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RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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Heri ya mwaka mpya! (Happy New Year!)

A new year always brings about anticipation of good things for the new year and reflection on the previous year.



Tanzania's missionary team posing with the mountain.

2025 in Review

2025 was a mixture of joy and challenges. God blessed us in many ways. In May, we hosted a band ensemble from Wheaton College. The Wheaton students and staff were an amazing blessing to our students. They were exposed to great music and received lessons on how to play orchestral instruments. In July, Amy Ketcham and her husband Tekle Regessa arrived as long-term missionaries. Both are experienced Rafiki Missionaries and assumed responsibilities overseeing the school, facilities management, and Outreach. Throughout the year, in addition to the group from Wheaton, we hosted twelve short-term missionaries at the Village. They provided much needed support in all our ministry areas. In 2025, our fourth grade and ninth grade students performed well on their national exams. Also, twelve of our Rafiki children graduated from our school and are now attending advanced-level high school, or a vocational training college. Our RICE Program graduated nine more teachers who are equipped to teach the Rafiki Bible Study and will benefit their new schools as well-trained teachers in classical Christian education.

Our year also had many challenges for our staff. Many staff had personal health issues and family deaths which made carrying out their work difficult. Our staff who faced these challenges were thankful for the daily Rafiki Bible Study and devotions we have. In many cases, the Scripture we were studying was relevant to their situation and provided comfort, assurance, and increased trust in God.

Space does not permit us to share all the good things God did last year, but we hope this overview encourages you to also praise God for the good work He is doing.



Hosting short-term missionaries



Fun with the RICE class of 2025

Expectations for 2026

We are very excited for what God will do in 2026. Amy and Tekle have acclimated to their new country, and their experience will allow our Rafiki School and Outreach Program to flourish. We are working with the Lutheran Church in Tanzania to develop plans for the use and distribution of over 8,000 Bibles arriving on our yearly container from Home Office. Our school added a new section of fifth grade, and our enrollment is about 430 students. We are focusing on improving consistency in discipline and developing a mindset of excellence in the students. Our RICE Program has fourteen good candidates, and we are anxious to see them develop spiritually and professionally as they work through the RICE curriculum. We now have forty-five Rafiki orphans at university, college, vocational training, or advanced-level high school. We look forward to helping and encouraging them in their studies. Our eleven residents are a blessing. With a smaller group, we anticipate planning activities that will help them learn how to be Godly contributors in the Village and enjoy some fun outside the Village.

We look forward to sharing the ways God will bless our work this year. We are so thankful for your prayers and support.

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16 kjv).

Love,



John and Gwen Ciccone



Welcoming our graduates



Taking the Rafiki orphans on a Mt. Kilimanjaro day trip. Pictured here at the Kilimanjaro National Park Mandara Huts, elevation approx. 8,900 feet!