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RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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Missionary #257

Dear friends and family,

Back when we first looked at serving with the Rafiki Foundation two distinguishing factors grabbed our attention: daily Bible study and classical Christian education. In this letter, I will be focusing on the Rafiki Bible Study.

One of the things that distinguishes Rafiki Foundation schools from other Christian schools is the emphasis on systematic Bible study. We are blessed with a daily Bible study done by all the children, staff, and teachers every weekday that our schools are in session. The Bible study focuses on a book of the Bible. Each week we will study a set number of chapters. The Bible studies have been written at all the different levels from preprimary through adult. We also share in singing a weekly hymn and memorizing scripture and a catechism question together. There is also a parent page that the children bring home so that their parents know what they will be learning in Bible study that week. That way the parents can reinforce it in their own home. The materials are well written and provide good notes and thoughtful questions. The beautiful thing about this Bible study is that everyone on campus is studying the same parts of Scripture therefore we can easily encourage one another!

Since September we have completed Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. After Easter break, we will finish the last chapters of Joshua. It has been great to get a big picture view of God's work among His people. It can be challenging to understand all the laws that God gave the Israelites, but we can be assured that all of them are meant to point us to His holiness and the need for salvation through His son. We can also learn that God disciplines His people when they rebel but ultimately, He shows His great grace and love through many miracles done on behalf of His people. Likewise, believers today may falter but He has provided such an amazing gift of love through the sacrifice of Jesus on our behalf! Our obedience to God is never to earn His favor but a way of showing our love and thankfulness to Him.



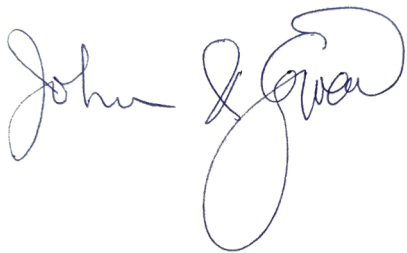
Primary students during Bible study

In the mornings, John leads teacher devotions while Gwen participates in staff devotions. At 8:00 a.m. all the classes from preschool children through teens are studying the Bible with their designated class. At that time, the students in the Rafiki Institute of Classical Education (RICE) are observing how the Bible is taught by the Rafiki teachers. However, at 12:40 p.m., Gwen participates with the RICE students in their own Bible study time. This study is for them, and it is great to see the students developing their skills, understanding biblical concepts, and having their questions answered. Twice a week students take turns leading the Bible study themselves using one of the student lessons. This is a great way for them to get practice at leading Bible studies themselves. It also pushes them to carefully read and prepare the information that they are learning from the Bible.

In addition to leading Bible studies, we are working in our respective jobs at the Village. John continues to guide the secondary school, maintenance staff, and the IT staff. Gwen works with the Rafiki mothers, teaches English and art at the RICE Program, and works as a liaison for the Widows Program. During the month of March, John also helped fill some of Laurie's roles while she was Stateside for training and some well-deserved vacation. We were both excited to have her return this week! It is good to have the whole team together!

This month we have also received the good news that our son Angelo and his fiancée Isabella will be getting married in July. We will be traveling back to the States for the wedding and hope that we may also get to visit with a few of our supporters and prayer partners during the short time we are in the U.S.A. We thank God daily for providing this opportunity to serve Him here in Tanzania with the Rafiki Foundation. We also thank you for your prayers, encouraging words, and financial support. We pray that our work here will see fruit now and in the coming years! Are you interested in a systematic Bible study for your small group or church? An adult version of the Rafiki Bible Study is now available. All the proceeds help to support the work in Africa. Perhaps God is calling you to be part of the work here either short or long term? You can find out more on the Rafiki website at RafikiFoundation.org. *Please join us in praying that God might raise up twenty new missionaries this year to continue the great work that is being done by Him in Africa through the Rafiki Foundation.*

With love and gratitude,



Gwen and John Cicone



Another class of primary students during Bible study



RICE students studying God's Word



The Rafiki Tanzania missionary team