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# RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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***"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight"***  
(Proverbs 9:10).

Dear friends and family,

Happy New Year! I am not four months early—Ethiopia uses a different calendar, and the new year begins on September 11! So, what happened at the "end" of the year here at Rafiki Village Ethiopia?

I returned from Enrichment in July and had a few weeks of quality time with the resident students. Fun activities included a spikeball tournament, grade eight students celebrating the completion of their national exams, two students attending a technology seminar in Addis, roasting s'mores, and learning to make new foods such as pie, pizza, and no-bake cookies.



Some enriching summer activities: attending a seminar at the Addis Ababa Institute of Technology; baking strawberry pie; saying goodbye to some students as they prepare to visit relatives.

At the end of July, all residents went to stay with their extended families; the nine youngest students visited for three weeks, and everyone else stayed for six weeks. Though the Village was very quiet during this time, I was not bored. Our teachers came to the Village for four weeks of full-time training using the RICE curriculum. I assisted in the administration of the two training courses—one in transactional English, the other involving classical teaching methods. Teachers improved in

their English speaking and writing and gained a deeper understanding of Rafiki's classical Christian approach to education. We have already seen marked improvement in many of the teachers, and we know this will enrich their students' learning experiences during the coming school year.



Answering a teacher's question during the training course.

Something else that kept me very busy this summer was applying to get my residence ID card. I was granted a work permit soon after returning to Ethiopia, but the subsequent process to obtain an ID card was convoluted and tedious, involving over 15 trips into the capital city Addis Ababa. Thankfully, the main obstacle has been solved and the rest of the process should be straightforward. Praise the Lord that He moved mountains and the main obstacle blocking me from obtaining an ID card was overcome. *Please pray that the remaining steps in the process will go smoothly and be free from the hindrance of bureaucratic corruption.*



A photo from one of my many trips into Addis. Can you see the donkeys on the overpass?

Fellow missionary Sarah and I have been holding summer school enrichment classes for the nine youngest students since they returned from their family visits. We are focusing on mental math, penmanship, and reading comprehension to maintain the students' skills and prepare them for the upcoming school year. I have been pleased to see how some students who tend to struggle in these areas are thriving with the more individualized help and focused studying efforts than they usually have during the school year.



Grade 4 and 5 students—and a Rafiki Mother!—practicing math facts.

The past few months were full of much learning; residents gained new cooking and athletic abilities and were enriched in essential study skills, teachers improved in their English proficiency and understanding of classical Christian education, and I discovered more about bureaucratic processes than I cared to. But most importantly, I was uplifted as I studied the book of Proverbs with the teachers each day in the Rafiki Bible Study and saw more clearly the stark contrast of a life lived with wisdom compared to folly. One is guided by a love for the Lord and passionate prayer for others, the other motivated by corruption and self-righteousness. Knowledge of Jesus is truly the most important knowledge anyone can have, and it leads to godly action that reconciles the world to Christ. May you know and believe this truth more deeply over the coming year, and see the fruits of wisdom in your life.

*Please pray that the Lord will provide more Rafiki Missionaries and more day student sponsors so that we can bring Bible study and classical Christian education to more needy children.* Perhaps He is calling you to be the answer to one of those prayers? Visit [www.RafikiFoundation.org](http://www.RafikiFoundation.org) to learn more.

Melkam Addis Amet!

Love,

Esther Honegger

## Prayer Requests

- *A new NGO visa and then my resident ID card to be processed smoothly in the next few weeks.*
- *Time to prepare for the classes I will teach during the new school year, despite needing to leave the country and return on a new visa.*
- *A heart that trusts God more deeply and turns to Him quickly in times of both need and rejoicing.*