faith in Exile

Throughout Armenia, rock is everywhere. Boulders spew from rolling hillsides. Stone-walled homes, churches, and office buildings fill the nation’s cities and towns. For many, including Menua, life can be as unyielding as stone, a hardscrabble existence that has come to define the aftermath of seven decades under communist rule. If Menua had been born a few decades earlier, even his private prayer corner would have been banned. When the Soviet Union absorbed a war-weary Armenia in 1921, the new government



Armenia’s celebrated Khor Virap Monastery has stood for more than 14 centuries against the backdrop of Mount Ararat.



sent thousands of priests into exile in Siberia. Hundreds of them were killed.

Armenia's ancient church doors slammed shut, except for the sanctuaries converted to serve as government buildings, music halls, even barns. Atheism was strictly enforced at the hands of the KGB.

Father Nshan Panfyorov, who heads Christian education in Gyumri and the surrounding Shirak Diocese, recalls an assignment in his communist grade school. A teacher asked the students to form words from a list of partial words. The young Nshan put together "con" and "fession"—and quickly found the principal interrogating him about how he knew the word "confession." The principal also called his parents into the office, threatening to have them fired from their Soviet-controlled jobs.

"Talking about anything related to faith just wasn't allowed," Father Nshan says. "If you did, you would be shamed by the Soviet government—or even lose your job."

Three generations passed without access to Christian community, education, or sacred gath-

ering places. The government banned Bibles and Christian teaching. Slowly, the once fervent faith faded. Yet in this resolute nation between the Black and Caspian seas, threads of faith remained, however frayed.

Communism's fall in the early 1990s created as many challenges as it solved. For most of the 20th century, Armenians worked in Soviet factories and were thankful to have jobs. But when the Soviet Union collapsed, the factories closed. Hundreds of thousands were left without a source of income. Meanwhile, a conflict with neighboring Azerbaijan erupted, ushering in "the dark years," four years when life's basics—food, water, electricity, and medical care—were scarce.

As the nation plunged into turmoil and unemployment soared, desperate fathers and older sons moved north to Russia in search of work, a migration that continues today. Empty stone houses with missing doors and windows dot the countryside, a testimony to the desperate lack of job opportunities.

In rural areas, nearly every family has lost males to jobs in Russia. Many fathers return



Basic housing remains at a premium throughout Gyumri as the city struggles to recover from the aftermath of communism and the devastating 1988 earthquake.





regularly or at least send money back to their families. But some are never heard from again. Without fathers at home, families often are left in dire need. Mothers care for the children with few resources—and faith frequently takes a back seat to survival.

“More people are leaving for Russia than even in the dark years,” says Father Nshan. “This says something about the condition of hope here.”

Restoring Christian Community

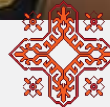
When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, World Vision was already in Armenia, stabilizing families following the 1988 earthquake that severely damaged Gyumri, the nation’s second largest city. In response to dire poverty in post-communist Armenia, World Vision’s emergency response work expanded in the mid-1990s to include child sponsorship. World Vision and the beleaguered Armenian Apostolic Church also joined forces to rekindle the faith in Christ that was doused under communist oppression.

In the mid to late 1990s, waves of young priests emerged from seminary, anxious to restore the Apostolic church in ways that go beyond the confines of the ancient churches and monasteries.

Among these devoted ministers is Father Paren Petrosyan, an energetic 31-year-old who is living his childhood dream of becoming a priest. One day the cleric, who is married like many priests in the Apostolic church, is at World Vision’s office in Gyumri, where women have gathered to soak up biblical wisdom on marriage



Tatevik wears traditional dress in church, a reflection of Armenia’s return to its core Christian values.



“Talking about anything related to faith just wasn’t allowed.”

— Father Nshan Panfyorov



and family life. The next day he is miles away in Marmashen village, walking house to house, assisting families in need. Just about every household in the community is in need of his encouragement and guidance.

Father Paren participated in World Vision's Celebrating Families program, an intense training that equips priests to live out their ministry as Jesus did—among the people. He covers 11 villages—more than 1,000 people total—and tries to visit each home every few weeks. He also teaches Sunday school and leads youth clubs. Then there are liturgies, baptisms, weddings, funerals, and church events. The priest admits he gets tired. When he does, he reminds himself of his calling to serve others.

“Each moment that I’m delegated to go, it’s not me who’s going. It’s God,” he says.

On this day, Father Paren arrives at the weathered home of a family whose mother and older brother are working in Russia. They send home what amounts to about \$100 a month.

The oldest sister, 22-year-old Geghetsik, is



Father Paren Petrosyan shares a blessing with 22-year-old Geghetsik, who is raising her five siblings while her mother works in Russia.

a confident stand-in for her mother. A few years ago, when she was a sponsored child, World Vision provided Geghetsik with training to become a hairdresser, a skill she now uses to earn income.

“I mainly do hair for friends in the community,” Geghetsik says. “They pay a small amount of money for this, but it helps.”

Three younger children are still sponsored. They participate in World Vision summer camp and Christmas and Easter celebrations. The family relies on a cow, a calf, 30 hens, and two roosters to keep food on the table—all provided by generous U.S. donors.

Seven people live in the family’s tiny house, crowding into three beds in one small room. A single light bulb dangles from a blackened bedroom ceiling, the rustic wood floor rests uncertainly on dirt, and one dusty window lets in weak light. The house has no water—except when the rain leaks through the sagging roof. The family has lived like this for more than 18 years.

As Father Paren approaches, the children

step forward for his blessing. They are happy to see him, and the priest listens to the children to discern if they have issues at home or school that he can help them address.

“When families don’t have enough for a stable life, parents often don’t want to be a part of society,” he explains. “In many cases, the children don’t want to go to school because they don’t have normal clothes and are ashamed. But the parents are doing the best they can.”

Here, he says, is one place where World Vision’s presence is especially critical, providing essentials like school supplies, games, and transportation to events so vulnerable children can just be children.

As the conversation between priest and children concludes, it’s time to play. Father Paren lifts his cassock to his knees and kicks a ball with 9-year-old Vahag. Their delight rings out across the pastureland—another reminder of God’s presence in this isolated community.

Miracle in the Making

Following the 1988 Gyumri earthquake that claimed at least 25,000 lives, thousands of homeless families moved into government-supplied shipping containers that had little insulation to ward off Armenia’s bitter winters. Nearly 4,000 people still live in these containers because, more than 25 years after the temblor, there still isn’t enough affordable housing for all displaced families.

While the government couldn’t come up with a solution for these families, faith-fueled youth have. Working jointly with World Vision and the Apostolic church, Gyumri’s youth are raising the funds to purchase basic condominiums at no cost to desperate families.

The 50 youth, ages 15 to 24, comprise a group known as the Charitable Union, which was founded at Gyumri’s Seven Wounds Church. Some of the 35 females and 15 males live in poverty themselves. Even so, when the youth saw the dire needs of families still living in shipping containers, they decided in 2013 to launch an effort some called crazy.

They found a Christian businessman willing to fund the cost of producing custom pocket calendars. Then the youth went to work, scouring the Gyumri region for individuals willing to pay \$1 in exchange for a pocket calendar. The goal of the project—christened “One Card = One Home”—was to raise \$15,000 to buy a condominium for a family.



Gor Torosyan leads the youth effort to secure housing for families in poverty, including 3-year-old Arman’s household.

Gor Torosyan, who at 26 leads the Charitable Union and the One Card = One Home campaign, is relentless in his dedication to helping families in poverty. “Faith to us Armenians is something sacred,” he says. “Based in the values we receive through faith, we have the wish, the desire to make positive changes.”

World Vision works alongside these young Christian men and women, encouraging their vision, training them in leadership skills and project management, teaching them how to network, and helping to spread the word about their project across the country.

With newly acquired savvy, initiative, and even some television coverage, the youth raised more than \$15,000 one dollar at a time—and





even had extra funding for the next condominium they would give away. They screened each family that applied for the first home, selecting the final family by lottery.

Soon the youth were collecting funds to purchase a second home, but this time without a lottery. Instead, the youth pre-selected an extremely destitute family of four to receive the next condominium. This family lived in a 20-foot metal shipping container without even a bathroom. Family members bathed in a tub near a small stove.

In Armenia, when loved ones are about to bathe, family members often say “Have a sweet bath.” But the family’s 5-year-old son objected to this tradition when he took a bath in his shipping container home. “It isn’t a real bath,” Hayk would insist.

The stove was the only source of heat for the uninsulated container, and the family burned anything they could find to stay warm—paper, cardboard, even old clothes people gave them. After Hayk and 3-year-old Arman were born, life became even more challenging in the tight quarters, with the toddlers burning themselves on the stove. The area surrounding the container also was unsafe, filled with garbage and debris.

Artyom, Hayk’s father, moved into the container following the 1988 earthquake, when few houses were left standing. Tehmine joined him there in 1994, after the couple married.

Nearly two decades later, the couple could see no way out. Artyom wanted to work but has a disability. Tehmine used to work as a kindergarten teacher until the school closed. She now stays home to care for her children and husband.

All her life, Tehmine dreamed of having a house with a living room, kitchen, and bathroom. So when representatives from Charitable Union arrived last December with the keys to the family’s new condo, Tehmine was overwhelmed by this gift of a home without a mortgage—and more than she ever dreamed she’d have, with a bedroom and a balcony.

“I’ve always believed in miracles,” Tehmine says, “and I know this is from God. I can’t thank God, the young people, and World Vision enough.”

Hayk, now sponsored, smiles when his mother tells him to have a sweet bath. His brother, Arman, is waiting for a sponsor. Artyom is looking forward to the possibility of surgery when the family can afford it. This would allow him to return to work.

Now the Charitable Union youth are raising funds to purchase yet another home for a family living on the edge of survival.



“Now as they learn, they also are excited to share what they’re learning with their parents.”

— Karine Harutunyan



Above: Vahe is one of thousands of Armenia’s children growing in faith as he uses World Vision’s *Christ to the Children* materials.

Faith Unleashed

Despite communism’s best efforts, faith is no longer locked behind closed doors in Armenia. It’s flowing out of the Apostolic church into streets and homes and classrooms. This growth ensures younger generations embrace truth, families see Christ’s love in action, and God’s presence is reflected not only in churches, but in homes and schools as well.

The road to recovery has not been easy. Whatever frail faith survived through seven decades of communism was passed down from parents to children—without the support of Bibles, teaching materials, or a priest’s guidance. As highly educated priests emerged from seminary and church doors reopened in the 1990s, one thing was still lacking: teaching materials for children.

World Vision supplied churches with Bibles and worked with Gospel Light Publishing to develop *Christ to the Children*, an age-appropriate series of creative Christian education materials geared for children ages 6 through 16.

“These books gave us the chance to have strong Sunday schools,” Father Nshan says. “Now the children themselves ask for more. Even in summer and on holidays they want to be learning more about living out their faith.”



Facing page: Teenagers visit Holy Mother of God Church in Gavar to light candles and pray.



The Apostolic church uses *Christ to the Children* not only in 130 Sunday schools but also in some public classrooms. Each year, approximately 150 Sunday school teachers across Armenia participate in World Vision’s Sunday school training, learning new ways to support faith among the younger generation. Because teaching Christian faith in public schools is legal in Armenia, more and more public schools also are using *Christ to the Children* in the classroom.

Meanwhile, children flock to World Vision’s popular summer camps that build faith and provide strong Christian role models for the children—priests and young Christian mentors like Misha Poghosyan (see his story on page 36).

“For 70 years, Armenian children had no Christian education,” says Karine Harutunyan, a World Vision faith and development adviser. “Now as they learn, they also are excited to share what they’re learning with their parents.”

Standing on the Rock

With Christian education and activities blossoming across Armenia, one priest predicts this is the beginning of a “renaissance” for the Apostolic church. Priests encourage parents and children alike to gather not just on Sundays but throughout the week to support one another, celebrate life, and grow in faith.

In 1991, an estimated one Armenian in 100 could say the Lord’s Prayer. “But now,” says the Very Reverend Father Aris Tonoyan of the celebrated Khor Virap Monastery, “the church is shaking with the sound of children saying the Lord’s Prayer. We are moving forward with great intention.”

The ancient Armenian symbol of Christianity is a cross that sprouts leaves, a poignant reminder of the flourishing life that comes for those with the confidence that God is with them. The faithful



Right: Even when school is out for the summer, boys and girls gather regularly to learn more about God using *Christ to the Children*, which is translated into Armenian and several other languages.



**TO HELP
A CHILD
GROW**
spiritually,
see the
envelope
between
pages
4 and 5.

know that when they turn to the budding cross, they will always have hope.

That cross sustains Menua as he faces potential blindness, Father Paren as he serves tirelessly in vulnerable communities, and Gor as he leads youth in the seemingly impossible effort of providing families with decent homes.

And the Rock they stand on isn’t the unyielding stone native to Armenia but the firm foundation of Scripture: “Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord himself, is the Rock eternal” (Isaiah 26:4). ●



World Vision serving in
ARMENIA

27,494 **470,054**

Sponsored children

Direct beneficiaries

214

Communities World Vision serves

PRAY AROUND THE WORLD FOR CHILDREN

BY DENISE C. KOENIG

We invite you to pray along with World Vision for these requests, which come directly from our staff serving in the field. Hear our prayers, O Lord.

LATIN AMERICA

Pray for the safety of children in Latin America who are affected by political, gang, or domestic violence. »

Dear Savior, in the Word we read that you are called “Prince of Peace.” Let this revelation become a reality for societies and homes in turmoil so children feel safe. May your peace heal relationships in these communities and families. Amen.

MIDDLE EAST

Pray for the children of the Middle East whose lives and educations have been disrupted by war and displacement. Pray that we don't lose this generation of children. »

Gracious Father, let Syria and Iraq's children experience your loving presence when fears or memories torment their minds. Help their parents and aid organizations find ways for them to continue their schooling and make up missed lessons. Keep this generation from being lost to poverty and despair. Amen.

ASIA

Pray for Christian youth in Asia serving in ministries for children who struggle without adequate food or education. »

Lord of the Harvest, we lift up to you Christian young people who are seeking to serve you by ministering to other children who have few resources or cannot attend school. Encourage them in their faithfulness as they demonstrate your love. Amen.

AFRICA

Pray for the children throughout Africa participating in World Vision Kids Clubs. »

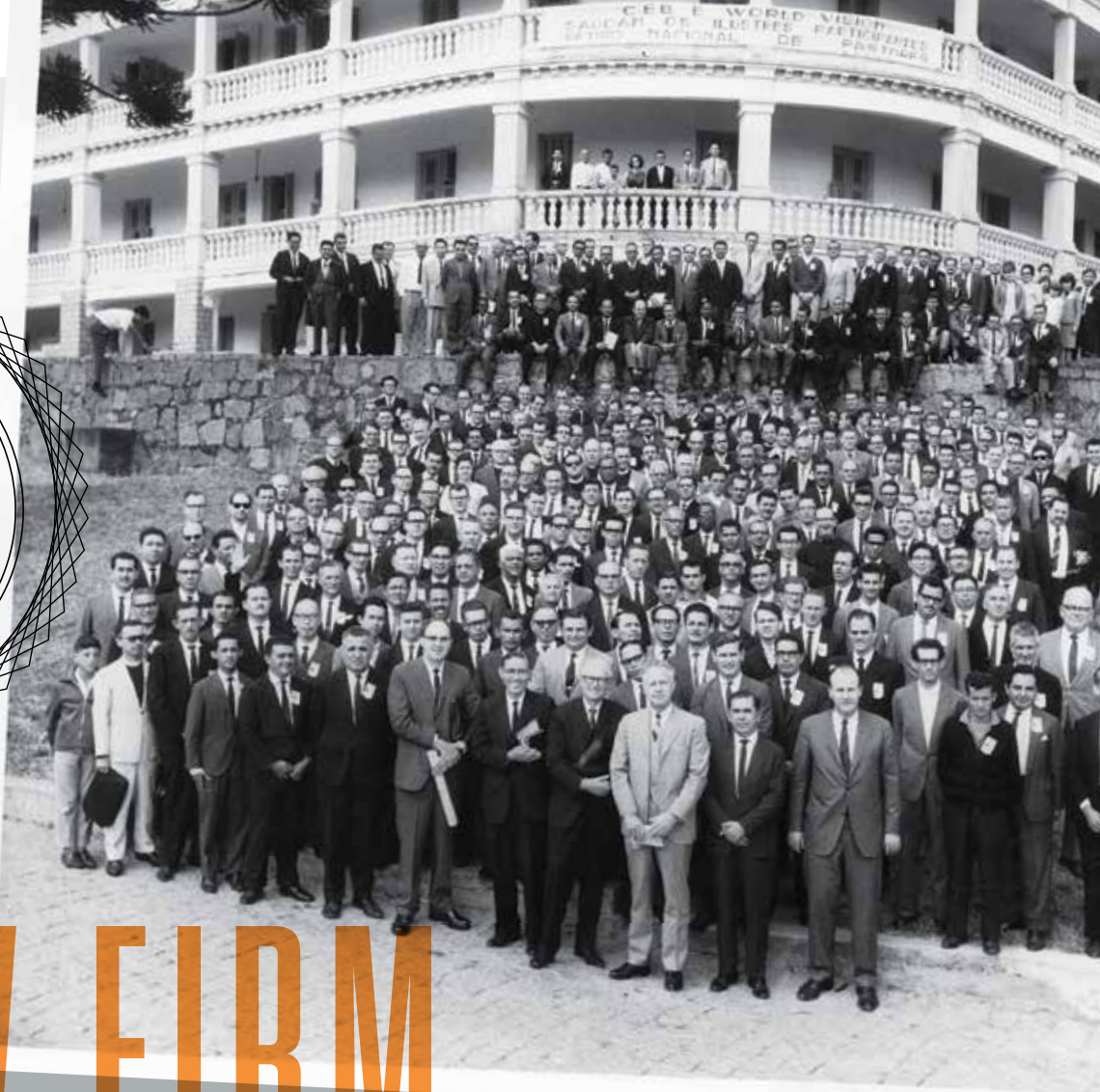
Christ Jesus, we are so grateful that you allow us to help establish Kids Clubs in many communities so children can be nurtured in your love. Bless these children's young faith as they learn about you. Amen.



Pray for Christian adults and children in multi-faith communities worldwide. »

Heavenly Father, we believe in your providence that you have placed Christians in multi-faith communities to be salt and light. Let them be conveners of neighbors who work together in peace for the good of all children and families. Let people see you clearly through their acts of caring and friendship. Amen. ●

Join our Hope Prayer Team and receive a monthly email guide to praying for World Vision's work around the globe. Sign up at wvmag.org/prayer.



HOW FIRM A FOUNDATION

A World Vision pastors conference in Brazil, 1966.

BY MARILEE PIERCE DUNKER

One man's vision for missionary partnership became a worldwide partnership with one missionary vision.



WORLD VISION ARCHIVES

This year World Vision celebrates its 65th anniversary. • Sixty-five years of partnering with the Church to share the good news of the gospel with a world in need. Sixty-five years of serving those for whom Christ died.

Sixty-five years of responding to emergency needs in the midst of wars, famines, natural disasters, and political and financial upheavals. Sixty-five years of fighting disease, malnutrition, and drought.

Sixty-five years of seeing God provide and guide and answer the prayers of his people for wisdom and strength in the midst of the battle. Sixty-five years of blessings from faithful supporters who give sacrificially to build God's kingdom.

Over the years I have often been asked what my father, Dr. Bob Pierce, would say if he could see the many ways the ministry he

began is serving those living in poverty today. In acknowledgement of the amazing ways God laid our foundations and in expectation of the greater things yet to come, it is an appropriate time to answer that question.

World Vision's history is tightly interwoven with the history of modern Church missions. While Bob Pierce is honored for founding this great organization, he would be the first to say that he did not do it alone. Generations of God's faithful servants laid the foundation with their sacrifice and witness. And thousands of churches, missionaries, volunteers, donors, and staff helped him to build on it.

ENGAGING THE BODY OF CHRIST

1950-2015

1950
North American churches respond to Bob Pierce's appeal for Korea

1951
As a U.N. correspondent, Bob Pierce reports from Korea for the American Christian press



1953
Pastors conferences start, first in Korea*

1955
Pastors conferences start in Taiwan, Philippines, Vietnam



1956
Pastors conferences start in Indonesia

1957
Evangelism events in Philippines, Korea

1958
Pastors conferences start in India, Singapore, Ghana, Myanmar

1959
Pastors conferences start in Malaysia, Thailand; evangelism event in Japan

* Pastors conferences recur in all countries mentioned

AS A BOY

CHALLENGED IN CHINA

As a boy, my dad was inspired by the great missionary Hudson Taylor, who first took the gospel to the interior of China. In 1947, he followed in Hudson's footsteps throughout inland China to preach the gospel as an evangelist with Youth For Christ.

In his memoirs, Dad admits to being nervous as he stumbled through his first sermon in Shanghai's Moore Memorial Methodist Church. But God blessed the young preacher's message, and he began to sense a fresh anointing and purpose.

"This is God's time in China!" he wrote to my mother on Aug. 3, 1947. "These people are so needy, so hungry for the gospel, that even a nobody like me can, under God, do so much that I doubt I will be willing to just 'go through the motions' of evangelizing in America again."

In Amoy (now called Xiamen), Dad spoke at a girls' school run by Dutch Reformed missionaries. It was there that a missionary named Tena Holkeboer challenged him to do something about the needs of a little girl named White Jade. The child had been beaten and disowned when her family learned she had become a Christian. Tena asked the question that would ultimately change the world for millions of children: "What are you going to do?"

Missionary Elmer Kilbourne, whose family was serving with the Oriental Missions Society in China at the time, witnessed Dad's response: "He emptied his pockets. It was only about \$5, but he promised Tena he would send more

when he got home," Elmer said. "The problem was he had no money to *get* home. I had to sell his camera equipment and personal belongings in order to buy him a ticket."

Dad's "White Jade moment" wasn't the only way God would challenge his heart. Everywhere he went, he met missionaries who were doing extraordinary things to share the love of God in practical, life-changing ways. Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Anglicans, Catholics—on the mission field, the labels didn't matter. The power of the Body of Christ in action was not lost on the young evangelist.

One of the unforgettable people he encountered was Beth Albert, a medical missionary in China. When Dad met her, she was single-handedly caring for 80 lepers who were forced to live in an abandoned cemetery. Unable to get her denomination to support them, Beth influenced locals to help provide the outcasts with medical care and food. As a result of this literal expression of God's unconditional love, nearly



World Vision's early work in India included a milk clinic in Calcutta.



1961

Evangelism event in Japan; pastors conferences start in Argentina

1962

Pastors conferences start in Guatemala

1963

Pastors conferences start in Brazil, Chile, Paraguay

1964

Pastors conferences start in Pakistan

1965

Pastors conferences start in Peru, Bolivia

1967

MARC Communications Center begins publishing world missions data

1968

Pastors conferences start in Kenya, Mexico, Panama

1969

Pastors conferences start in Sri Lanka, Portugal



1960

Pastors conferences start in Barbados, Colombia

every man, woman, and child had come to faith in Jesus Christ.

My father was deeply moved by what he saw. This time *he* asked the question: “What can I do to help?”

SERVANT OF THE CHURCH

Since then, Bob Pierce made it his life’s work not only to share the gospel, but to raise support for the “unsung heroes of the Cross”: missionaries working in impoverished places with inadequate support; people laying down their lives to feed the hungry and care for widows and orphans in Jesus’ name; Christians standing for their faith under tremendous persecution; and pastors struggling to shepherd and care for their congregations.

Dr. Han Kyung Chik, founder of Young Nak Presbyterian Church in Seoul, Korea, was one of those courageous pastors.

My father met this man who would become his lifelong friend, mentor, and co-worker when he was invited to hold evangelistic meetings throughout the Republic of Korea in the volatile weeks before the war began in June 1950. Tens of thousands of frightened people flocked to hear the hopeful message of salvation as the dark clouds of communism gathered threateningly along the 38th parallel. And thousands came to Christ.

Two weeks after Dad arrived back in the United States, the war broke out. Desperate to see what was happening to the pastors and church members he had come to care for so deeply, he

returned to Korea as a U.N. war correspondent, representing Protestant church media outlets. His intent was to report on how Christians were impacted by the war. The first person he looked for when he reached Seoul was Pastor Han.

Han Kyung Chik was already organizing his congregation to care for the increasing numbers of refugees flooding into Seoul and, once again, my dad offered to help by raising funds and awareness.

On Sept. 22, 1950, World Vision became a legal nonprofit. Its purpose was to share the gospel and channel funds to help the poor through existing missions organizations and churches like Young Nak Presbyterian.

How World Vision partnered with the churches of South Korea to meet the needs of orphans, widows, and refugees during and after the war is one of the great stories in Church history. Because many pastors had met my father, they trusted him with the needs of their congregations and accepted his offer to help. It is believed that one out of four South Koreans were helped in some way through the emergency aid, children’s and widows’ homes, hospitals, leper clinics, schools, training centers, and churches World Vision helped build, staff, and support in the decades to follow.



1970
Pastors conferences start in Tanzania

1971
Pastors conferences start in Guinea, Bangladesh

1972
Pastors conferences start in Uganda, Vanuatu

1973
Love Loaf fundraising launches for U.S. churches; pastors conferences start in Ecuador

1974
Evangelism events in Cambodia, Philippines; Lausanne Congress in Switzerland; pastors conferences start in Australia, Sudan, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Honduras

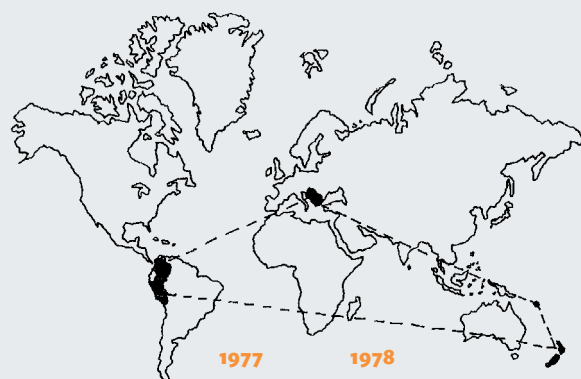
1975
100th pastors conference in Korea

1976
Pastors conferences start in Ethiopia

1977
Pastors conferences start in Fiji, New Zealand, former Yugoslavia

1978
Pastors conferences start in Burkina Faso, Malawi, Hong Kong

1979
Pastors conferences start in Poland, Haiti



MY FATHER'S

UNFORGETTABLE FELLOWSHIP

My father's concern for the well-being of Korea's pastors would also lead to one of World Vision's most significant, foundational ministries: World Vision's pastors conferences.

After Seoul was taken by the communists, many people fled south to the city of Pusan, including many church leaders. Pastor Han would later describe their desperate situation: "These pastors had lost everything: their parishes, homes, and often their families. They were struggling to live just like everyone else. Still they tried to help their people. Many felt lonely and discouraged."

Pastor Han shared the great weariness he saw among his colleagues with my father, and Dad immediately set out to arrange for as many pastors as possible to gather for a week of rest, fellowship, and spiritual renewal.

Approximately 100 ministers attended that first historic conference. The meetings went from 4 in the morning till 9 at night. Men who had hardly spoken to one another before the war now found themselves laughing and crying together and encouraging one another in the Word. When the second World Vision Pastors Conference was held at Young Nak Church after the war, more than 3,000 pastors came from all over South Korea.

Over the next 30 years, World Vision made pastors conferences one of its top five organizational priorities. Drawing on the knowledge and experience of the greatest theologians and pastors of the time, World Vision held an aver-

age of six conferences a year, eventually serving 62 countries and 122,000 pastors. And today, World Vision offices still organize times like these to empower the local church.

As my father traveled throughout Asia to preach and serve, his urgent message about the crisis in Korea often inspired pastors and churches in other countries to give as well as receive.

The William Carey Baptist Church in Calcutta (now Kolkata), India, became World Vision's first international support partner in 1951 after hearing Dad share about the desperate needs of Korea's suffering children. While the congregation was unable to give much financially, the youth agreed to go to the docks to repack donations from North America being sent through Calcutta on their way to Korea. As a result of this unusual partnership, Dad began raising funds for the church's outreaches to those suffering and dying in Calcutta's slums.

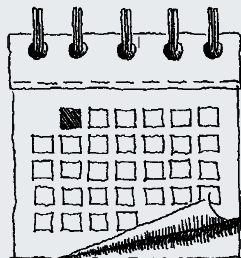
World Vision opened an office in India in 1957 on the campus of this historic church, and the senior pastor, Dr. Walter Corlett, became our first national director. Today, World Vision still has a project office on the church property. The partnership with the church William Carey founded remains the longest in World Vision's 65-year history.

HANDS AND FEET

And so the vision grew from country to country, church to church, and need to need. Never before had an organization been created to

1980
Annual Robert W. Pierce Award created to honor missionaries

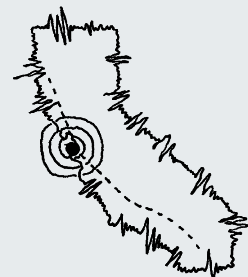
1981
Day of Prayer annually sets aside Oct. 1 for prayer in all World Vision offices; pastors conferences start in Egypt



1983
Pastors conferences start in Hungary

1984
Pastors conferences start in Zimbabwe

1985
Retreat for urban pastors in Chicago; refugee Vietnamese pastors gather in California



1989
Lausanne II in Philippines; response to San Francisco earthquake through U.S. churches; pastors conferences start in El Salvador



WORLD VISION ARCHIVE

Dr. Bob Pierce and Dr. Han Kyung Chik address a conference in Korea.

“See, I lay a foundation stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who relies on it will never be stricken with panic.”

—ISAIAH 28:16

serve the worldwide Church in quite this way. Because of the unique interweaving of various ministries and denominations, World Vision grew with exceptional speed. The foundation upon which our work stands today bears the handprints of thousands of churches, missions organizations, and servants of God who gratefully responded when Bob Pierce asked that all-important question, “What can World Vision do to help?”

My father’s prayer, “Let my heart be broken with the things that break the heart of God,” became a rallying cry for a new generation of missions-minded youth. And thousands of young men and women committed not only their hearts but also their lives to serving Christ through his ministry.

Today, World Vision works in nearly 100 countries around the world, providing emergency relief, bringing clean water and other necessities, addressing the root causes of poverty, and advocating in the highest halls of justice for the poor. Child sponsorship, once focused on orphans living in group homes, is



1990

Pastors conferences start in Dominican Republic, Moldova, Nigeria, Zambia

1991

Pastors conferences start in Romania

1992

30 Hour Famine engages church youth to fight hunger; response to Los Angeles riots through local churches; pastors conferences start in Bulgaria

1993

Pastors conferences start in Ukraine

1994

Pastors conferences start in Democratic Republic of the Congo

1995

All-denomination pastors conferences continue through the decade in West African countries

1996

Reconciliation workshops begin for pastors in Rwanda after the genocide (photo at right)

1997

Pastors conferences start in Chad, Czech Republic

JON WARREN/WORLD VISION



today blessing more than 4 million children and their communities who benefit from wells, sanitation, food resources, schools, clinics, and microenterprise loans. I believe that my father—a great man of vision—would heartily approve of this long-term approach to breaking the cycle of poverty.

But World Vision is no longer led by one man’s vision. A dynamic, international partnership of dedicated men and women offer their talents, energy, and passion to help World Vision fulfill God’s call to bring “life in all its fullness” to the world’s impoverished children. In most cases, staff work in their home countries, speaking the language and understanding the culture and needs of the people. This, too, would bless my father’s heart.

In a 1957 magazine interview, Dad said, “The day of the foreign missionary is over. If the world is going to be won for Christ, it will be through national pastors and workers.” Today, more than 45,000 committed workers represent the Lord as the hands and feet of Jesus through World Vision.

But the truly important things have not changed. World Vision is still committed to sharing the gospel and finding ways to grow, serve, and empower the Church of Jesus Christ at home and around the world.

A program called Channels of Hope, operational in more than 90 countries, continues my father’s vision of partnering with local pastors, churches, and ministries to find the most effective ways to share our faith. Another program,

Celebrating Families, empowers church leaders to strengthen relationships within families. And through World Vision’s work, more than 4.7 million children worldwide benefit from this spiritual nurture. As the testimonies from Armenia’s youth illustrate (see page 14), we are helping to equip a new generation of “world changers” to be bright lights in the darkness.

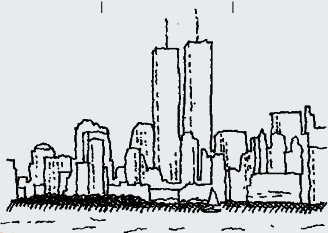
What would my father say about World Vision 65 years later? I believe he would challenge us to keep our eyes on Jesus. And borrowing words from the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 3, I believe he would say:

I planted. Others watered. But God kept everything growing ... For we are God’s co-workers, and World Vision is his building. As an expert builder using the grace that God gave me, I laid the foundation. Now others are building on it. Let each generation be careful how it builds. And always remember, no one can lay any other foundation than the one that is already laid, and that is Jesus our Lord. ●



ADAM ARKIN/WORLD VISION

Since 2001, **Marilee Pierce Dunker** has served World Vision as a speaker and an international ambassador for children. She is the author of *Man of Vision: The Candid, Compelling Story of Bob and Lorraine Pierce, Founders of World Vision and Samaritan’s Purse.*



2000

Hope Initiative engages U.S. churches to address the AIDS pandemic

2001

Response to 9/11 attacks through New York City churches

2004

Hope Tours encourage U.S. pastors to mobilize on AIDS



2005

Faith in Action Study Bible published with Zondervan

2006

Menlo Park Presbyterian Church begins assembling hygiene kits for AIDS caregivers

2007

Faith in Action campaign kit equips U.S. churches; experiential AIDS exhibit travels throughout U.S.; Youth Bible Curriculum provided to former Eastern Bloc countries

2009

Rich Stearns’ book *The Hole in Our Gospel* is a call to action for the U.S. church

UNSUNG HEROES

Since 1980, World Vision has honored missionaries with the Robert W. Pierce Award for Christian Service, continuing the founder's passion for encouraging those who quietly serve in Jesus' name around the world. Just a sampling of these amazing servants of God:



SANJAY SOJIMAL/WORLD VISION

BENIGNO BELTRAN

Honored with the Pierce Award in 1998, Father Beltran pastored a church in the Smokey Mountain community near a garbage dump in Manila, Philippines. His encouragement and activism enabled Smokey Mountain residents to rise above their poverty.



RANDY MILLER/WORLD VISION

DR. BISHARA AWAD

Born in Jerusalem and educated in the U.S., this Palestinian Christian founded the Bethlehem Bible College in the West Bank in 1979 in order to prepare followers of Jesus for service in Arab churches and society. He received the Pierce Award in 1999.



ROBERT MICHEL/WORLD VISION

ANGELA MWAMBA MIYANDA

Honored with the Pierce Award in 2002, the wife of a former vice president of Zambia felt God's prompting to establish an orphanage and transit center in Lusaka—a haven for abused, abandoned, and homeless children.



JON WARREN/WORLD VISION

REV. SAW MOO PE

The 2001 honoree, a pastor and evangelist in Myanmar, was mentored by Bob Pierce at the beginning of his ministry. Saw Moo and his wife spread God's Word in places where Christians were rare, and he remained strong in his faith despite persecution.



JON WARREN/WORLD VISION

SISTER AROUSIAG

After the fall of communism, Middle East-born Sister Arousiag moved to Armenia. She ran a school and orphanage in earthquake-devastated Gyumri that provided a safe place for children to live all year round. This advocate for children was honored with the Pierce Award in 2003.

2010

Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelism in Cape Town, South Africa; Church Partnership for Child Well-Being project launches

2011

"Journey to Jamaa" film deepens congregations' understanding of AIDS

JON WARREN/WORLD VISION



2015

Experiential exhibit enables U.S. churches to follow Jesus into the margins



TO CONNECT YOUR CHURCH
with World Vision, visit
worldvision.org/church.



LAURA REINHARDT/WORLD VISION

RAISING THE BAR IN ARMENIA

A FORMER SPONSORED CHILD LEADS A YOUTH MOVEMENT TO HELP OTHERS.

BY NATHALIE MOBERG

In a tiny room tucked in the basement of St. Jacob's Apostolic Church in Gyumri, Armenia, women and girls are hunched over a table, diligently working yarn and fabric together to fashion traditional Armenian dolls. More than just a craft, the dolls help to fund a nonprofit that is improving the lives of children and youth across Armenia's second largest city.

Gyumri is filled with crowded living spaces, utilitarian storefronts, too many pitted dirt roads, and decaying concrete skeletons of former buildings the government can't afford to raze. All are constant reminders of the 1988 earthquake that heaped devastation on top of the region's chronic poverty.

This city's young people have always known Gyumri this way. Yet one young man who isn't willing to accept the status quo is raising the bar for the city's youth. Misha Poghosyan, founder of the nonprofit organization that sells the traditional dolls, is an energetic 24-year-old whose wide-ranging interests include catering and fashion. But Misha has one overriding passion: to encourage and equip Gyumri's vulnerable young people with faith and vision for a new future.

A former World Vision sponsored child, Misha was born in 1991, the year many Armenians lost their jobs when Soviet factories collapsed alongside communism.

“Everybody was in need here,” says Misha, who was sponsored at age 9. “But because I was sponsored, I got to go to World Vision’s summer camp. I had many good talks with a priest at the camp. The values I share with children today come from these talks.”

Even as a boy, Misha was captivated by the World Vision social workers who regularly visited to see how they could help him, his two siblings, and parents. “I wanted to become like them,” he says.

Years later, that dream is coming to fruition. While Misha was still a teenager, priests noticed his enthusiasm for faith and mentoring children. He was invited to lead the Young Church Lovers Union, a children’s club at St. Jacob’s.

Soon Misha wanted to do more for these children—to give them healthy meals, new games, and field trips so they could learn about the world. To fund his vision, volunteers created the Armenian dolls and sold tickets to open-air movies.

It wasn’t long until Misha’s entrepreneurial spirit and big heart led him to World Vision’s office in Gyumri. He met

with Christian Witness Manager Arman Muradyan. In the midst of their conversation, Misha shared with Arman how the club was made up largely of children who are orphans or growing up in impoverished families.

Arman invited Misha to partner with World Vision—the same organization that supported him through sponsorship years earlier. Arman subsequently helped Misha establish his own nonprofit organization, today known as ARM strong—“ARM” for Armenia.

The young man with a bachelor’s degree in photography and theater arts soon was at the helm of both the Young Church Lovers Union and ARM strong.

“The church youth club does projects related to the church and traditional values,” Misha explains. “ARM strong is doing youth empowerment—getting youth involved in raising awareness and activities that address the community’s need.”

ARM strong members organize community training, fairs, and activities that promote healthy families, such as child protection, first aid, environmental care,

“Those letters were the happiest part of my life. My sponsor was the motivation for me to reach further.”

—MISHA POGHOSYAN

and—most of all—faith. Misha, known among his peers for his polished dress and styled hair, also uses his regular local radio show to urge people to love and care for one another.

While Misha seldom slows down, no salary comes with his community-building efforts. He still lives with his parents in their tiny apartment, which helps to reduce the amount of income he needs. What he does earn comes once again from his deep well of creativity. “This is the interesting part of my life,” he says with a grin.

Economic development is among World Vision’s work throughout Armenia, assisting those with good ideas and lots of energy to start small businesses. So when Misha decided to launch a catering business that would employ local residents, World Vision assisted him. Now the business provides catering at local weddings, forums, and other large gatherings. Some of the profits also generate a small income for Misha and others.

Once in awe of World Vision’s social workers, Misha now works alongside them as he encourages Gyumri’s children and youth. He credits his sponsor with keeping hope alive for him when he was younger.

“Those letters were the happiest part of my life,” he recalls. “My sponsor was the motivation for me to reach further.” ●



Laura Reinhardt/World Vision

Misha Poghosyan (opposite page) devotes his life to encouraging young Armenians as they follow Christ. Volunteers fashion handmade dolls (above) to help support Misha’s work.

TO SPONSOR A CHILD fill out the form between pages 4 and 5 and enclose in attached envelope, or go to wvmag.org/sponsor.

Our Creative Best

BY ADDIE ZIERMAN

When World Vision asked me to join a blogger trip to Armenia, I almost didn't go.

Extreme poverty makes me feel powerless, and I hate feeling powerless. It forces me to struggle with God's goodness and my own privilege. I was afraid that if I went to Armenia, if I came face to face, day after day, with that systemic and generational poverty, I would leave feeling guilty and defeated.

That's not what happened.

Don't get me wrong—I did see poverty. I met a family who lived in an old shipping crate. The father spent his days searching for kindling—any kind of kindling—to keep them warm. The mother was younger than me.

There was a woman who struggled to keep her seven children warm and fed in a two-room shack; there was an older couple whose ceiling was caving in and who walked, along with their 12-year-old son, several miles a day to clean other people's barns for what amounted to about \$1.40 a day.

I saw poverty.

But I also saw a hundred brilliant creative assaults on that poverty.

There is a small catering business that formed as a result of a World Vision class on food design. They served us fruit that looked like flowers and showed us pictures of them catering weddings—supporting their families by serving pretty platters of Armenian favorites to brides and grooms.

In Armenia, World Vision is teaching communities how to dry local fruit and connecting them to chocolatiers who buy it. They are teaching mothers how to cook healthy meals with cheap ingredients, how to stretch their resources, how to take control.

Someone had the idea to build a greenhouse by a school, and the students are learning to plant, reap, and sell their produce. Someone else started a computer class where students learn programming and robotics, becoming equipped to find a job in an up-and-coming IT center of Armenia.

A group of World Vision-sponsored teens also formed a club to help their community. Their many-pronged approach to poverty includes puppet theater, libraries, food baskets, and a campaign in which young people roller-skated around their city, asking people to exchange their cigarettes for apples.



LAURA REINHARDT/WORLD VISION

“Each of you must take responsibility for doing the creative best you can with your own life.”

— GALATIANS 6:5
(The Message)

Addie Zierman expected to see poverty in Armenia, but she found so much more.

In Armenia, poverty wasn't the dominant narrative. Creativity was.

In The Message Bible, Eugene Peterson translates Galatians 6:4-5 like this: “Make a careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then sink yourself into that. Don't be impressed with yourself. Don't compare yourself with others. Each of you must take responsibility for doing the creative best you can with your own life.”

I always believed that to fight poverty, I had to give more, more, more. I imagined that The Need was a giant vacuum, and that if I let myself care too much, it would suck up everything I had.

But the truth is that the war on poverty isn't really about more money, more resources, more energy. It's about having the courage to offer your “creative best” in the face of great need. It's about courage to look pain straight on and see not hopeless-

ness but possibility.

It's an act of subversive creativity to offer a class on food design in a community where just getting enough bread is a challenge. To look at wintering fruit trees and see not death but dried fruits in chocolate. To take a bag of cheap staple foods and say, “This is what we have. But there is so much we can do with it.”

I went to Armenia expecting—and fearing—I would see hopeless poverty. What I actually saw was what can happen when people respond to that poverty with their creative best.

And that's something any of us can do—both here in our own neighborhoods and at the far reaches of our broken, beautiful world. ●

Addie Zierman is a writer and speaker. She holds an MFA from Hamline University and is the author of *When We Were on Fire: A Memoir of Consuming Faith, Tangled Love and Starting Over*. She lives in Minnesota with her husband and two sons and blogs regularly at addiezierman.com.

THE STORY BEHIND THE PHOTO

LIFE FRAMES



NICARAGUA

Often the picture of severe malnutrition is a child from Africa with a thin body or distended belly. However, in Central America the issue can go unnoticed, even by mothers. At first glance, 5-year-old Nicole appears to be normal, but she is short for her age and extremely underweight. At the start of her Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food treatment she weighed only 23.8 pounds. (For comparison, my son of the same age weighs 40 pounds). I saw Nicole after she had been eating the fortified peanut butter paste for three weeks. Her weight was on the upswing, extreme fatigue was a thing of the past, and hope was now part of her future. ●

Written and photographed by Eugene Lee
Nikon D800, 50mm lens,
1/200th, f/2.8, 200 ISO

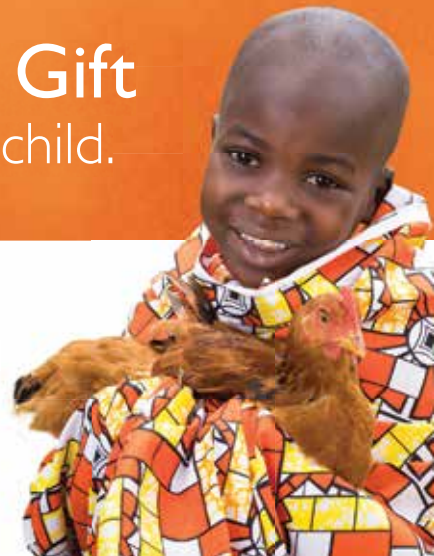
**LIFE
FRAMES**

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Go to myworldvision.org to send your Special Gift.



2

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3

Gifts* are purchased locally and delivered by World Vision staff.



4

You get a personal thank-you note and photo from your sponsored child!

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or call 1.800.423.4216.

*Special Gift minimum is \$100. When gift amount exceeds \$200, the portion beyond \$200 will be used to benefit the entire community. Special gifts are not available as an option for Cambodia, China, Kenya, Mozambique, and Myanmar.



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World Vision, Inc.
P. O. Box 70172
Tacoma, WA 98481-0172

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
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