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# RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



Sarah McMahon

PO Box 2871  
Nazareth, Ethiopia  
AFRICA

Contact information  
Email:  
SarahM@RafikiFoundation.org  
Missionary #247

*“...do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength” (Nehemiah 8:10).*

Dear friends and family,

It may surprise you that I have recently needed to make Nehemiah 8:10 my compass. Many of you have enjoyed my laugh, smile, or singing, so you may be thinking that it is strange I would need a reminder like this. The truth is, though, that I have not always seen joy as a strength, but instead as just a sign of frivolity and lack of seriousness. While there have been times when that was true, I have often sacrificed joy in order to be seen as responsible and thoughtful. However, through prayer and conversations with friends, I have realized that joy is exactly one of the puzzle pieces that is needed so desperately here. The work we do is taxing and often without many breaks. Ethiopians continue to experience challenges of civil conflict and rampant lawlessness, and easily lose hope that anything could change for the better. So, in that light, I have decided to “fight my battles with joy.” I choose to defy hopelessness, monotony, and annoyance with joy. I choose to follow joy wherever it leads me—in my work, my worship, and my rest times. Besides, I want to give God the glory, living as He created me to be. I hope that causes you to give glory to God as well!

Just today was the end of our first semester of school. It may seem late to most of you, but we do not usually begin school until after Ethiopian New Year which is in September. What a joy it has been to see all that was accomplished this term! Several grades presented for recitation today. I am always impressed by the variety of subjects our students learn. Included was a drama about microscopes by grade five, a poem about hard work by a sixth grader, and a presentation about “Big Data” by the twelfth grade students. It is very hard to believe this was their last recitation presentation since they will be graduating and moving on at the end of the year as our first graduating class!



Grade 12 IT presentation  
on the benefits and  
challenges of “Big Data”



Grade 5 science drama  
about microscopes

Now, I am excited to announce that I will be visiting Massachusetts this spring! I have already made plans to be there from March 29 until April 15. This means several things. First of all, I plan to attend First Congregational Church of Hamilton for Good Friday and Easter services, as well as give an update at some point. Secondly, I need to increase my overall funding which means that I want to partner with more interested churches in the area. Do you attend or know of a church that you think would be interested in supporting my work with Rafiki? Let's set up a time for me to speak! A Sunday service, mid-week meeting, or Bible study small group times are all available. Simply reach out with contact information so I can begin to schedule those as soon as possible. I am looking forward to it!

One complication I was unaware of until it was too late to fix, is that my driver's license has expired. This means that I will need to rely completely on others to help me get from place to place while I am in the U.S. I know this will probably limit what I can do, but I also know the Lord is good and will be taking care of this real need through all of you. Please let me know if you can help with this in any way. Thank you in advance.

As always, thank you to all of you who support me in SO many ways. You pray, call, email, and give your time and resources. I could not be here without you. I love you all so much.

Fighting this battle with joy,



Sarah McMahan



A grade 6 student reciting a poem about the hard work farmers do



With some grade 2 students presenting their "Stained Glass Window" artwork for the headmaster's office