



# RAFIKI

FOUNDATION  
MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER

December 2020 – Michelle and David Graves

***“For he is like a refiner’s fire” (Malachi 3:2).***

Dear friends and family,

Last May, we wrote you about our call to serve with the Rafiki Foundation working to support the growth of classical Christian education in Africa. A lot has happened since then and we would like to update you on our progress and ways you can join with us in advancing this critical ministry.

### **Update**

First, we thank God for all who are currently praying for us and giving to our mission. Your faithfulness is a great encouragement.

Originally, we planned to spend two weeks in Florida at the Rafiki Home office for training; however, COVID turned this into two weeks of Zoom training. We were fortunate to have three other trainees with us and to get to spend virtual time not just with the Home Office staff in Florida, but also with many of the missionaries already in the field in Rafiki’s ten African Villages.

We have continued a weekly study with our fellow trainees and periodic meetings with the Home Office staff. At the moment, the plan is that we will move to the Rafiki Village in Uganda in summer 2021, unless there is a change that would make us more needed elsewhere. We do not know the exact date, but we will be doing job specific training in Florida in late June and hope to leave shortly after that.

Michelle is slated to be the Dean of the Rafiki Institute of Classical Education (RICE) which is the teacher training college. David will be the Village Administrator. There should be plenty of work for us to do, including working to complete the accreditation process for the teacher training college with the government of Uganda.

The Village is located about twenty kilometers northwest of Uganda’s capital of Kampala, on the shores of Lake Victoria. It provides living and educational facilities that support an orphanage, a daily Bible study program for everyone in the Village, a PreK-12 classical Christian school, the Rafiki Institute of Classical Education, and a Widows Program.



Morning assembly at the Rafiki Village Uganda.



The recently repainted main gate at the Rafiki Village Uganda.

As in most other African countries, schools have been closed due to COVID, but they are beginning to reopen. During the downtime, the Rafiki Village staff has worked hard to take care of the resident orphans, providing materials to them and the day students to continue their education.

Fortunately, the Village has avoided any infections.

### The mission

According to the United Nations Population Fund, 34.8% of Uganda's 34.6 million people are adolescents. As in most African countries, there are tremendous shortages of trained teachers and educational materials. Rafiki is working to change this by establishing model schools and training teachers. Its goal is to establish 1,000 classical Christian schools in the next ten years by sending out trained teachers working in conjunction with its partner churches. Over the last decade, the Lord has led Rafiki to develop an outstanding classical Christian curriculum adapted to Africa as well as a comprehensive three-year teacher training course.



Too many African classrooms are like this one: overcrowded and without books or other educational materials.



In contrast, Rafiki classrooms feature small class sizes, caring teachers, a comprehensive curriculum, supplies, and books.

Why us? Although God's call to work in Africa is still surprising and humbling to us, together we have more than fifty years' experience teaching and working in classical Christian schools. And we recently were encouraged that God has been refining us to be useful in Africa. One of our Kenyan students from summer 2019 posted on Michelle's Facebook page, "The sparks of reading you left in us while you visited RICE Kenya have grown into flames."



Michelle exploring the Rafiki Village Kenya.

### Join us

We invite you to join with us in supporting this mission which the Lord is using to make a real difference in countless young lives.

Here are some ways you can participate, if you feel called to do so:

- Make a one-time or recurring tax-deductible contribution to support the cost of sending us to Africa (online at [rafikifoundation.org/missionaries#252](http://rafikifoundation.org/missionaries#252) or by mail with the enclosed envelope).
- Join us in the field either for a few weeks or longer ([rafikifoundation.org/opportunities](http://rafikifoundation.org/opportunities)).
- And most importantly, pray that all of the myriad things we need to do—wrapping up our lives in Houston, making provision for our college-age children, documentation, and more—get done so that we can take up our tasks in Uganda next summer.
- If you would like to join our Rafiki Prayer Group, please email [michelle@boldfacegraphics.com](mailto:michelle@boldfacegraphics.com).

We would love to talk more with you and/or your church or small group about Rafiki.

God bless you friends as we prepare to celebrate another Christmas,

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Missionary #252

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