



2019 ANNUAL REPORT



ORCHARD: AFRICA

Sowubona

(sow:BOH:nah)

"I see you."

Michelle is the co-founder and
CEO of Orchard: Africa

A message from Michelle Tessendorf



In English we say words like “good morning,” “hello,” or “hi” as a form of greeting. I’ve noticed that lately we sometimes simply lift our chin and say “hey.”

The word Sowubona (sow:boh:nah) is a greeting in the Zulu language of South Africa. A response is Ngikhona (sic:hona).

For me, the Zulu greeting and its response is special.

Sowbonah means – I see you.

Ngikhona means - I am here.

I love this way of greeting in South Africa. “I see you.” I acknowledge your presence and your very existence. “I am here.” You acknowledge your availability to me.

I believe that this Zulu way of greeting encapsulates the philosophy of Orchard: Africa. We say to the vulnerable people of our world, “I see you.”

I’ve noticed that vulnerable people tend to live on the fringes of society. In many ways they become invisible to the greater functioning society. At Orchard: Africa, we exist with intentionality to care for those the world does not see. We say to them, “Sowubona – I see you.” In return, they say to us, “Ngikhona - I am here.” This response is so very important because sometimes vulnerable people believe that they are, in fact, invisible and don’t matter. At Orchard: Africa we want them to say, “I am here. I do exist, I do matter, I do want my presence to be known.”

Somewhere in the middle of 2019 we provided our 10 millionth meal. Each and every one of these millions of meals was physically handed to a child and through it we said, “I see you.” And each time a child stretched out their hand and took the plate of food, they acknowledged, “I am here.”

This is a very personal process, made possible because of you, our supporters. Through your partnership you have said to a child, “I see you,” and, each time a child received a meal from you, they acknowledged, “I am here.”

As a leader of Orchard: Africa, I strive daily to see the greatness of God’s plan and the holiness of our specific task within that plan. Orchard: Africa exists to equip the church to care for the vulnerable. This is our holy task. Through our equipping we have accumulated large statistics, which you will see in this annual report.* However, what we do is so much more than numbers.

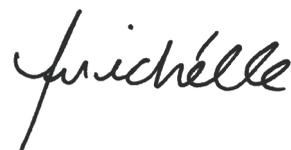
Every time we provide agricultural training and, at the graduation ceremony hand over a certificate of completion to the participants, we in essence say to them, “I see you.” And they, beaming with pride, (for most of them it is the first time in their life they receive a certificate of achievement) say to us, “I am here! I am here! I exist. I am seen.”

Everything we do comes through the Church and

because of this, I believe that each moment we show care translates into Jesus saying to a hungry child, “I see you” and the child responding, “I am here.”

Even more profound, the most holy of moments, is when a vulnerable child, or desperate mama, or frail grandmamma receives care and they say to Jesus, “I see you.” And he in return says, “I am here. I am here through my church. I am here through those who daily care for you. I am here through those who train your pastor. I am here through each staff member of Orchard: Africa who works diligently to make you known to the world. I am here through those who sacrificially give their support.”

When a vulnerable person says to God, “I see you” and he responds, saying, “I am here”, well, those are the moments, the most holy of moments, for which Orchard: Africa exists.



Michelle Tessorf
Co-founder & CEO

** All statistics in this report are cumulative.*





But Jesus spoke to them at once. “Don’t be afraid,” he said. “Take courage. I am here!” - Matthew 14:27



A LIFE CHANGED

Lerato Pholo lives in Madutle, a remote village on the very edge of the western border of South Africa. There is no cell phone coverage, no public transport and no stores. Over 90% of high school graduates and adults are unemployed. Any job they do get would be as temporary farm laborers or domestic workers outside of the village. The village school that Lerato attended was staffed by teachers who live outside of the village because Madutle had nobody remotely qualified to teach.

With the help of La Casa De Cristo Lutheran Church in Arizona and Mount Pleasant Community Church in Michigan, Orchard: Africa planted a church in Madutle village. Lerato benefited from many of the Orchard: Africa programs run from the church and, as she grew up, she attended all the life skills and agriculture courses, for which she received certificates of achievement.

At the beginning of 2019, Lerato noticed that the village school needed a kindergarten teacher. She confidently approached the school principal and asked to volunteer for this role. The principal, possibly thinking that nothing good can come from Madutle, was reluctant to take her on. However, a

member of the school governing body advised Lerato to submit her resume to the Education Department, and to include all the certificates she received from Orchard: Africa.

This strategy worked and Lerato was given permission to volunteer for the position as a kindergarten teacher at the village school. Her work ethic was so good that, after a few months, they added her to the payroll plus the education department offered her financial assistance to study part-time for a teacher's diploma while she teaches at Madutle school.

Lerato is not only one of a few people from Madutle village to graduate from high school but she is the first to go to college. Lerato – we are so proud of you!

In 2008, two churches in the United States partnered with Orchard: Africa to start a church in a remote and forgotten African village. Eleven years later, one of the outcomes is this amazing life change story.



FOOD & AGRICULTURE

The primary need in a vulnerable community is food security. Without food and water, people can't think beyond their own survival.

Orchard: Africa trains local churches to run a daily feeding program. This provides a job for a cook and a hot lunchtime meal for children. For many children, this is their primary meal of the day. The Orchard: Africa Food & Agriculture program also works in conjunction with the church preschools to provide breakfast for the preschoolers every school morning.

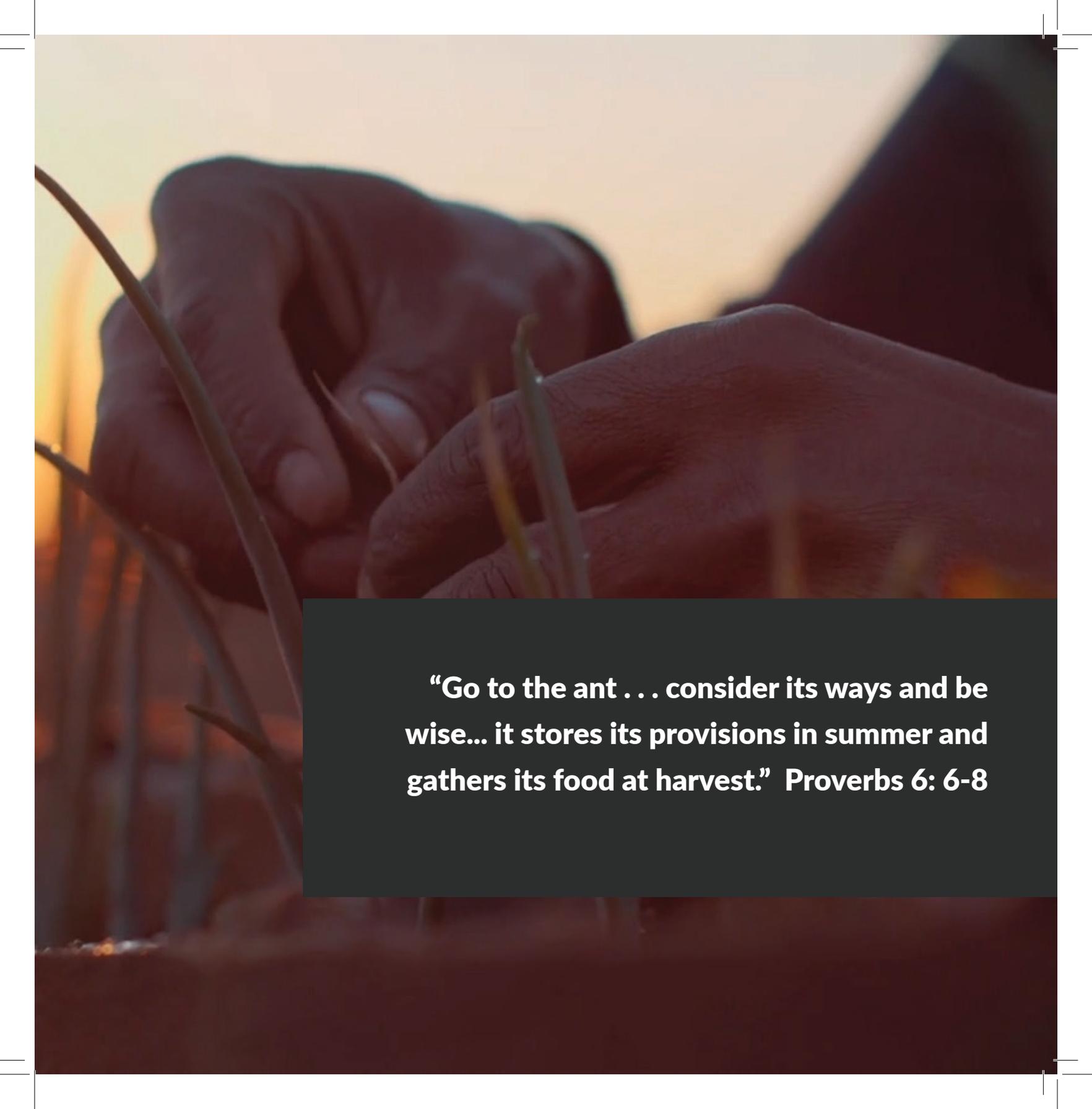
The Agriculture program emphasizes sustainability by teaching communities to grow their own food. Innovative vertical and small-scale farming initiatives allow families to not only grow food for themselves, but to also have enough food to sell to provide for their other needs.

The local church goes beyond being a place to gather on Sunday morning. It is an active part of the community as it teaches, trains, and provides its community with the necessary skills to pursue a better life.



10,289,720 meals served

1,687 people trained in agriculture

A close-up photograph of hands harvesting wheat stalks at sunset. The hands are shown in the foreground, with fingers carefully separating the grain from the stalks. The background is a soft, warm glow of the setting sun, creating a golden light that illuminates the scene. The overall mood is peaceful and industrious.

“Go to the ant . . . consider its ways and be wise... it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest.” Proverbs 6: 6-8



“... the excellence of knowledge is that wisdom gives life to those who have it.” Ecclesiastes 7:12



EDUCATION

Education is a powerful weapon against poverty. Our Education program helps local churches start a preschool, provide an after-school learning center, and conduct life skills and entrepreneurial training for older students. A good education equips children to pursue their dreams and break the cycle of generational poverty.

All education programs are run through a local church. When the local church steps up to care for the vulnerable through providing education and essential life and vocational skills, poverty and injustice shrink.



7,734 children enrolled in preschool

261,416 youth educated in HIV prevention

1,079,147 visits to learning centers

366 trained in small business & life skills

Fundraising 2019

We have had many people fundraise through online platforms on behalf of Orchard: Africa. Thank you for raising funds for your birthday, for summer weather, for the first snowfall, for a hike you took or a bike you rode, or just because! You are our heroes and we appreciate you so much.

- AmazonSmile.com - Thank you to each person who has designated Orchard: Africa as their charity. When you shop on AmazonSmile in support of Orchard: Africa, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate a percentage of your purchase to restoring hope in Southern Africa.
- Grace, Sam & Emily Deneke are 13, 10 & 6. They spent their summer this year mowing lawns (and babysitting, and dog walking) to raise funds for Orchard: Africa. They set out to raise \$10,000 and instead, with the help of matching funds from mom's employer, from grandmom and parents, they raised a very impressive \$12,600. We are inspired by their sacrifice, diligence and determination on behalf of children halfway across the world from Kansas, where they live. Our grateful thanks to the Deneke family. You are amazing!



Zoolights Family Night



The Deneke Family



Evening of Giving at Ancala Country Club



Lion King Movie Night



CARE

Our Care program equips church leaders to be the hands and feet of Jesus. Orphans and the vulnerable are cared for through home-based care, trauma counseling and orphan intervention. Church pastors identify orphaned and vulnerable children in their communities and work with them (through our specially designed intervention program), helping them cope with loss and grief. The pastors also provide support to foster parents. Compassionate care develops children with healthy souls, who have hope for their future.

The local church engages members of its community and trains both men and women to be caregivers. These heroic caregivers visit residents in their homes and provide basic medical and hospice care. Church leaders are trained to provide AIDS prevention programs to local high schools. HIV/AIDS infection is not inevitable – it can be prevented.

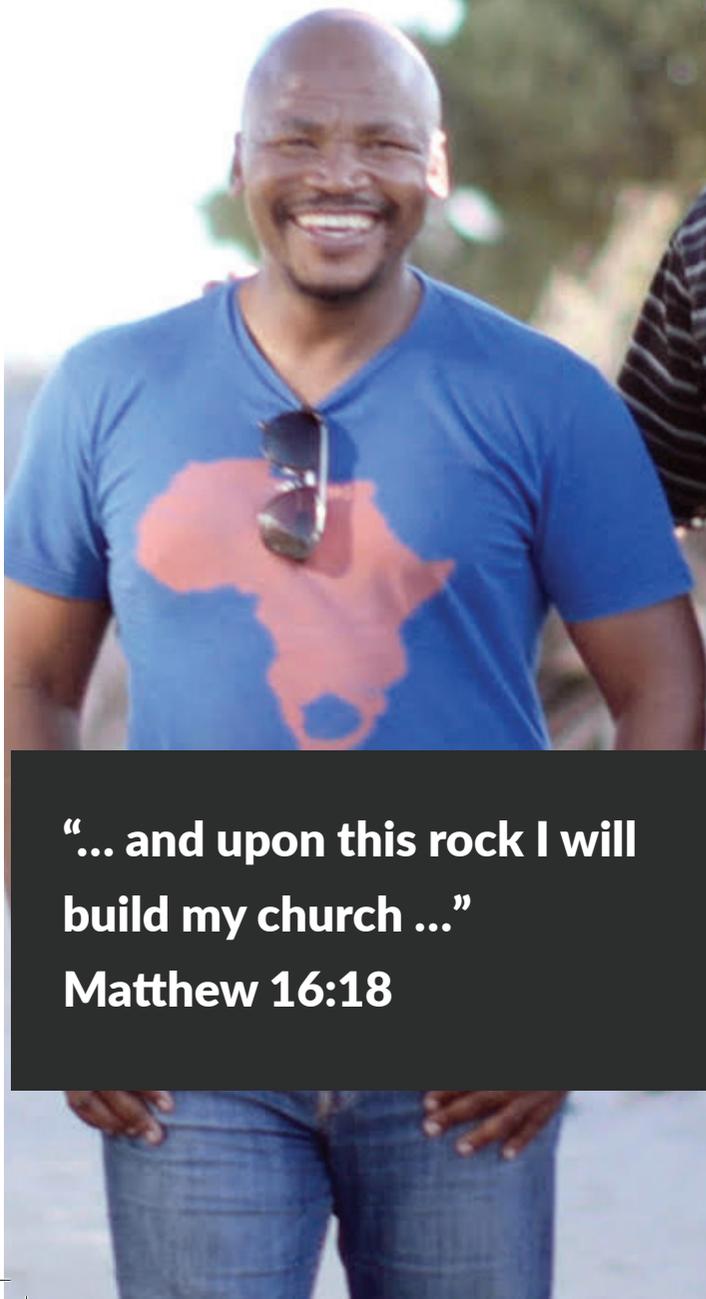
The local church equips, empowers, and cares for the community, in turn protecting the vulnerable and restoring hope.



208,850 home care visits to the sick
8,973 families provided with social services
73,605 children completed Orphan Intervention Program



**“For the Lord is good and
his love endures forever; his
faithfulness continues through
all generations.” - Psalm 100:5**



**“... and upon this rock I will
build my church ...”
Matthew 16:18**



MINISTRY

This is where all the Orchard: Africa programs start. To truly care for the vulnerable and implement sustainable solutions in communities, the local church has to be on board.

the Church is our platform, programs are our tools and hope in Christ is our message.

Why the church?

1. Christ is establishing His Church, ensuring that investments into it will last for generations to come.
2. The Church is one of the most sustainable community-based organizations in the world, able to reach where many other established organizations cannot.
3. God intends for His church to protect and holistically care for the vulnerable.

At Orchard: Africa, we are passionate about the Church, about protecting the vulnerable and about sustainable, holistic solutions. That is why



685 church leaders in the Orchard Network

Of these churches:

79 run feeding projects

38 run agriculture projects

58 run education projects

133 run care projects

A total of 308 church projects

impacting their communities



MISSIONS

STEP UP

by Rose Cowden

I still wonder why God used me?

He spoke to me one Sunday morning in 2010. When I heard Pastor Brian speak about South Africa and Mount Pleasant Community Church forming a mission team, he woke my heart to something planted 40 years before. My heart leapt, but when I heard it was a 17 hour flight, fear set in. I was afraid to fly. I tried to figure out how I could go without flying. Possibly I could be a part of the team here in the U.S. After weeks of struggling with what I should or could do, the time came to decide. I told Pastor Brian that I needed to step back and allow someone else to go but Pastor Brian looked me in the eye and said, "I think you need to step up." It was the defining moment. I knew he was right, so I allowed God to take over.

God uses ordinary people. If I had said no, God could still have completed his mission but I would have missed the great blessings he had for my life. There have been many, many blessings, many special relationships formed, not only with the people we go to serve, but with the teams I have served alongside. Lots of hugs, love and pure joy!

As I look back to that first year, I know my reasons for going were somewhat self-centered. I wanted to hold babies, play with children and fix the problems. The children did not disappoint. They were full of joy and to this day, when I want to feel more joy in my life, I conjure up visions of them singing. There were so many highs and lows on that trip that most of the time I couldn't tell which was which. The tear in my eye when I saw a little girl playing "jax" with stones turned to a tear of joy because she can!

What I didn't expect was how much I would be affected by the people - the teenagers, the older women, an elderly blind mama. The day I met blind mama was a dark day for me. I was struggling. I couldn't feel God. I felt he had deserted South Africa. The song "Hosanna in the Highest" kept going through my mind and over and over, I whispered a prayer, "Break my heart for what breaks yours." Blind mama sitting on the hard ground, in the hot sun, alone, was too much for me. How could God allow all this suffering? I told God that my heart was, indeed, broken but I did not know what to do with it all.

 **138 people on mission**
12 states represented
Oldest team member was 77
Youngest team member was 11
280 villagers attended team run courses
6,920 volunteer hours were given

It took weeks, months, even a year later to fully understand his response. In returning to South Africa a second time, God showed me what he wanted me to see. He showed me how he was there in the village of Madutle. He was in the neighbors of blind mama, who looked after her. He was in Orchard: Africa and all that they do in the village. He was in us, a team of ordinary people offering themselves to him and to others. God had sent all of these people to do his work. Eight trips to South Africa later, this is why I go - to spread the joy of the Lord that I have received and to love people right where they are. God has put me here for a purpose that only he knows the answer to.

Our 2019 team had only 10 people signed up and we've always had at least 12 in past years. God whispered to ask my sister. She had never shown a lot of interest and she hadn't been to church in over 30 years. I thought it wouldn't work but a few days later he again whispered to me to ask my sister. In an attempt to get God off my back, I asked her and she said yes! Then my other sister said yes!

God uses ordinary people ... he just needs us to say yes. It is his plan but we get the blessings when we step up.





ORCHARD: AFRICA

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