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RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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Missionary #252

*“So neither he who plants
nor he who waters is
anything, but only God who
gives the growth... For we
are God’s fellow workers”
(1 Corinthians 3:7, 9).*

Dear friends,

Twenty years ago our fellow workers with the Rafiki Foundation planted this Village and this ministry. Since then there have been many hands watering and tending it. As ones who are the latest in that line, we can see God giving the growth—and it seems to come not because of what we have done, but despite it.

Here are some highlights of the things God has kept us busy with over the last few months.

Supporting the Church of Uganda

Our generous partners at Ligonier Ministries, headed by Chris Larson, donated 4,000 Reformation Study Bibles (RSB) to the 11-million member Church of Uganda (COU), one of our mission partners here. Our Home Office packed a container with those Bibles and 4,000 Acts and Matthew Rafiki Sunday School lessons and commentaries and shipped it to us.

In July the COU held its first all clergy conference since before COVID. This coincided with a visit from our Home Office, so Karen Elliott, Steve Kranz, and David joined the Anglicans at Ndejje University. It was a joyous occasion with over half of the 4,000 clergy members in attendance. We had the privilege of presenting each one with a copy of the RSB and one set of Rafiki Sunday School lessons.

Many pastors here struggle to find any Bible study materials to use in sermon preparation and discipling their congregations, so the impact of these rich resources is profound.

Rafiki Institute of Classical Education (RICE)

Here is an update to the independent accreditation of RICE, our teacher training college. After months of hard work by Cathy Brown, Carol Kranz, and Michelle, we applied to the Uganda National Council on Higher Education for a Provisional License as an Other Degree Granting Institution and for approval of two degree programs in Early Childhood and Primary Education. We are fortunate to have the support of our long-time university partner, Westminster Christian Institute Uganda, in pursuing this course.



Archbishop Stephen Kaziimba presents Reformation Study Bibles donated by Ligonier Ministries to Church of Uganda clergy during the All Clergy Conference at Ndejje University.

This is allowing us to offer a Holiday Top Up Program as well as our full time degree program in 2024. Because all teachers must have a degree by 2029, there is a big demand for programs that allow current teachers to upgrade certificates and diplomas. Teachers will attend classes here during primary and secondary school breaks in January, May, September, and December with reading assignments in between.

Crossway Million Bible Initiative

Another of our ministry partners, Crossway, publisher of the ESV Bible, is in the midst of a campaign to raise money to print and distribute one million Bibles for free to populations and areas where Bibles are hard to find and expensive. They asked Rafiki to help with the distribution in Africa.

In March, we found out that Uganda would get the first shipment, 23,000 Bibles. We spent the next few months wondering how do you distribute that many Bibles and how long would it take.

We found out in August. The container arrived at the Village about 3 p.m. on a Thursday afternoon. By 5 p.m., a crew of secondary boys had unloaded more than 2,000 boxes, stuffing one of our buildings almost to the ceiling.

We started contacting ministry and church partners. Two weeks later, almost 100 churches, ministries, schools, children's homes, remote villages, prisons, and more all over Uganda had taken all of them. We could have easily distributed several more containers full.



Village workers and students begin to unload 23,000 Bibles donated by Crossway from the container.



At the Presbyterian Church in Uganda 2023 General Assembly in Gulu City, David Graves presents Crossway Concise Study Bibles to PCU pastors.

Classical Christian Education Conference

At the beginning of March, we hosted The New Old Way Conference on Classical Christian Education (CCE) at a hotel/conference center near Makerere University. Great speakers from the U.S.A, the U.K., and Africa introduced and inspired more than 300 local teachers, administrators, and government leaders to the benefits of CCE.

We are grateful that God used the conference to raise awareness and interest—and that the conference is over! It takes a lot of planting and watering to put one of these on, as well as lots of fellow workers, on both sides of the Atlantic.



Speaking at the New Old Way Conference in Kampala on October 6, Dr. Grant Horner discusses Christian Worldview.

Please pray for:

- Full financial support for us to continue serving in Uganda (<https://rafikifoundation.org/missionary/michelle-and-david-graves-252>).
- Rafiki to grow to seventy missionaries on the field by December 2024.
- All RICE Programs to be filled up and accredited by June 2024.
- Rafiki Foundation to attain full funding of 3,500 Rafiki students and orphans by end of this year.
- All of our children and students to come to know God early and become godly contributors.
- 100 schools in Africa to be using the Rafiki Bible Study and curriculum by June 2024.
- The Rafiki Classical Academy in Eustis, Florida, to continue to grow and be a model for other schools and for training new missionaries.
- Wisdom as we steward all the resources God has given us and that the distribution of every Bible, Bible study, and the curriculum would bear much fruit.
- Our ten GL13 graduates as they complete their national exams and reintegrate into their communities.
- Continued safety and protection for the Uganda Village from criminal gangs and threats of Islamic terrorism.
- Awakening in the church around the world.

New schools, new partners

We continue to work with the COU to pilot the Rafiki Education System in five to ten of their primary schools beginning in the February 2024 school term. There are lots of moving parts to these endeavors, so we are praying we have the resources and manpower to provide the training and support.

In addition, we have met with the Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Uganda about partnering with that church here. They want to implement our Early Childhood curriculum in twenty-two of their schools beginning next year. If God brings this about, we are going to be busy!

Our residents, our school and the Village

While all of these other events are taking place, we continue to oversee our fifty-six resident children and the OrphanCare Program. Ten of our residents are in the final weeks of their time with us, and are currently taking their national exams. In December they will be reintegrated into their host families in the communities. When they receive their exam scores, we will help them with university or other tertiary education.

The school is coming to the end of the third term with 411 students enrolled. We have just begun enrollment for 2024 when we will be adding an additional section at Grade Level 4 and expect increased enrollment.

The Village currently employs over eighty Ugandans as teachers and support personnel. We are blessed with a talented and loyal staff, most of whom have been with us for years.

Visit to the U.S.A.

In December/January we will be in the Houston area for several weeks, to update our friends and mission partners on what we are doing. We will send you details soon on times and locations, but please let us know if there is a good time to meet with you.

Thanks

We are grateful to God for all of you and the generous support in both prayer and funding you have provided to us and to Rafiki to sustain our mission here.

In Christ,



Michelle and David Graves

P.S. From the Home Office: The Graves presently have less than 50% of their funding needed for 2023.



At the End-of-Term Recitation in August, GL13 students Deo and Agnes entertain the crowd of students and parents with a scene from a Ugandan play.



Executive Director Karen Elliott presents an ESV Student Study Bible to GL13 student and resident Chloe at morning assembly in July.