



# RAFIKI

FOUNDATION  
MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER

December 2018 – Amy Ketcham and Tekle Kumera

***"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus"*** (Philippians 4:6-7 NLT).

Merry Christmas and Seasons Greetings!

I must confess that I have never been one to send holiday letters. You know, the kind which attempts to jam-pack twelve months' worth of events into one letter in order to keep friends, family, and other folks informed about what has happened in your life or ministry. Frankly, there is not enough space to explain God's faithfulness to us and our Rafiki family over the last year. But since Tekle and I have not written in a while, we do want to share some of the highlights of the year with our faithful supporters...

January

At the end of December 2017, we said goodbye to our dear brother and sisters in Christ, Macia and Paul Fuller and Esther Honegger. Tekle and I took up the mantles of all the administrative duties on site and then welcomed Amy's mother Marnie to celebrate Ethiopian Christmas (January 7th). We also welcomed MiniMissionary Jenay Yuen who had just graduated from university in December and wanted to volunteer here for a few months before heading to medical school.

February

For the first time in five years, a container was shipped from the Home Office in Florida to Ethiopia, carrying loads of curriculum, library books, a copier, items for the dining hall, a tractor, clothing for the children, Bibles donated by the Rosemary Jensen Bible Foundation for theological students at various seminaries in the country, and much more. (Little did we know at the time that it would take over 7 months for us to obtain duty-free status for some items on this container and get it to clear Ethiopian customs!) Jenay did an amazing job teaching grade two while their class teacher was on maternity leave. And Amy breathed a big sigh of relief when our yearly financial audit for the Federal Ministry of Charities and Societies was successfully completed!



MiniMissionaries Jenay, Dianne, and Craig

March

This month started off with a bang as a visit from Rafiki's Home Office staff coincided with Amy coming down with a terrible case of food poisoning (no correlation between the two events)! MiniMissionaries Josh and Melissa Egbert from California helped with maintenance projects, trained the older kids on some basic coding, and taught the moms and kids some great dance moves. They delighted us with their senses of humor, hard work, and delicious baked goods. We were also blessed by a group of Dutch Bible College students who were doing mission work in Ethiopia; they assisted in the preschool and conducted sports activities for a few afternoons.

April

Retirees Dianne and Craig Nason spent six weeks teaching, story-telling, and basically being the resident grandparents for our fifty-two kids. MiniMissionary Vivian Rodgers helped Amy tremendously with the ChildCare Program by completing an inventory of all the children's clothing and shoes; we were then able to donate some items to those in need at the local churches in Modjo.



Dianne reading to one of our girls

May

We praised God for the safe and successful construction of the new Junior Secondary School. Our ten oldest girls moved into a cottage together with their new mom, Ebise.



The older girls modeling their new pj's outside their cottage

June

MiniMissionary Charity Miller (a native Floridian and grad student in the U.K.) shared her expertise in theater by conducting drama "camp" and teaching the resident children about theater production, acting, and directing; it culminated in a student-written, acted, and directed production. Also, at the end of the school year, Rafiki had our first-ever kindergarten graduation. While Amy was in the U.S., the Dulany family (one of the families that established this Rafiki Village) came to help.



Tekle with our new graduates



Grade one students

July

Ken Dulany and Tekle were able to finally obtain duty-free status for some items on our container! Later in the month, twenty-two of the oldest children spent two weeks visiting their extended families. For all of them, this was not only an eye-opening experience, but also a wonderful way for them to start preparing for life after they graduate from high school and leave Rafiki.

August

What a huge blessing it was to have here Sarah MacMahon from Amy's home church, First Congregational Church of Hamilton, Massachusetts! She started a fledgling music program with our younger resident kids during her visit.

Two teenagers from Holland who attend our English-speaking church nearby volunteered to help Sarah for a couple of weeks. Our teachers returned after an eight-week break for in-service and preparation for the new school year. Oh, and Tekle and Amy celebrated their second wedding anniversary!

#### September

We enrolled twenty-two new day students, welcomed MiniMissionaries Beth and Michael Kegler-Gray, and full-time missionary Wendy Kinka to head the ChildCare Program, hosted another Family Visitation Day for the kids and their families, and...the long-awaited-for container arrived! Distribution of its contents was like celebrating Christmas in September (actually we did celebrate Ethiopian New Year's in September—did you know that it's 2011 here?)



Family visitation day. Robel and Etsub's grandmother brought me a gift to thank me for "caring for her children"



Watching the container being delivered

#### October

Let's just say it was busy. Very, very busy.

#### November

Last year at this time, the process to obtain Amy's work permit and resident permit was long, confusing, and frustrating. This year's renewals were accomplished in fewer than 10 days, with minimal frustration, and only a 15-minute wait at Immigration! Truly miraculous!

As we wrote this, we have been reminded of God's faithfulness in His provision for all we need, especially people! He brought us just the right helpers at just the right times and we are so grateful. We are humbled by your support and thankful for the privilege it enables us to have—to serve with Rafiki here in Ethiopia. Thank you and God bless you abundantly this year!

Love,

*Amy and Tekle*

Amy Ketcham and Tekle Kumera  
PO Box 2871  
Nazareth, Ethiopia  
AFRICA

E-mail: [ketchaminghana@gmail.com](mailto:ketchaminghana@gmail.com)

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