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RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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Missionary #264

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

What an exciting time this is! As many of you know, we have officially begun walking down the road that leads to Africa, and we are prayerfully planning to be on the field early next year. I wanted to give you a little information on the organization we will be serving with, the Rafiki Foundation, and then I will write a little about what we will specifically be doing in Malawi.

Rafiki started working in Africa forty years ago. In the 1990s, several African governments asked Rafiki to help with the orphans during the AIDS crisis. Rafiki joyfully granted this request and starting in 2000 began opening orphanages in ten different African countries (Malawi, Zambia, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Liberia, Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana). They leased large pieces of land in each of these countries and established a Rafiki Village in each.



Malawi Village front gate

Once they had a lot of children to care for, a question soon arose; “What about their education?” African schools are universally acknowledged to be struggling, at best. Looking at this, Rafiki decided the next logical thing for them to do would be to open schools at each of their Villages. They adopted the classical model for education because they believe it is the best educational model for every human being (which we whole-heartedly agree with). So now, each Rafiki School in Africa delivers a strong classical Christian education to children!



Morning assembly

In the years since the height of the AIDS epidemic, Rafiki no longer is asked to take in orphans, but the schools are thriving! The schools are a beacon of hope to the community, built upon, and around the Word of God. Rafiki’s motto is *God’s Word at Work*.

After Rafiki established their schools, they realized that they were not

often able to find teachers educated to the level that was needed to be able to teach the curriculum to the children well. Consequently, they started Teachers' Colleges at several Rafiki Villages, called Rafiki Institute of Classical Education (RICE).

In Malawi, Stuart would be the Dean of RICE, and Deborah would be the Headmaster of the K-12 school. We were both classically educated in our secondary educations, and in our undergraduate degrees (Great Books Program at St. John's College). Stuart also has a Master's in Pastoral Counseling (theology emphasis), and a Juris Doctorate. He is uniquely suited to deal with all the red tape in Malawi, navigate complex systems, establish programs, and lead and direct with kindness and firmness as the RICE Program is further developed in Malawi. Deborah has her Master's and PhD in Counseling Education and hopes that she will be able to support and lead the school.



RICE Student

We are excited at the prospect of serving our brothers and sisters in Malawi and helping others to know and love God more. Education is discipleship, and what an amazing discipleship opportunity this is!

Please consider how you can join us in this work. We would love to answer any questions you might have.

Because He came,

Stuart & Deborah

Stuart and Deborah Bannan