

JANUARY 2024

# RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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Missionary #257

Dear friends and family,

*Heri ya mwaka mpya* – Happy New Year!

We pray that as you read our latest newsletter that you and your family are well. God has blessed us with a good end to our year. We were able to take a week-long vacation to Zanzibar before Christmas and get some much-needed rest. We are excited to begin our new year.

## **A new beginning**

As 2024 begins, we start a new school year in our pre-K-12 school and RICE Program. As we reflect on 2023, we are reminded of how gracious God has been by providing for all our needs in our Village to help us have a good year. We look ahead with great anticipation at the good works God will accomplish in 2024. We are thankful for what God is already doing:



Our Tanzania leader  
Laurie Eastup

- Our pre-K-12 school now has about 380 students.
- We completed renovations of three resident cottages into a primary library and two pre-K classrooms.
- We were able to hire four graduates from our RICE Program to fill open positions at our school.
- Eleven of the thirteen RICE graduates have teaching positions at Rafiki or other area schools.
- We have fifteen RICE students for our 2024 class.
- As we begin our second full year in Tanzania, we thank God that we understand our roles and responsibilities better and look forward to being more effective as leaders in 2024.

Some of our goals for this year are:

- Work with the eighteen Lutheran private schools to help them use the Rafiki Bible Study.
- Develop extracurricular activities in our school.
- Help our students be doers of the Word.

- Improve our students' math skills.

We are thankful for all your prayers and encouragement. We have felt God's presence in a special way this past year and we know it is because of people like you who are praying for us. We pray that God will bless you in 2024 as well.

Enjoy the following pictures from our recent graduation ceremony.



Each graduate feeds cake to special people in his or her life



Kelvin shared an original good-bye song



John sharing a speech he wrote in Swahili



The graduation cake



Next year it is their turn!



Irene leads the National Anthem

Love,

Gwen and John Cicone



Ready and equipped to leave Rafiki School