



# RAFIKI

FOUNDATION  
MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER

August 2021 – Gwen and John Cicone

Dear friends and family,

Since our last newsletter on April 30, we have been busy finishing the 2020-2021 school year and beginning our initial preparations for our move to Africa in the Summer 2022.

From June 20-July 1, we were blessed to spend time training at the Rafiki Home Office in Eustis, Florida. The first week was a wonderful opportunity to meet the newest missionaries who have headed to Africa soon after completing their training and the Home Office staff who work diligently behind the scenes to support the Rafiki Foundation's mission of spreading God's Word through Bible study and education. During our time, we received training about policies, Village life, finances, and core values and participated in service and team building projects with the other new missionaries to prepare us for our service.



Gwen and Catherine working together on widow's products

During the last three days, we served at the annual Enrichment Conference. Missionaries from most of the Villages were present and we were

encouraged by the amazing accounts of children whose lives had been transformed through the work of Rafiki. One example from Ethiopia is a girl named Yesunesh whose father died, and her mother abandoned her when she was a few months old. Her uncle brought her to the Rafiki Village in 2010 when she was three years old. She has blossomed into a young lady who loves the Lord and has hope for a normal life. Stories like this abound at Rafiki and it is exciting that God would allow us to be part of this ministry.



Yesunesh 2011



Yesunesh 2021



John and Gwen with the newest missionaries and Rosemary Jensen, founder of Rafiki Foundation

Part of our preparation for serving in Africa is downsizing our belongings. We began that process this spring as we prepared our house to be put on the market in June. Thankfully, we currently have

a contract with a scheduled closing of August 23. We will be living nearby in an apartment as we work at Redeemer Classical Christian one more year and finish our preparations for full-time service with Rafiki in Africa. While letting go of many belongings and our home is emotionally challenging, there is freedom when you have so much less to manage. Summertime is also when we travel to visit with our families and enjoy the beautiful creation around us. In July, we were able to see beautiful sunrises and sunsets over the water in both Texas and Delaware. When we see the majestic hand of God in creation, we are humbled by the fact that this great God would work out a plan of salvation so that we may know Him personally.



Later in August, we are excited to share our ministry opportunity with Grace Bible Church, Mount Laurel, NJ. We were able to make this connection through Gwen's uncle sharing our newsletter with his church's missions committee.

This will be the first of what we hope to be many opportunities to share the magnificent work God is doing in Africa through Rafiki. We would love to have the opportunity to share more of the details of Rafiki with you and anyone you think may be interested. Currently, we are still penciled in for Ghana to serve as Headmaster and Dean of the Rafiki Institute of Classical Education but as we have learned at Rafiki we need to remain open to the ways that God might change our plans.

#### Prayer Requests

- *For the sale of the house to close on time without any difficulties.*
- *For God to provide opportunities to share our work with other churches and individuals.*
- *For God to prepare the way before we go to Africa so that our efforts will bear much fruit.*
- *For spiritual, emotional, and mental preparation.*

Thank you so much for your prayers and financial support. None of our plans would be possible without you.

*Pro Rege (For the King),*

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