

APRIL 2025

RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



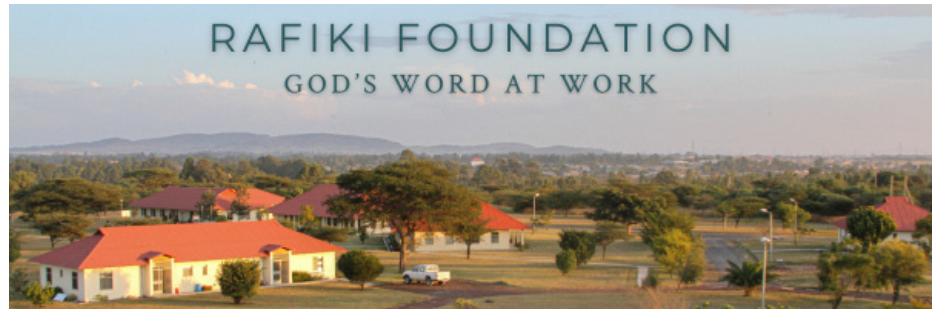
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Missionary #102

“Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert” (Isaiah 43:19).



Dear friends and family,

Selamno! This is the most common greeting in Ethiopia. It is a word that closely resembles *Salam* or *Shalom*, otherwise known as Peace. Once the greeting has been acknowledged, we can begin speaking in the English language. The site of the Rafiki Village Ethiopia was once a large farm, but since 2009, the property has been home to children who will be future leaders for their country. Twenty-one buildings house the educational and residential facilities of the Village.

After three one-month stints at Rafiki Ethiopia to help, it was decided Doug and Carolyn were the best suited couple to continue the work. We said goodbye to our Nigerian brothers and sisters and moved to Ethiopia at the end of January this year. We are pleased to see that so much work has already been done here in Ethiopia. The Village has a fully functioning school with early childhood, primary, and secondary schools. The first class of grade twelve students graduated last year, and the next set of seniors will graduate on July 12, which is almost around the corner.

One of Rafiki's last year's graduates has found university life surprisingly challenging, especially in the moral sense. As an exam was about to begin, one student received a telephone message with the answers to the exam. Our Rafiki graduate was asked by other students to hurriedly write down the answers but he refused. He told the other students that he knew the material and did not need to cheat. When the teacher arrived and found that the students had access to the answers, he gave the whole class zeros. Our graduate had to beg to be allowed to take the exam since he had refused to cheat. Our graduate saw first hand what the Lion King clearly pointed out, Cheetahs never prosper! Another of our graduates attends a university that does not have clean drinking water. She has been sick for a while and is still recovering. She has to buy packaged water for daily use, which is a challenge she has never had to deal with before. Her illness has impeded her ability to stay current with her classroom assignments.

There are a number of good opportunities for high school graduates

who score well on their grade twelve exams to step into tertiary education. Because many of our day student families do not have the financial resources to send their children to college or university, there are fewer opportunities. One of our goals is to find ways for the graduates to get into occupations that will assist in lifting their families to a higher standard of living. Our teachers and guidance counselor are putting their heads together to come up with new ideas. You too can pray with us for some outside-of-the-box thinking.

Being new to Ethiopia, we are still discovering a number of opportunities that can help our children and the local community. Stay tuned for future updates regarding partnering with a local ministry that provides income to widows who are skilled in basket weaving and sewing. Second, there is no English speaking church service in our local town of Modjo. Inquiries are being made to see if our Rafiki resident children could be the first members in this endeavor. Their English skills are very good, and could be put to good use in the establishment of a new church service. Third, the local community has been working hard on beautification of roads and creating garden areas to sit and talk in. Our Rafiki Village will embark on a concerted plan to beautify the compound with flower beds, flowering trees, fruit tree orchards, and meeting areas.

Praises

- Rafiki's partnership with Mekane Yesus, Ethiopia's Lutheran church body, is strong and holds promise for expanded work together.
- All seven of the resident graduates from last year's class are in university.
- A container of Bibles arrived for our Ethiopian church partners!
- The newest Rafiki Mother is settling in well, and another Mother is in training.
- A recent inspection of Rafiki schools by local school supervisors went very well. So well in fact that one of the supervisors asked if he could enroll his son in our school!
- The first conversion of a cottage into a classroom building has begun. The building will house an early childhood class.

Will you join us in praying for this Village and thanking God for his faithfulness?

Love,

Doug & Carolyn

Carolyn and Doug Koepke

Prayer Requests



- *Pray for new teachers needed in early childhood, PE, Amharic, and first grade classes.*
- *Rafiki's students to take academic integrity seriously.*
- *Our young lady who has suffered from contaminated drinking water, for renewed health and ability to catch up in her academic studies.*
- *A successful partnership with a local ministry that helps widows.*
- *Establishment of the first English speaking church service in our community.*
- *One of our students who has been disobedient and disrespectful towards others, pray for God to soften his heart.*
- *The new Rafiki Mothers, and for these dear women to raise the resident children as their own.*