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Rafiki Foundation Missionary Newsletter



Lorri and Steve Blum
Missionary #263

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"Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!" (Psalm 96:2-3).

Hello from Rafiki Village Rwanda!

It has been a few months since our last newsletter. Not because we have not had any news, but more because we are so immersed in our work here. There is an amazing amount to learn and do each day here as we continue to get acclimated in our new roles.

I (Steve) have been getting up to speed as the Village Administrator, and the Country Director of an NGO. There is the daily challenge of making sure you are looking at the big picture and how things are going with the school, while at the same time dealing with a plethora of tiny details around payroll for nearly 100 Rwandans, end-of-month closing of the books, making sure taxes and utilities are paid, ensuring we are receiving water regularly into our storage tanks (about 65,000 liters of storage), keeping our vehicles running, and managing all of our interactions with various governmental agencies.

I start most days at the gatehouse at 6:00 a.m. to have morning devotions with Eric (one of our fellow missionaries) and the guards at shift change. Praying and singing hymns with them, and studying through the Rafiki Bible Study (RBS) is such a blessing! At 7:30 a.m. I lead devotions with the rest of the non-teaching staff (cooks, the maintenance/landscaping team, and cleaners). Sarah (another one of our fellow missionaries) leads the teachers in the RBS, who then go lead their students in the same. We were in the middle of the Book of Acts when we got here in August. We finished that recently and are now in Romans. So, every one of us starts our day with the RBS, which is very thorough and includes age-based studies for all ages.



Meeting with a bishop of a partner church to deliver Bibles

A key role I have is to lead and partner with the team: the national workers and the missionaries. As missionaries, we are a team of five. Besides Lorri and me, we have Sarah, who is headmaster of our school of 460 kids from three-year-olds to grade level twelve. And we have Eric and Rachel, another husband-and-wife team (and their four children). Eric is the Outreach Coordinator and Plant Manager.



New Outreach preschool using our curriculum

Rachel is our bookkeeper, part-time and mostly from home, so she can be a stay-at-home mom.

Lorri is working hard as the Dean of our Rafiki Teachers College. She has eighteen students who have finished their degree in education and are here to learn the classical Christian teaching method. She is also helping them to enhance their proficiency in English, math, and reading and comprehension, and to learn more about history, literature, philosophy, art, music, and of course the Bible, than they would have gotten in the government schools and in university.

Lorri is also the Child Care Administrator, overseeing our thirty-two college students who are on full or partial scholarships at universities across Rwanda. She also works with the sponsored kids at our pre-k through grade twelve school, via letter-writing quarterly to their sponsors. She will sometimes refer to our college students as baby birds because they can act a bit helpless, with their gaping mouths, waiting for her to handle everything for them. Providing for their financial needs is part of what we do, but we also mentor them as we can, so they learn important life skills and problem solving, and we also encourage them not to neglect their spiritual lives.

We already have wonderful, strong bonds with Sarah, Eric, Rachel, and their four adorable children who are like our African grandkids. Everyone loves potluck, game night, Bible study, going to church together, and weekly prayer together. We attend the Presbyterian church just down the hill. Eric plays keyboard for our hymns. He and I each take a turn preaching, once every couple months.

During our first term break, we did a three-day mini vacation to Akagera National Park for a wonderful safari and cannot wait to explore more of Rwanda.

Praise God with us

- We learn more every week about how to be effective in the work the Lord has called us to.
- The team works quite well together and the relationships are strong.
- Daily, we impact the lives of these 460 students and nearly 100 workers.

If you wish to support us, you can do so by visiting online at https://RafikiFoundation.org/missionary-detail/stephen-and-lorri-blum-263. We thank you for your love and support.

Love,

Steve and Lorri

Steve and Lorri Blum

Pray to God with us

- *for our school, our teachers, and our students, to continue forward in God's will.*
- *for our Rwandan work-permit applications to go through.*
- *for some changes we are working through regarding national testing.*



Together with our "African grandkids"



Steve takes his turn preaching

Learn more about Rafiki's expanding opportunities.
Visit our newly designed website RafikiFoundation.org to learn how to:

- Purchase the Rafiki Bible Study for small groups for your church or neighborhood
- Serve as a missionary with Rafiki
- Sponsor a child with the Rafiki Foundation to bring God's Word and the best education in the world to some of the neediest children in the world in Africa.

Explore the Rafiki Foundation YouTube channel.
Visit (youtube.com/@RafikiFoundation) for videos from Rafiki children, teaching at our annual Enrichment conferences, and the teaching at our African classical Christian conferences.

Listen to our podcast for current discussions on Rafiki's work in Africa truenorth.fm/show/the-rafiki-foundation-podcast/