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RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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Missionary #253

Dear friends and family,

Happy holiday season! In honor of Thanksgiving (which I desperately miss!), let us make this letter a series of short stories, each of which has caused me to give thanks for the progress of Rafiki's work here in Malawi.

Last term, a father visited my office and asked me if he could purchase the Rafiki curriculum. His son had been in a traditional Malawian school, but this well-educated and thoughtful pastor did not like all the secular and humanist content of the national curriculum. He had heard about Rafiki, and had gone online and read everything he could find about us and about me in particular. "I believe this is the best way—I love this classical Christian concept." He wanted to send his son part-time to the school to be taught some of the Rafiki subjects, and homeschool the rest of the time using our curriculum. He also urged me, "you must train the students' parents in this philosophy—they do not really understand. They believe education is all about memorizing things to pass the national exam. You must give this system to us, really train the Malawians so that they can hold it and pass on its legacy themselves." I give thanks for this unusually insightful parent!

As the new term approached and we offered entrance exams for open spots in the school, I was deluged with applications and calls and texts of people begging me to let their child into the school. The school has a waiting list of over 100, and I regularly have people begging me for a spot—everyone from the policeman on the side of the road, to the vegetable vendor in the market, to the head of the Presbyterian denomination. It is actually stressful to have to so often say "I'm sorry, I have no space," but I am thankful for the incredible hunger the people have for what we are offering.



First day of the new school year—
everyone looking so smart!

Two weeks ago, the father of a day student came to see me because his daughter had not shown up for the beginning of school. She was an excellent student who had been here for years, so we called to find her. He explained to me that he had had an injury to his leg and could not work right now. His wife could barely make enough money to pay for the family's basic necessities, so they had no money to pay school fees. In broken English but with the most earnest seriousness, he explained, "But madam, we want her to be here so much. I tried to put her into a public

school, and it is so bad, I cannot stand it. My daughter is different than all the other children because of this place. They teach how to memorize, but you have taught her to be wise. She knows her subjects better, and she also knows the Bible. I love Jesus, but all I could ever tell her was to read her Bible—I could not explain it to her. Now she comes home and explains it to us, and she tells us how everything in school is connected to the Bible. You are transforming these children, and it will not stop there. Now they will transform our church and our whole community!” I listened to this sweet, humble father in near-awe. Without ever having sat through a training session or read a book about classical Christian education, he had almost perfectly grasped the heart of our vision, because he was seeing it played out in his own home. Again, I was thankful—nearly to the point of tears.

Last week, I was driving with my assistant through town and she shared that she had prayed much for this job. She had worked before at a missionary school where they did not pay their teachers well, and often ran out of money to pay at all. Similarly, the government schools are right now in financial crisis and have not paid their teachers. But here at Rafiki, her salary was good and reliable, and she was learning so much about Scripture. “And truly, madam, in all of Mzuzu, everyone knows that Rafiki and only one other school are the top. When people find that someone has worked for Rafiki, they automatically believe that the person is a good worker and trustworthy—that is Rafiki’s reputation.” I give thanks for the supporters who have made this mission financially stable and for those workers—both missionaries and nationals—who have built such a reputation for this Village!



An excellent teacher always involves the student in active learning!

Just two days ago, as we held a celebratory dinner for our graduating students, one of our girls sat next to me and told me, “when Rafiki first came here, there were seriously no white people, and many were scared to allow the children to go to Rafiki. When our extended families wanted to send us to live in the Village, our neighbors said, ‘they’re going to eat your children, they’re going to sell them!’ But now, they tell us they wish they had not been so foolish. They tell us that anyone can recognize a Rafiki kid anywhere, just by looking. We look healthier and our facial expression is also different. Now, wherever I go, people ask me to help them with questions and problems, and whatever a Rafiki kid



The graduates giving their mamas special thank you gifts after the ceremony

Prayer Requests

- *Financial provision for Rafiki to remain strong and grow—many day students and residents still lack full funding, and inflation continues to put pressure on operating costs.*
- *Continued work of the spirit to regenerate our children’s hearts and bring true fruit of sanctification.*
- *Fruitful partnerships with several schools who want our curriculum and many churches who want to use our Sunday school curriculum.*
- *My travels home in December/January to be smooth, fruitful, and restful.*
- *More missionaries—short and long term—to share in this work*



The oh-so-popular group selfie as graduates wait for the ceremony to begin

says, they believe, because we are educated and know the Bible.” I give thanks for these orphan children, many of whom are now no longer children, but young men and women going out into their communities, noticeably different, and respected because of their training and the way they live their lives.

How good the Lord has been to allow me to see and hear these immensely encouraging testimonies. They remind me in the middle of busy and often frustrating weeks that the Lord is at work here. It is a huge, exhausting, wonderful task, and I constantly feel “there’s so much to be done—and people are begging for it—and not enough of me!”

But what joy to be permitted to share in the Lord’s work! How soul-satisfying are my days, even when I fall exhausted into bed at the end of them! I give thanks to you dear friends and partners who are making it possible for me to be here sharing in this work, and I ask you to give thanks with me for what God is doing here in Rafiki Malawi. I also pray that He would call some of you to join this work here in Africa. Oh my friends, the harvest is white, and there is not enough of us to go around. Who will come? And if you cannot physically come, is there another way that the Lord might allow you to partner in this work?

May the Lord richly bless you as you serve in your own communities and as you keep an eye towards His global church, always on the march!

Love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anna". The letters are fluid and connected, with a large initial 'A'.

Anna Liebing