

# WorldVision



WINTER 2023

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## Life abundant

How simple gifts  
unlock a future full  
of promise

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WORLD VISION'S GLOBAL  
DISASTER RESPONSE

22

NEW DREAMS FOR  
FAMILIES IN RWANDA





# Christmas gifts THAT GROW

Send your love to your sponsored child this Christmas with a Special Gift of \$100 or more. Our local staff connect with their family to find out what they need most and then purchase the gift. You'll get a thank-you letter and photo once the gift is delivered!

**Give your Special Gift today!**

Call 1.800.423.4216 or visit [myworldvision.org/SpecialGift](https://myworldvision.org/SpecialGift)

To help ensure your gift goes as far as possible to help meet the unique needs of your sponsored child and their family, each Special Gift must be \$100–\$200. Any amount over \$200, and 25% of gifts under \$200, will go to help your child's community. Delivery time of Special Gifts varies and cannot be guaranteed by Christmas due to the many gifts given during the holiday season.

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## ON THE COVER

Samanta, 6, in Guatemala is thriving now that her family received pigs donated through World Vision's Gift Catalog. LAURA REINHARDT/WORLD VISION

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## EXPLORING OUR WORK

Each icon below corresponds to an area of World Vision's work. Use these to guide you topically as you explore this issue.

- Child protection
- Child sponsorship
- Christian faith
- Clean water
- Disability inclusion
- Economic empowerment
- Education
- Emergency response
- Gender equality
- Health
- Hunger and food security
- Poverty in America
- Prayer
- Refugees

"I find it beautiful to be able to save money."

—Claudia





# Water for the win

By Edgar Sandoval Sr.

**IMAGINE THE ENERGY** of a sold-out sports event, like an NFL championship game. Excitement ripples through the crowd, punctuated by chants and cheers. Every time the home team scores, the fans go wild, as if points on the scoreboard could make their lifelong dreams come true.

That was the mood at an unforgettable event I joined in Kageyo, Rwanda, earlier this year. Throngs of people filled two massive tents and more spilled out onto the surrounding hillsides. They were there for speeches and testimonials, prayers and praises, live music and dancing. I found myself in a sea of kids wearing World Vision—orange shirts. Together we raised our fists and joyfully chanted “ONE MILLION!”

This was a celebration better than any championship game.

Why? We were celebrating the milestone of World Vision reaching 1 million people across Rwanda with access to clean water. Everyone here was a winner! These families now enjoy a water point within 500 meters of their home, instead of a source that took them hours to get to. And clean water flows in their schools, health facilities, and churches.

I visited a health center where the mere turn of a tap was a sign of impact. Previously, expectant mothers had to bring their own water to deliver their babies because the facility couldn't provide it. Higher school attendance records were another sign, showing that students are in class instead of out gathering water or ill from waterborne parasites. And at a local church, the pastor told me how critical handwashing stations have become in enabling his congregation to feel

Edgar joins thousands of excited people at a celebration in Kageyo, in Rwanda's Gicumbi district, as they enthusiastically chant “one million!” to celebrate 1 million people receiving access to clean water in Rwanda.

safe from disease as they greet one another. In these simple but significant ways, clean water is truly a game-changer, as its impact continues to grow across the community.

The greatest impact promises to be for the kids I met, like 13-year-old Merci. Merci told me that ever since she was a small girl she has had to walk hours to collect water for her family. She was often late to school and fell behind, putting her at the bottom of her class. Now, with a water tap right near her home, she's not just thriving in school—she wants to become a doctor! (Read more about Merci's family on page 22.)

Children like Merci have so much potential, limited only by their circumstances. What makes the difference is the people who invest in them and cheer them on. That's what you do as a child sponsor or when you give the gift of clean water through the World Vision Gift Catalog. Those gifts grow in impact. Access to essentials like clean water levels the playing field, empowering kids for achievements like finishing their education and discovering their God-given gifts. Further empowered by strengthened families and thriving communities, kids have a shot at becoming the champions we believe they can be.

And as we do this work together in Jesus' name, we demonstrate the truest meaning of victory—especially significant at Christmas—that Christ came to usher in a new kingdom where hope wins. In the words of 1 Corinthians 15:57, “Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

It's success when babies are born safely in a clean, sanitary delivery room. It's a win when churches are able to protect their congregants with handwashing stations. And it's a triumph when a bright girl goes from doubting she can finish school to dreaming of becoming a doctor. But the biggest prize of all is transformative faith in the One who defeats our earthly troubles and invites us into everlasting life with Him. 🙌

**Edgar Sandoval Sr.** is president and CEO of World Vision.

**FOLLOW HIM ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

📧 @EdgarSandovalSr  
📷 @EdgarASandovalSr



The lions may grow weak and  
hungry, but those who seek  
the Lord lack no good thing.  
—PSALM 34:10

# Embark

COME IN AND SEE THE WORLD

Travel the globe this  
Christmas season to see  
how children and families  
around the world celebrate  
by visiting [wvmag.org/  
Christmas-photos](http://wvmag.org/Christmas-photos).



## Niger

As part of World Vision's pivotal work to upgrade health facilities in this West African country, the clinic near this little one's home in Dosso now has clean water, bathrooms, and electricity, making it safer and better able to serve the community. The baby's mother is part of a class that teaches life-saving nutritional skills to mothers of malnourished children.

At the same time, Niger needs prayers, as the country has been in turmoil since a military coup on July 26, 2023. At press time, Nigerien president Mohamed Bazoum was being held prisoner by the military junta that deposed him.

JON WARREN/WORLD VISION







*THE AMAZON BASIN INITIATIVE SEEKS TO BENEFIT 10 MILLION PEOPLE AND RESTORE 25 MILLION HECTARES IN SIX COUNTRIES—BOLIVIA, BRAZIL, COLOMBIA, ECUADOR, PERU, AND VENEZUELA—OVER THE NEXT SEVEN YEARS.*



## Brazil

World Vision's Amazon Basin Initiative seeks to ensure sustainable livelihoods for vulnerable families through climate-smart and bio-economic food access. In Brazil, World Vision staff also distribute food baskets to vulnerable populations who often pick supplies up by boat.

Despite living in one of the world's most biodiverse regions, less than 50% of the population has access to clean water, and 7 out of every 10 children under the age of 5 suffer from chronic malnutrition, a figure that's even higher among indigenous children.

WORLD VISION STAFF IN BRAZIL





WORLD VISION  
ASSISTED OVER

**29.6M**

DISASTER SURVIVORS,  
REFUGEES, AND  
INTERNALLY DISPLACED  
PEOPLE WORLDWIDE  
IN 2022.



## Mongolia

World Vision distributed life-saving food and supplies to 3,000 low-income herding families in Mongolia during the 2023 dzud—a weather phenomenon characterized by extreme winter conditions following a dry summer, often leading to mass livestock death. Dzuds used to occur about once every five years but have been happening more frequently and with greater severity. Herders make up 80% of households in rural Mongolia and are at high risk of losing their livelihoods during winter.

CHOIJID DUL/WORLD VISION











MD QAZI SHAMIM HASAN / WORLD VISION



## Bangladesh

A teenage boy douses his shelter with water after a fire spread in a Rohingya refugee camp in March 2023. The Rohingya are a mostly Muslim minority ethnic group from predominantly Buddhist Myanmar. The refugee camp in Cox's Bazar is the largest in the world and home to more than 960,000 people—half of them children—who fled what the U.N. has described as genocidal violence following decades of persecution and human rights abuses. The fire destroyed more than 2,000 shelters and left 12,000 refugees homeless again. The fire also destroyed healthcare centers, learning centers, water sources, places of worship, and a Child-Friendly Space. World Vision has been working alongside the local government and U.N. agencies since 2017 to provide emergency care and improve living conditions in the camps and host community.

WORLD VISION HAS HELPED  
MORE THAN

**265,000**  
ROHINGYA REFUGEES WITH  
LIFE-SAVING ASSISTANCE.



**SCAN THE CODE**

to learn how to  
pray for Rohingya  
refugees.



## COVER STORY | 12

Learn how simple gifts of pigs and chickens are making a life-changing difference for families in Guatemala.

# Discover

EXPLORE THE ISSUES FACING PEOPLE IN POVERTY

Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always. Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced.  
—PSALM 105:4–5

## Syria

Following the 7.8 magnitude earthquake on February 6, 2023, that affected at least 15.7 million people in Türkiye and Syria, World Vision worked to distribute much-needed heaters to people now living in camps. The disaster damaged the residences of at least 855,000 people in Syria to varying degrees, with 265,000 people needing shelter after losing their homes. The earthquake also exacerbated the effects of the ongoing war in Syria, deepening the crisis for approximately 3.7 million children.





WORLD VISION SYRIA CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM

# RESPONDING AROUND THE WORLD:

Restoring hope in over 50 countries through emergency response

By Sevil Omer

 Armed conflict, natural disasters, and other emergencies can upend the lives of children in an instant, especially in places where they're already vulnerable because of poverty. With a presence in nearly 100 countries, World Vision responds swiftly to humanitarian crises worldwide, ensuring access to critical necessities like food, clean water, hygiene and cooking kits, cash vouchers, child protection services, and more. In 2022, World Vision responded to 58 disasters in over 50 countries, including the war in Ukraine and the global hunger crisis.

World Vision also assisted over 80,000 children and adults in the United States through disaster response efforts in 2022. This map highlights some of the places outside of the U.S. where we've supported children and families affected by disasters both widely reported and lesser known. 

**Join World Vision in responding to disasters around the world. To learn more, see the insert between pages 18 and 19.**



IN FY22\*:

**29.6M+**  
people reached

**14.7M+**  
children reached

**16.1M+**  
women and girls reached

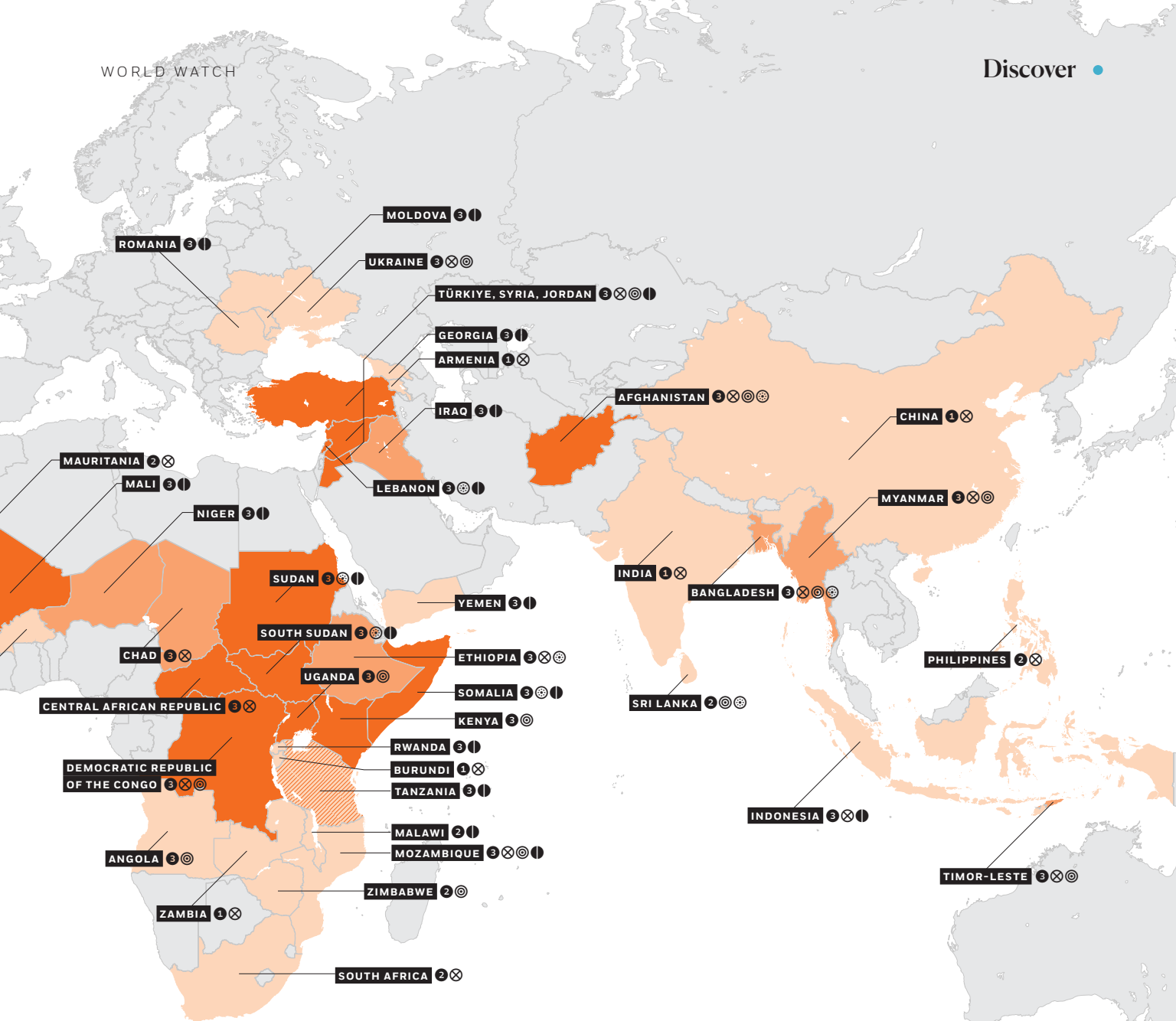


SCAN THE CODE

to explore more about World Vision's global emergency response work.

\*Initially reported FY22 figures have been adjusted following data review and validation with national offices.





## MAP KEY

**3 CATEGORY III** are the most severe crises, where societies are unable to respond and recover without large-scale external assistance.

**2 CATEGORY II** are significant humanitarian crises that impact large numbers of people in societies that can respond and recover with limited external assistance.

**1 CATEGORY I** are community-level or subnational crises with localized impacts, where the community is able to respond and recover with some assistance.

**⊗ RAPID ONSET** refers to a sudden, unexpected disaster like an earthquake or a significant new conflict.

**@ SLOW ONSET** describes emergencies that grow gradually over time, including events like droughts.

**⊕ COMPLEX** refers to a crisis caused by a mix of factors, both natural and human-caused. When different hazards come together, they create a more complex humanitarian situation, making people even more vulnerable.

**ⓘ SUSTAINED HUMANITARIAN RESPONSES** are emergency responses that last longer than two years, often due to ongoing conflict. These responses typically include a wide range of support, from providing life-saving essentials like food, clean water, and healthcare to ensuring ongoing support for education, livelihoods, and more.

PEOPLE REACHED

UNDETERMINED

UNDER 300K

300K TO 750K

OVER 750K





Claudia and her 5-year-old daughter, Valery, pause to pray.





# THE



STORY AND PHOTOS BY



# BLESSING



LAURA REINHARDT



# CHAIN







📍 Nestled in the mountains of northeastern Guatemala sits the community of Alta Verapaz. From its high vantage point, the views are spectacularly tranquil: distant hills look blue, while up close, lush greenery fills the landscape.

Alta Verapaz means “high trail of peace,” and on the surface, this really does seem like an idyllic place to live. But the families who make their home here paint a picture of their daily lives that’s anything but peaceful.

Alta Verapaz is one of the poorest areas in Guatemala, with more than 8 in 10 people living in poverty—and more than half in extreme poverty. It’s also been affected by prolonged drought in recent years. Many people who live here are farmers, but soil erosion makes it difficult for families to grow crops.

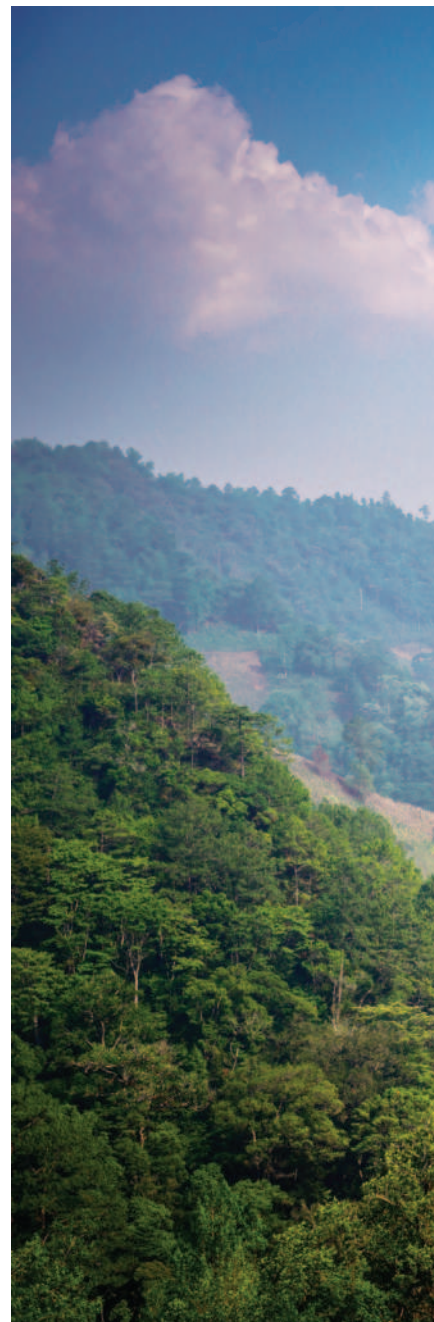
Claudia, a mother in the community, offers a personal perspective on those statistics: “The main struggle I have as a single mother is how to feed my children,” she says. Her youngest—a 5-year-old named Valery who’s almost always ready with a smile—is tiny for her age because of the family’s lack of access to food. Seven years ago, Claudia’s husband moved out to start a new family with someone else, leaving Claudia to raise their children alone.

World Vision first began working in the Alta Verapaz area after Hurricane Eta caused devastating landslides in 2020. That’s often how World Vision’s work in a community begins: in response to natural disasters or other emergencies, when help is urgently needed. But after the emergency has passed, the work

doesn’t abruptly end; instead, our local staff stay to help communities rebuild and equip families to thrive. This long-term development work is made possible through community-wide child sponsorship, which began in Alta Verapaz in October 2021.

Following its proven model of community partnership, World Vision began working alongside local leaders and families to help identify and address some of their most challenging issues.

In Claudia’s community, those challenges included weather-related food insecurity and chronic health issues. To help meet immediate needs, World Vision provided many families in the community with food supplies during a dry season, when the need was most urgent. But staff also began working with the community to focus on solving the problem in the long run through improved farming techniques. To begin addressing some of the chronic health issues and the soil erosion, families were also equipped with high-efficiency wood-burning stoves, which helped them limit the amount of smoke in their households and decrease the amount of wood used for cooking. That has meant healthier families, free from respiratory issues caused by smoke, and a healthier environment that’s filled with trees.







### **Global impact fact**

Nearly 96,000 donors gave animals and other gifts through World Vision's Gift Catalog in 2022.



## • Discover

As the Alta Verapaz community made progress with the support of child sponsors, World Vision staff and community members were able to shift their focus to the future—toward empowering families for self-sufficiency, which is always the goal of World Vision child sponsorship. This includes opportunities like animal rearing, which allows parents to begin increasing their economic resilience.

In November 2022, opportunity arrived for Claudia in the form of a chicken. And it came in a surprising way, as hope often does—through another family in her community, who had received animals through World Vision.



### Transformation through animals

Each year, generous supporters donate items through World Vision's Gift Catalog, including animals such as goats, alpacas, sheep, chickens, and pigs. A gift of animals can help struggling parents better provide for their family by offering a steady source of much-needed nutrition from eggs, meat, or milk. Over time, families can also build their income as they sell their animals' offspring.

In Alta Verapaz, pigs are the preferred option since they thrive in the area's high altitudes and bring in higher profits than other animals. Juan Carlos Chavac, who oversees Gift Catalog distributions

**Sound saving techniques allow Ilse and Marco's family to enjoy a variety of foods.**



in Guatemala, says that raising pigs increases a family's resilience by helping them earn a steady income, which allows them to set money aside for any difficulties or emergencies that might arise.

To ensure maximum impact and good stewardship of donors' gifts, World Vision staff use carefully chosen criteria to select participants who will be most likely to succeed in raising animals. For a family to receive Gift Catalog pigs and training, the mother and father need to work together, and the family must own the land where the pigs' shelter will be built.

That left Claudia and her kids out—at first.

After her husband left, Claudia struggled just to feed everyone—13-year-old Daisy, 11-year-old Heiser, 5-year-old Valery, and herself. She was receiving 300 quetzals (about \$38) in monthly child support, but the payments weren't always on time. Without steady employment, she would begin every day with a search for work. Sometimes she did laundry or other chores for people in the village. Sometimes she worked in the neighbors' fields. And sometimes she would deliver food to other people working in the fields. She made herself available for whatever work came up. And to save money on expenses, she and her family moved in with her sister.

Unlike Claudia, Ilse and Marco met all the criteria for raising pigs. As a fare collector on local buses, Marco had





Samanta, 6, and Jaylini, 8, can look forward to a promise-filled future.

steady work to help support their three children: 8-year-old Jaylini, 6-year-old Samanta, and 18-month-old Kaylin. The couple didn't always have enough income to cover unexpected expenses, but they were willing to work together as partners.

World Vision knew about the family's needs through the child sponsorship program in Alta Verapaz. Since the organization's staff and volunteers are local, they live in the community and build relationships with individual families—so they know who faces the most need, and

who would thrive with the right resources.

Ilse was thrilled at the prospect of gaining security through raising pigs. “When I was selected,” she says, “I felt really happy to be on the list.”

But before the pigs arrived, the family needed to prepare to ensure they'd be able to raise the animals successfully. Ilse attended a 9-month animal husbandry training, which covered how to build a home for the pigs, how to care for them, how to clean the shelter, and what vitamins the pigs would need to



Jaylini feeds the family's pigs.



## • Discover

grow healthy. She also attended Biblical Empowered Worldview trainings. This curriculum begins by focusing on the fact that people are children of God and therefore capable of amazing things. But it also emphasizes that we're stewards of what we're given, which includes our environment and our families. "I learned to pray for the family, for the children, for what we received, and for what we had," says Ilse. "Before, I barely prayed."

Finally, World Vision helped families like Ilse and Marco's prepare to welcome their pigs by supplying the materials to build the shelter.

In May 2022, Ilse brought home her first piglet. She shared the knowledge she'd gained about cleaning the shelter and feeding pigs with her two older girls. Over a year later, she still manages most of the care, but Jaylini and Samanta help. Recently, Ilse sold her full-grown pig and used that money to purchase two piglets,

doubling her earning potential. She'll raise these ones to adulthood, too, and as the sows give birth she'll continue to increase her revenue.



### **A mindset of saving**

As part of World Vision's Gift Catalog program in Guatemala, families who receive animals are also enrolled in savings groups. Through the group, participants learn why and how to save



**Claudia cares for her chickens.**



money and then move on to basic entrepreneurship instruction, such as how to invest money for business opportunities.

Ilse had never really considered saving before. When she had a little money, she spent it on her family because she didn't realize how a small amount could add up. But after the training, she embraced the concept. She started by saving 5 quetzals (about 64 cents) in twice-a-month meetings.

"Before the pigs, it was hard for us because we didn't know how to save," says Ilse. "Thanks to the project, we know about saving. With the money we save, we can buy supplies for the family."

That includes school supplies for her two older girls, medicine if anyone gets sick, and a variety of nutritious food so the family can eat a balanced diet.

"Before, I wasn't able to buy fruits or vegetables for my daughters," Ilse says. "Now [we] can have a variety of foods. I can cook different meals every day."

Continuing to reflect on the positive changes, she says, "Before, it was hard ... I would borrow money or ask my sisters-in-law if they had any [money] in their home."

Thankfully, the days of living on the edge are gone. Ilse now has a safety net and can think about the future in ways she never dreamed of.

Thanks to her entrepreneurship training and the savings she's managed through selling pigs, she's purchased chickens that are yielding nutritious food and income for her family too!



### A blessing chain

From the beginning, each participant in World Vision's animal program in Alta Verapaz, including Ilse, knew that they would share the wealth with their neighbors. One of the program's goals is to create a ripple effect of giving within the community by having participants share some of what they've gained with families who haven't participated yet—a "blessing chain," as Ilse calls it.



The community is free to decide how this will work. In Ilse's savings group, members decided that each person would save 500 quetzals (around \$64) to benefit another family. Through their training, participants learn that pooling their money with the money of others allows them to reach more people in ways that are most beneficial to them.

At first, such a sum seemed daunting to Ilse. But thanks to the training and her initial success with saving, Ilse began to see how saving 500 quetzals might actually be possible. And she wanted to be generous: "God put in my heart to bless someone that was in higher need."

So Ilse embraced the lessons she'd learned, saving the 500 quetzals to gift to others. She also put away 185 quetzals, or nearly \$24, to put toward more livestock or any family needs.

According to Juan Carlos, when World Vision looks to begin the blessing chain, its staff and community volunteers identify families experiencing food insecurity or other challenges. The staff in Alta Verapaz saw how Claudia was struggling to feed her children—noticing how hungrily her daughter Valery ate the lunch they brought when they came for a home visit. So they added Claudia's

**Small investments through savings groups can lead to big changes.**



☀☀☀☀☀☀☀☀

“I FIND IT  
BEAUTIFUL  
TO BE  
ABLE  
TO SAVE  
MONEY.”

☀☀☀☀☀☀☀☀

- CLAUDIA

family to the program’s list of potential “blessing” recipients.

The money Ilse and others in the savings group had saved was pooled to purchase chickens for Claudia and other families. Chickens are a great option for the most vulnerable members of a community because of their quick growth cycle and relatively cheap cost to raise.

“I was really grateful to hear that I was going to be [included],” Claudia says. “As soon as I heard my name, I ... started building the coop!”



### Blessed by chickens

Just like Ilse, Claudia attended a training run by World Vision staff and became a member of a savings group. The group introduced her to the power of saving and gave her access to critical financial services like loans. Each meeting started with a prayer and a Bible verse—a practice Claudia now shares with her children at home. After prayer, the group moved into learning how to raise and care for chickens. When she finished the 9-month training in late 2022, Claudia

received 10 chickens, containers for food and water, and chicken feed and vaccines to keep her birds healthy.

Since then, she’s faithfully cared for her flock with support from her kids, who love the chickens and help by cleaning the coop and collecting water.

“The benefit for me is that when I have a chicken to sell,” says Claudia, “I can buy corn or whatever my family needs.”

In the mountainous climate of Alta Verapaz, breeding chickens is easier with an incubator, something World Vision hopes to invest in for families as the Gift Catalog project continues. For now, the best way for families raising chickens to grow their flock is by selling a chicken and purchasing younger ones at a lower price. Claudia has already been able to sell a couple for nearly 79 quetzals, or about \$10, each. For each one she’s sold, she’s been able to purchase two younger chickens.

As these young chickens reach maturity, Claudia will be able to continue increasing her flock in this way, benefiting from a more stable, dependable source of income. And the improvements she and her family are seeing are likely to continue: Valery was recently matched with a child sponsor, whose gifts will help provide funding for World Vision’s many other local programs. Through this gift-pooling model, all the community’s families and kids—whether sponsored or not—get a boost toward a brighter future.

As Claudia’s savings continue to grow, she’s experiencing more financial freedom. She’s been able to not only buy daily necessities like chicken feed, but also to move her kids out of her sister’s house and into their own home, paying construction workers to fix up a house using money from child support and a loan she received through the savings group. She says, “I find it beautiful to be able to save money.”

Equipping parents to provide a better future for their children is the heart of what donors can do through World Vision’s Gift Catalog



Savings helped Claudia and her kids to have a home of their own.





Valery likes to help take care of the chickens.

and child sponsorship program. Claudia can now dream in ways she was never able to when she was struggling to make ends meet.

“I see my future [being] to continue growing my birds and probably breeding birds,” she says. “I want to continue working [to support] my children. And for my children, I hope to see them well educated, healthy, and strong.”

Donors and child sponsors play an essential role in this gift that keeps giving as they provide the first link in the “blessing chain,” whether by giving an animal from the Gift Catalog or sponsoring a child.

Ilse says, “If I had the donor here in front of me, I would tell them, ‘Thank you. Thank you for your kind heart. Thank you for letting me be touched by your kindness and helping me share my blessing with someone else.’”

May more and more links be added to the blessing chain, empowering people around the world to live abundant and joy-filled lives. May more families overcome obstacles and gain opportunities through the animals gifted by World Vision donors. And may parents like Claudia, Ilse, and Marco in Alta Verapaz find the peace that their community’s name represents. 🍎

## Gifts that GROW

**Empower families like Claudia’s to leave poverty in the past through your gift of animals.**

See the insert between pages 18 and 19, call 1.888.852.4453, or visit [wvmag.org/give-animals](http://wvmag.org/give-animals).

Even at nightfall, Merci, 13 (in pink hoodie), and her friend, Sada, can safely fill up jerrycans with clean water at a World Vision–installed community water tap just moments from their homes.

# The Sound of new dreams

## FINISHING THE JOB IN RWANDA

BY KARI COSTANZA • PHOTOS BY JON WARREN







## Global impact fact

World Vision has equipped more than  
**1 MILLION RWANDANS** with access to clean water.

### THE SOUND OF A NEW DREAM IS

the protracted scrape of a trowel and the wet plop of cement against a mud wall. The pattern continues—the cement-filled trowel, raspy and rhythmic, scraping and plopping, adding percussion to the sounds of the day. On this sunny morning in Kageyo, in Rwanda’s Northern Province, sixteen men are at work transforming 44-year-old Juvenal Ngaruye’s home into a dream house for his family—cementing the mud walls before painting them his favorite colors, yellow and blue. The house, situated on one of Kageyo’s dirt roads, is abuzz with activity as one of the men empties a heavy bag of cement into a bucket to mix with water. In a nearby wheelbarrow, four jerrycans of water wait: none for drinking, none for bathing, none for cooking—all to be used for home improvement. Clean water is plentiful—not just here in Kageyo, but everywhere World Vision works in Rwanda. It’s a far cry from how things used to be in a village where water was as scarce as a man’s dreams.

### SOUNDS OF THE PAST

The sounds of Juvenal’s teenage years were nothing short of horrifying. Life was already difficult for his family. His parents had sold land to pay for his schooling, supporting his dream of teaching someday. “But at some point,” he says, “there was nothing to sell anymore.” Then, in April 1994, he witnessed the genocide against the Tutsi, a 100-day period during which more than a million people were killed, many by machete. “At



**Juvenal remembers the Rwandan genocide, growing up poor, and having to leave school.**

school, they sent us back home,” says Juvenal, who was 15 at the time. “People were being killed outside. People kept running and trying to hide. It was very scary.” The sounds one can never forget. “If you had neighbors being killed, they had to fight for their lives,” he says. After the genocide, Juvenal worked on other people’s farms to

help provide food for his impoverished family. With each passing day spent tilling the soft, dark soil, his dream of becoming a teacher gently died.

On Sundays, he attended an Anglican church. That’s where he met his wife, Olive, 39, a warm presence with a ready smile. “He was very brilliant,” she says. Olive encouraged her husband to finish high school. “If she had not supported me,” Juvenal says, “I would not have gone back to school.” It took three years, but he graduated in 2012. During that time, Olive worked in other people’s gardens to support the family, which had grown to include two children: a son, whom they named From God, and a daughter, Merci. The family was often hungry and weak, with both food and water hard to come by.

In those days, the early morning sounds could be unsettling as Juvenal would walk to collect water for his family—the first of many water walks each day. He’d leave at 3 a.m., hoping to avoid long lines at the spring where people gathered. He’d find a flashlight, grab a jerrycan, and start walking. Rwanda is known for its many hills. “Sometimes I would fall,” he says. “I would also be afraid of meeting an animal or [robbers].” He remembers



**“WE HEARD THAT AT WORLD VISION, YOU BUILD INFRASTRUCTURE  
AND MAKE SURE THE WATER IS THERE.”**

**—PRIME MINISTER ÉDOUARD NGIRENTE OF RWANDA**

the sounds of wild dogs and other animals. “Sometimes I would hear a snake and feel my hair going up on my head,” he says. Even the grass made noise. “There were rumors of a leopard. That made us scared. Any noise I hear[d], I thought it was a leopard.” During the rainy season, things were even more difficult: Juvenal would sink into the mud in the darkness, barely able to see what he was doing. “When I was fetching water, I wasn’t sure of the water I was collecting,” he says. “I didn’t know if it was clean—if it had insects.”

Sometimes Merci went next, collecting water before school. If she arrived late to class, the teacher would punish her. It affected her grades. “At school, I didn’t perform well,” she says. “I used to fail in class.” In those days, it was quiet at their home. “We didn’t play with other children,” she says. “We didn’t have the energy.” Olive and Merci would walk together for water after school. The afternoon sounds were different—a hubbub of angry noises as children competed with adults for water. “There would be many people from different places who would come to fetch water,” says Merci. “The ones with strength would be the ones who would fetch water. People would push each other. Those who were weak would wait.”

### **A CHANGE IN TIMBRE**

Life would have played on in its minor key but for something that happened in April 2018. Prime Minister Édouard Ngirente of Rwanda held a critical meeting with World Vision’s



**Caring for an impoverished family was challenging, but Olive never stopped believing in her husband.**

then-president, Richard Stearns. The men concluded their meeting at a conference table, polished until it shined, beneath a colorful mural depicting a Rwandan man dancing. “Some NGOs can only do infrastructure but not provide water,” said the prime minister, his voice deep and melodious. “We heard that at World Vision,

you build infrastructure and make sure the water is there.”

Rich leaned forward to share World Vision’s goal: to “finish the job”—a 5-year plan to provide clean water to everyone, everywhere World Vision worked in Rwanda. “We will encourage you to continue because your goals are our goals,” the prime minister told Rich. The two men knew that reaching universal water coverage at this scope was an ambitious goal. It would set up Rwanda to become the first country in Africa to achieve universal access. World Vision’s share of the work would be to provide an estimated 1 million people with access to clean water. Completion of the water systems would be several years away, but the seeds of hope were already planted—including at Juvenal’s house in Kageyo.

### **THE SOUNDS OF HOPE**

Hope came quietly, as tears make no sound. It all began when From God was sponsored. Child sponsorship brings funding for much-needed improvements decided on by the community. Sponsored children enjoy a special connection to their sponsors, but all children in the community benefit from the system of community development that sponsorship makes possible.



**“THE FIRST DAY I GOT WATER, I FETCHED 40 JERRYCANS.  
I WASN’T SURE THE WATER WOULD STAY.”**

– JUVENAL

Volunteers from the community monitor the well-being of sponsored children and non-sponsored children alike and spread the word about new programs to their parents. That’s why Juvenal joined a World Vision development program in 2020. Its aim—to move people out of poverty. By now, the family had two more children to provide for, Bless and Sifa, and had also taken in an orphan, Jean Bosco, the same age as From God.

As part of the program, Juvenal and Olive learned new farming techniques and how to market what they grew. They were also trained in Biblical Empowered Worldview, a signature program that has yielded tremendous results. Biblical Empowered Worldview teaches people that they are made in the image of God and emphasizes the importance of loving your neighbor. Participants put that knowledge into practice when they join savings groups. Generally composed of 15 to 25 people, these groups meet regularly to contribute savings and lend money to one another. “They told us every time we have a savings group, you should have a relationship between you and God—[and] love one another,” says Olive. “Whatever you do, do it for others.” Juvenal agrees. “The small group makes us feel more connected to one another.”

While these are truths that the couple had heard in church for many years, Biblical Empowered Worldview gave them a chance to live them. At the end of the program, they received a cash transfer of 60,000 Rwandan francs, about \$60, and rented land to plant maize. The crop was successful, earning the family \$120.



**A born teacher, Juvenal reads in English to his family at home.**

Juvenal had never had this much money in his life. He brought it home to show Olive. Listening to her husband recount the story, she laughs at the memory. “I was excited because we got the money. We sat down and decided to grow beans.” After the harvest, Juvenal brought the beans home, filling the house. There were

so many beans. “When she saw the beans in the house,” he says, looking at Olive, “she cried tears of joy.” The beans brought in 600,000 Rwandan francs—\$600. The family was beginning to dream. But they were still without clean water.

### NEW SOUNDS IN KAGEYO

In 2022, hope overflowed with a thunderous whoosh. Two water taps were installed just down the road from Juvenal’s house. The family, relaxing on two couches in the living room, recalls that first day of clean water. From God, 17, Merci, 13, and Bless, 7, are still dressed in their school uniforms. Two-year-old Sifa is wearing a dinosaur costume and dances between her mother’s and father’s laps, singing to herself. “The first day I got water, I fetched 40 jerrycans. I wasn’t sure the water would stay,” says Juvenal. “Now I get two.” Having the water taps close to home means his days no longer start at 3 a.m.

For Merci, it means no longer going to school late, getting poor grades, and feeling that her life had no future—that she would always live in poverty. “For me, I would think it would always be my fate,” she says. “There was no water near.” A few years ago, Merci could only manage to get between 30% and 40%



**“I FEEL I HAVE NOW A BETTER LIFE COMPARED TO THE LIFE  
I HAD BEFORE. NOW I WANT TO BECOME A DOCTOR.”**

**— MERCI**



**With food and water plentiful, Merci is now second in her class. Even her dreams have changed from being a farmer to becoming a doctor.**

on her exams. “It hurt me because my grades were deteriorating, and I knew I could do better.” Today she is ranked second in a class of 62. As she speaks, her baby sister, Sifa, continues to twirl around the room. “I never did that when I was little,” she says, nodding to her happy-go-lucky sister. “I feel I have now a better life compared to the life I had before. Now I want to become a doctor.”

### HOPE FLOWS

Merci can focus on education now, as her school has clean drinking water. Before, students were required to bring their own water, a nearly impossible task. And girls faced additional challenges. In the past, a girl would go home when she had her period, missing school for up to a week. World Vision partnered with the school to create a room for menstruating girls equipped with running water, hygiene supplies, and a bed topped with a soft cotton quilt. School attendance has increased—all due to clean water.

The health clinic next door to Merci’s school has also gotten clean water with support from World Vision—and it, too, has been transformed. Before, the clinic relied on rainwater, which was captured on the roof and ran through pipes into a holding tank. “It was difficult,” says Aaron Dusabe, 44, who manages the health center and its 19 staff, including nurses, midwives, and support staff. “You can’t give patients rainwater to take medicine.”

The health center, which serves more than 20,000 people, including Merci’s family, was forced to buy water—

an expensive proposition. Mothers in labor were encouraged to bring their own water for delivery—water that was sometimes contaminated by the containers used for transport. World Vision installed a large water tank at the health center and a water station with multiple taps. There are new latrines for men and women with rooms to shower and a latrine

for those with physical disabilities. Best of all, there is water at the turn of a faucet in every room. Mothers-to-be no longer have to bring their water when they deliver. “Now they come happily,” says Aaron. “Before they came because they had no option.” The nurses are happy, too. They can wash themselves after treating patients and thoroughly wash treatment areas that were once impossible to clean.

### A PROMISE KEPT

It is May 2023. World Vision’s current president, Edgar Sandoval Sr., is meeting with Prime Minister Ngirente in the Rwandan capital of Kigali to describe how World Vision has kept the promise made five years ago. All over Rwanda, families like Juvenal’s are now enjoying clean water. More than 1 million people—everyone in the 39 areas where World Vision works throughout the country—will have access to clean, safe water by the end of September 2023.

The meeting comes on the heels of a celebration in Kageyo, where 3,000 fathers, mothers, and children gathered with government leaders and World Vision staff to sing, dance, and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30



**TOP LEFT:**

Juvenal serves steaming mugs of nutritious porridge to children in the two-room schoolhouse he built on his property to serve as an early childhood development center.



**TOP RIGHT:**

Sada helps Merci (right) fill her jerrycan with clean water at the World Vision–installed community water tap close to their homes.



**BOTTOM LEFT:**

World Vision's Jean Baptiste Akumuntu (wearing an orange World Vision vest) consults with an engineer from the Rwandan government in the main pumping room at the Muhondo pumping station and reservoir.

**BOTTOM RIGHT:**

Nestled in the valley far below Juvenal's family home, the Muhondo pumping station and reservoir are at the heart of a water supply system that serves more than 14,000 people in the area, including Juvenal's family.







**“MANY GROUPS SET GOALS BUT NOT MANY BEAT THEIR TARGETS.”**

—PRIME MINISTER ÉDOUARD NGIRENTE OF RWANDA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

share testimonials about their lives before and after getting access to clean water. Juvenal spoke with Merci at his side, telling the story of how his family, once burdened by poverty, can dream for the future.

The prime minister listens with interest as Edgar recounts the celebration. “We congratulate World Vision on setting a big goal five years ago to reach 1 million people and then exceeding the goal,” he says. “Many groups set goals but not many beat their targets.” The moment feels like a coda to a splendid composition.

**A SOUND FUTURE**

A prolonged moo sounds from behind Juvenal’s house. With the money from the beans that had made Olive burst into tears, the family bought their first cow. Now they have milk to drink and sell. And another sound—the sweetest sound—dozens of children singing next door. Recently, Juvenal built a two-room schoolhouse on his property to serve as an early childhood development center, with a playground where the kids can play safely. Three days a week, working mothers drop off their children so that they can learn, sing, dance, and eat a nutritious meal of porridge provided by the government and mixed with clean water. For so long, Juvenal could not feed his family. Now he cares for his family and 30 more children.

Juvenal’s dream of being a teacher is on full display as he reads to the children, who gather around him on a colorful mat. Sifa climbs into his lap. This is her father, after all. The story is about the importance of obeying your parents. Afterward,



**Eager children, followed by Juvenal carrying Sifa, march into the early childhood development center for a nutritious lunch.**

the children clap. “Who has understood this story?” he asks. One of the preschoolers stands. “Respect our parents,” she says. Juvenal nods, open and affirming to each child who answers the same question. The look on his face says it all: You matter. Soon it’s time for hot porridge, and the children rise from

the mat and pick up their plastic shoes. As he tries to form the wiggly preschoolers into a straight line, he kneels to put Sifa’s shoes on the correct feet.

Olive laughs, watching the scene. Perhaps she’s envisioning the future. She has convinced her husband to go to university to become a teacher—fulfilling a dream that will allow the family to put all their children through college. Rwandan teachers recently benefited from a generous cost-of-living increase and enjoy a retirement package. Olive knows it will take three years for Juvenal to complete his degree and that she will again carry the load for the family, but it will be easier this time. She has everything she needs in her blue-and-yellow house, noisy with construction, cows, and children. This new dream sounds wonderful. 🍌

**Gifts that  
GROW**

**Support communities like Merci and Juvenal’s with access to clean water.**

See the insert between pages 18 and 19, call 1.888.852.4453, or visit [wvmag.org/water-merci](http://wvmag.org/water-merci).



"Christmas means not just hope for the world, despite all its unending problems, but hope for you and me, despite all our unending failings."  
—TIM KELLER

# Inspire

MOTIVATING YOU TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Want to inspire your kids to think globally this Christmas? Use our Christmas crafts from around the world to start the conversation. Find them at [wvmag.org/crafts](http://wvmag.org/crafts).

## IN THE KITCHEN: Mukimo

By Kari Costanza

👉 Mukimo (pronounced moo-KEE-mo) is a traditional Kenyan main dish—a favorite in western Kenya. Nutritious and simple to make, mukimo relies on ingredients that should be easy to find in an African village (as well as your local supermarket): potatoes, corn, peas, spinach, and onion. Corn, called maize in Kenya, is grown by 90% of the country's farmers.

But today, once-plentiful food is hard to come by. East

Africa, including Kenya, is in the middle of its worst drought in 40 years. The impact of the drought on crops and livestock has been disastrous—and at the same time, conflicts like the war in Ukraine have caused food prices to soar. People who once enjoyed plentiful tables are going hungry.

World Vision is responding to the emergency in the East African countries of Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda, serving more than 10 million people, half of whom are children. Our work includes helping overcome the root causes of hunger by providing training in improved agriculture techniques,

assisting farmers in diversifying their livelihoods, and helping ensure access to clean water to support crop irrigation. Together with our partners, we are also meeting immediate needs through emergency aid such as food assistance.

One way to remember the people of East Africa is by creating simple meals like mukimo to serve your family. Dinnertime can be an opportunity to pray for an end to the drought in East Africa and the war in Ukraine. 🙏



**SCAN THE CODE**

to get the  
recipe.





# God's miracles with our choices

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By Amy Bird

† **HOW MANY CHOICES DO YOU MAKE EVERY DAY?** Recent studies suggest that, for the average person, it's around 35,000! Especially during this busy season, our routine decisions can run on autopilot, hardly requiring conscious thought: pouring a cup of coffee, checking your phone, putting on a coat. But we know nothing is wasted in God's economy, not even our smallest choices (see Romans 8:28). Sometimes in our life of faith, it's the common—even seemingly insignificant—choices we make that can have a ripple effect, leading to great impact in the hands of the Miracle Worker.

Reflect on these biblical examples of people who made ordinary choices that God then used for His extraordinary plan. May you be encouraged that God still works through seemingly small actions today.



Children play in Cambodia.



## WEEK 1

## Drinking water

**READ** // Judges 7:1–21

**REFLECT** // God tells Gideon to take on the Midianites and wants Israel to know this victory will be from Him alone, not because of the men's strength or valor. So God instructs Gideon to reduce the number of men fighting, first by asking them to self-select. Anyone afraid to fight is free to go home. Over two-thirds of the men leave. But God wants an even smaller army, so He instructs Gideon to have the men go down to the water to drink.

Most of the men kneel down to drink from the source. But 300 of them choose to lap up the water with their hands. From this seemingly trivial decision God selects His army: the smaller group of men who lapped up the water. With the troops in place, God shows His power as they defeat the Midianites despite being outmatched 450 to 1.

The point here is not to adjust your water-drinking habits but to marvel at the ways of the Lord. We recognize God's ways are not our ways, nor are His thoughts our thoughts (see Isaiah 55:8–9). We give thanks that God is in control and in His hands even the mundane can hold meaning.

**CONSIDER** // Next time you take a sip of water, remember that God can take even our mindless actions and turn them into something miraculous.

## WEEK 2

## Following the rules

**READ** // Luke 2:22–40

**REFLECT** // After Jesus' birth, Mary and Joseph do what Hebrew parents have done for thousands of years: follow the Law of Moses concerning the rites of purification (see Leviticus 12). This decision may seem so integral to their faith—so automatic—that we can fail to notice the significance it carries. By choosing to keep these practices, Mary and Joseph are beginning the faithful work of raising their son according to the Scriptures, affirming Jesus' place among the Israelites—the people through whom God enacts His work of salvation.

What they don't know is how this customary choice will become a key moment in God's surprising redemption story. When they take Jesus to the temple, Mary and Joseph meet Simeon and Anna, who prophesy that Jesus is the Christ. The parents marvel as Jesus is declared God's plan of salvation for all nations. Furthermore, in Simeon's meeting of Jesus, God fulfills His promise that Simeon would not die before seeing the Messiah.

All this happened because Mary and Joseph chose to do what God's Law commanded of them. No doubt, Mary and Joseph would continue to make typical parental choices as they raised Jesus—and in doing so, unknowingly help fulfill hundreds of years of prophecy about the Savior of the world.

**CONSIDER** // What ordinary rule have you followed that may have had a larger impact on your life than you initially realized?

## WEEK 3

## Sharing a meal

**READ** // John 6:1–14

**REFLECT** // Thousands of people have followed Jesus to the mountainside and now need something to eat. Given the sizable crowd, one of Jesus' disciples estimates that it'd take more than half a year's wages to buy enough bread for each person to have just one bite (v. 7). Where will they get enough food?

Then a disciple notices a boy among the people and comments on the lunch he's brought. Imagine the boy's surprise! Even Jesus Himself is interested in the boy's five small barley loaves and two small fish. Taking the food and giving thanks to God, Jesus feeds the entire crowd. Everyone has as much fish and bread as they want—with leftovers—from the boy's single meal.

What if the boy had decided not to bring fish and bread with him that day or kept it hidden from the disciples? Surely Jesus could have provided for the crowds in another way. Yet Jesus worked in this way: through a boy and his choice to pack food—a choice others didn't make. What the boy and disciples saw as a small, humble gift of food, Jesus used to nourish the whole crowd in body and soul.

"After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, 'Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world'" (v. 14).

**CONSIDER** // Who can you share a simple meal with this season, whether by inviting them to your home or by bringing food to them?

## WEEK 4

## Gathering with God's people

**READ** // Acts 16:13–15

**REFLECT** // Despite being away from home and in an unfamiliar city, Paul and his companions choose to do what they do every Sabbath: find a place to gather with God's people. In going to the river to pray, Paul meets Lydia and shares the good news of Jesus with her. Lydia's heart is opened, and she and her household are baptized. Immediately her home becomes a meeting place for believers as she supports Paul's missionary efforts.

In our terms today, we might say Paul chooses to go to church even when he is out of town. He chooses to maintain the same rhythm and priority in his life no matter where he travels or how well he sleeps the night before. As he does, God works through him to increase His kingdom.

**CONSIDER** // When have you simply shown up among God's people and God ministered to you in a big way? When was the last time you gathered with other believers? Who could you invite to join you this Christmas season? 🍷

# Small actions, big imp



## Sammie's stand for change

In the spring of 2022, 7-year-old Sammie found herself troubled by something she learned at her school in New Jersey: that many people around the world lack access to clean water and sufficient food. Determined to help, she turned to her parents, and her dad, Nick, showed her World Vision's Gift Catalog. He said, "If you can raise enough to buy one goat, I will buy a second goat." Seeing the price of a pair of goats at \$170, Sammie boldly told her father, "I can make more money than that."

She put all her money in a jar and started brainstorming fundraising ideas. The winning concept? A lemonade and cookie stand, symbolizing summer delights. It was an idea her mother, Kristina, immediately saw the value in. "It's a great opportunity to encourage kids to do something that seems monumental," she says. And at the same time, it also feels accessible to kids: "Anyone can make lemonade and cookies to sell."

The family worked together, baking goat-shaped cookies and creating signs and T-shirts. Sammie looks back on this

shared effort with joy, saying, "Doing it with family reminds me of how happy the other people would be when they get to keep their family healthy and safe when they get [goat] milk." The venture was a huge success: At their church, Sammie raised enough funds for six goats, and at a Christian camp event she brought in enough for four more.

With 10 goats funded, Sammie hoped that families receiving animals would be blessed through her donation. "I want them to know that our family loves them and cares for them even though we don't know who they are," she shares.

Reflecting on their journey, Kristina believes it is crucial to nurture children's desire to serve. "[We] often shut kids down and say 'you're too young and little.'" Sammie echoes this sentiment, stating, "I would say no way, you're not too young ... There's not an age limit on this."

She encourages others to listen to their hearts and recognize the immense impact within their reach. "Hey, you're gonna help a lot of people. You're just bringing joy to the world and making this a better place for people to grow and be strong."

## Megan's actions in advocacy

Megan Wysocki's heart brims with compassion, which led her to become a World Vision Advocate a couple of years ago, when she was in high school. This step sparked a journey that would reshape her future.

"World Vision calls upon everyday people from all walks of life ... to make a change in the world," Megan, now 19, reflects. Age or social status are inconsequential, she emphasizes, when you're driven to make a difference.

Because Megan's advocacy journey began during the pandemic, it started out

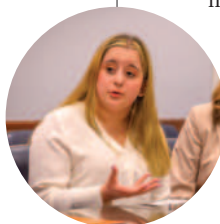
with emails and phone calls. "It's honestly a good starting point for someone new to advocacy," she confesses. "It's a bit easier to send emails than it is to walk into Congress."

Yet Megan soon found herself traversing the corridors of Capitol Hill. "I never thought an 18-year-old student like me would attend a meeting in one of the Senate office buildings," she recounts. Megan represented World Vision at an online meeting and then again in person.

"Even though I was terrified and nervous, I was well prepared." Months of practice and planning with World Vision staff and other advocates brought about a productive meeting. Megan left feeling accomplished, knowing she and her team played a role in advocating for other people.

Megan stresses that advocacy isn't limited to meetings; it can be as simple as a flyer posted on a school campus. "If even a single person is moved by your flyer, you've made a difference," she says.

Nevertheless, advocacy isn't without its challenges. It often hinges on being heard, and getting there requires persistence. Megan reflects, "It just takes one person. You can make 20 phone calls a day, but all you need is one person to pick up and listen to you."



Megan believes in the power of small steps in advocacy and encourages others not to underestimate their contributions, however modest they may seem. "Every action matters ... We need small steps in order to be able to take big steps," she insists. "If it makes a difference, if it touches one person, it's advocacy."

Megan's dedication serves as a reminder that everyone has the power to plant the seeds of change—every action, every step, no matter how big or small, can make a difference.



## act

† **IN A WORLD FACING** many challenges, opportunities to make a difference abound—and they’re as diverse as the individuals who inhabit God’s earth. The stories that follow celebrate a few compassionate individuals who saw a need and decided to do something small—and whose actions have grown in impact: a reminder that a first step can be the beginning of a life-changing, world-changing journey.

By Amy Van Druenen

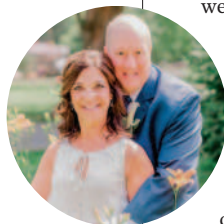
## Monica and Steve’s legacy

From the small town of Lebanon, Pennsylvania, Monica and Steve McKenzie have been nurturing a connection across thousands of miles: their unique bond with Kelvine and Lokidaya, two children in Kenya that they sponsor through World Vision.

Their sponsorship journey was spurred by two guest speakers at church whose lives were transformed by World Vision. Monica, 59, and Steve, 55, felt compelled to act. Steve remembers, “We felt that we could make an impact on a little child who might be struggling to access basic necessities like water, something we often take for granted in America.” The first time Steve saw Kelvine, he felt an instant connection. Monica adds, “He was 4 years old at the time, and we thought, ‘Wow, we could have 14 years or more to truly make a difference in his life.’”

As they watched Kelvine transform from a timid child to a smiling, cheerful boy, they decided to sponsor another child. In 2022, a 4-year-old boy named Lokidaya chose the couple as his sponsor through Chosen®, World Vision’s unique sponsorship model that gives children the chance to choose their own sponsors. When asked why he picked their photo, Lokidaya simply said it was because of their smiles.

Witnessing the impact within Kelvine’s and Lokidaya’s communities compelled Monica and Steve to make another profound decision—to include World Vision in their trust. It’s a lasting



legacy set to benefit countless lives, transcending their lifetimes. Steve explains their decision: “If Monica and I can donate a small portion of what we’ve worked hard for and have been blessed with over our 50-plus years on this earth, the least we can do is try and make lives better for these young people.”

Monica was inspired by the story of the widow’s offering in Mark 12:41–44: “We’re like the woman with the one coin; we see the value in giving what you can ... It’s just a small token of what we can do.” She firmly believes in the transformative power of giving. “Sure, you’re going to give money to your kids and grandkids, but they’re probably already better off than kids in these countries. Just consider how far a dollar goes to them versus us; it’s just incredible.”

The couple’s legacy, rooted in faith and compassion, promises to touch lives long after they’re gone. It’s a testament to the power of a love that grows as it’s given, and to the profound impact ordinary people can have.

## Jorge’s class project

Within a sales management course, a lesson in empathy unfolds. For Jorge Daniel Garcia Santiago, 42, a university lecturer and World Vision Child Ambassador in Texas, the podium becomes a platform not only to impart sales techniques but also to kindle a tangible difference in the lives of children thousands of miles away.

The task Jorge sets before his students is more than just an academic exercise. He has them learn new sales strategies as they find sponsors for children in need. “We talk a lot about all the reasons why this is important to them—about the actual impact that World Vision makes and the lasting change in the children’s communities,” says Jorge. “But we also talk a lot about the value that this process has for the

sponsor.” Relationships are cultivated and nurtured as sponsors witness firsthand the transformation in their sponsored children and their communities.

Bracing his students for the challenge, Jorge prepares them for rejection. He tells them, “People are going to say no—anticipate that and then keep asking with the same joy, enthusiasm, and energy you did before.”

For Jorge, sponsorship is an ideal “product” to market because it can be the start of so much more. “It’s a simple way to make an impact—to make a difference,” he points out. “But in comparison, the result that you see, not only in the children’s lives but also in the community, is way larger.” The impact, he suggests, resembles an echo in a canyon, a single call triggering a series of reverberations that impact the whole community.

Together, Jorge and his students have connected over 100 children to sponsors.

Jorge’s trust in World Vision is a cornerstone of this project. “I wouldn’t be doing this if I didn’t believe

in World Vision’s impact,” he says. Through this unique class project, he reveals that even within the bounds of a classroom, seemingly small efforts can echo outward. “People want to do something to help others,” Jorge says. “There are so many ways that you can make a difference in the world—and have fun with it.” †



**SCAN THE CODE**

to read more stories of impact.



CALIE & GLADYS

## Q&A: TV host and multimedia personality Tayshia Adams

By Nicole Harris

📌 **ON A COOL NOVEMBER DAY** in 2021, television personality Tayshia Adams laced up her sneakers and joined 30,000 people in running the New York City Marathon. Not only did she finish, but she rallied her fans to support her run by sponsoring children in Kenya and Honduras through World Vision's Chosen® sponsorship experience. She sponsors children in the two countries, and more than 125 people joined her. But she wasn't done.

Just a few months later, Tayshia traveled to Eastern Europe to see World Vision's work in response to the Ukraine refugee crisis, and later that year she promoted one of the handcrafted gifts in the World Vision Gift Catalog, with funds going to support the crisis response work.

"My journey with World Vision is just beginning," Tayshia says. "I am just wanting to do more." We sat down to talk to Tayshia about what inspires her to give back and why she partners with World Vision.

### What about World Vision's work motivates you to partner with us?

I've seen the impact that it has on lives firsthand. I've been there. I've hugged refugees that just needed a lending hand. And I've seen where our donations go. I've seen the light that it brings to kids' eyes to be able to have a small toy or a meal, and I am more than happy to be a part of the World Vision family.

### As part of our family, you're promoting a special handcrafted gift this year in our Gift Catalog. Can you tell us more about it?

I'm so excited about it! My handcrafted gift this season is a charcuterie board from artisans in Kenya. It's made out of olive wood and has a reclaimed-bone inlay on the handle. It's beautiful, and I think it's going to be so perfect [for when] everybody's home to gather around, share meals, make memories, and just have a great experience this holiday season. I love that this gift is something that's going to bring families together.

### How else do you think your gift will make an impact this holiday season?

It builds a community with all of us that care about World Vision. Each

donation that you make [through] the World Vision Gift Catalog is more special than you know. Every donation counts!

**Yes—and simple things like donations can become so much more! Can you share a time when something seemingly simple had a large impact on your life?**

During the holiday season, a lot of us give donations. And I don't think that we realize how much of an impact it has on people's lives, especially at our local churches, when you're donating cans of food, small gifts, or a blanket—whatever it is. There have been times in my life where my family actually was the recipient of those donations. At times, you don't realize [the impact]. It could just be a can to you, but it's a meal that makes kids happy and creates memories for people, and it's a way for families to connect. A simple donation actually makes a huge impact, which is why I give back now.

### You mentioned churches. Can you share with us about your faith journey?

My faith journey is extremely important to me. I was raised in a Catholic home, and that has carried with me. It's very important for me to make time to worship and find a community—a community like World Vision, but also a community in New York City.

And it's something that I daily work on. I wake up and pray and give gratitude to God, and I always thank Him for the bed that I have, the roof over my head, the food, my senses. It's fairly easy to take this for granted, but it's very important to give gratitude and just be thankful, so my faith journey grows every single day.

### What is something that God has taught you?

At times, you don't realize why things happen, but there's always a bigger picture, and trusting in Him has never led me astray. 📌

**Give Tayshia's charcuterie board as a gift this Christmas! See the insert between pages 18 and 19 for more information.**





## A new Gilgal in Kenya

**WITH A DEFT FLIP** of his wrist and a happy laugh, Godwin, 6, launches a perfect paper airplane right at my camera lens. It sails past me and is promptly snagged by a nearby toddler. More laughter, and then the kids race off to play somewhere else. What a contrast to what I photographed 17 years earlier in this same program area in Katito, Kenya, when child sponsorship was in its early stages. Back then, my focus was on children who

had been orphaned because of HIV and AIDS, and on documenting World Vision's response. I remember compassionate caregivers tending to dying patients, somber children with piercing eyes, and such quietness. At the time, I'm ashamed to admit, my insignificant pebble of faith could hardly imagine the transformation that could occur in a place like this when vulnerable communities are empowered to thrive. Now, in Godwin's perfect toss, I have the proof of God's goodness right in front of me. These new photographs—joyful children, thriving agriculture, lively schools, and young people with dreams—are like the stones Joshua and the Israelites piled at Gilgal, a memorial to God's faithfulness. +

Written and  
photographed  
by Jon Warren

Nikon Z6  
70–200mm lens at 90mm  
1/1600th at f/6.3  
ISO 1250



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# GIVINGTUESDAY



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## Give a gift that grows God's kingdom

#GIVINGTUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28

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potential, and equip families to thrive—for good.



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SEE THE INSERT BETWEEN PAGES 18 AND 19 TO LEARN MORE!