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RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



Amber and Paul Okoth

PO Box 12714
Kampala, UGANDA
EAST AFRICA

Contact information

Email:
AmberJ@RafikiFoundation.org
PaulO@RafikiFoundation.org

Missionary #245

Dear friends and family,

It has been nine months since we arrived here in the lush and humid city of Kampala. During this time, we have had the incredible opportunity to be actively involved in the life of a rapidly expanding church community. Additionally, we have been fortunate enough to work at the breathtaking Rafiki Village which is situated in the charming town of Wakiso.

I (Paul) have been fortunate to embark on an enriching journey to remote schools nestled deep within the heart of Uganda. During my time there, God has allowed me to witness the remarkable growth of two exceptional schools that have adopted and embraced the Rafiki Education System (RES). Moreover, I have had the honor of spearheading my very first teacher training program, CORE (Classical Orientation to Rafiki Education). This experience has been truly transformative and has further solidified my passion for education.



Paul with a group of teachers for CORE training



Outreach schools classrooms

It is always a great pleasure to distribute brand new Bibles to the enthusiastic second graders who have been diligently using the RES for a whole year now in primary schools that are using the RES. These Bibles, generously provided by the Rosemary Jensen Foundation, serve as a wonderful gift to these young learners, further enhancing their reading journey and fostering a deeper connection with the RES curriculum and most importantly



Paul with second grade receiving Bibles

to God. It is truly incredible to witness the profound impact that the Bible, the Rafiki Bible Study and the Rafiki Curriculum are having in this community. The transformative power of these resources is not only shaping minds, but also changing lives in remarkable ways.

Allow me to share an inspiring story from one of the schools. Recently, we received heartwarming news about a student who comes from an Islamic background. This student, after engaging with the Bible and participating in the Rafiki Bible Study and the various songs and chants found in the Rafiki Curriculum, has undergone a beautiful transformation. Not only does he now constantly sing Bible songs to his mother at home, but he has also discovered the immeasurable joy of having a personal relationship with a loving God. This newfound connection allows him to freely communicate with God and share his thoughts and feelings. It is truly a testament to the power of faith and the ability of these resources to touch lives in profound and meaningful ways.

The Lord has graciously given me the opportunity to visit and observe classes at various schools and provide valuable feedback. In addition, I have conducted several follow-up trainings with schools that recently started the RES. Finding these schools has proven to be quite a challenge as I have gotten lost three times on my way. Google Maps has been taking me on some wild adventures! Furthermore, I had the privilege of conducting a follow-up training session at the Rafiki Campus, as well as another CORE training with a new school. I am eagerly anticipating the involvement of other prospective schools in spreading God's Word and nurturing not only the minds, but also the hearts of the children in Uganda.



Follow up with outreach schools training

Here at the Rafiki Village, I also serve as the Plant Manager. In this role, I am responsible for overseeing various aspects of the Village's operations. One of the key tasks I undertake is to ensure that everything is in proper working condition. This involves regular maintenance checks and addressing any issues that may arise. For example, we often (more than you think) encounter leaking washrooms and broken locks which require immediate attention. Additionally, I have the privilege of participating in Bible study sessions with the national workers. These dedicated individuals play a crucial role in maintaining the Village's appearance and ensuring that it remains a safe and welcoming environment for everyone. They work tirelessly to keep the grounds well-maintained, including mowing the extensive grass areas. Furthermore, they are responsible for ensuring that the students and teachers are well-fed, and that everyone's nutritional needs are met. Overall, serving as the Plant Manager at the Rafiki Village has allowed me to witness the incredible dedication and hard work of the national workers. It is a privilege to work alongside them and contribute to the smooth functioning of this wonderful community.

I (Amber) have been amazed by God's grace and faithfulness over and over and over again since I arrived in East Africa. He had many plans about how to use me that He apparently told Karen Elliot back in 2016 when we meet on a plane! I have had the wonderful privilege of serving as the Headmaster for the Rafiki Classical Christian School in Uganda. In January, I was anxious about stepping into the shoes of Kelly Fore (the former Uganda Headmaster). BUT GOD, in His grace, stilled my heart, affirmed my service, and guided my steps. Here in the Uganda school, I have met the most wonderful God-fearing team of head teachers who I get to work with, learn from, and train daily. They are eager to know more about God and how to serve Him in a godly way. What I love the most about working together is that when there are challenging decisions and opposing thoughts or opinions, they are always settled



Uganda preschool class

by God's Word. Paul in Philippians talks about having the mind of Christ. And it is such a delight to be united in Christ with these dedicated leaders. We study God's Word together, grow together, and pray together, seeking wisdom and discernment to make the next best decision for God's glory within the school.



Primary students and their spelling bee certificates



Kindergarten students celebrating 100 days of school

This year, I have been focused on training the teachers in godly discipline. We have focused on the sins of the student and the teacher, on being imitators of God, and on seeking to teach, train, rebuke, and correct the way God does us. We have a tendency to look for a quick fix when it comes to discipline and our teachers are learning that discipline is rooted in love that forgives, extends mercy, gives grace, exercises patience, admits fault, gently corrects, and faithfully rebukes over and over and over. We have been discussing consequences and how they can be more purposeful, meaningful, and logical. We want to be intentional with how we train our children. By God's grace, He so perfectly in His timing had us studying Numbers and Deuteronomy this term. We have looked all term at how God faithfully instructed His people even when they were unfaithful. He still revealed Himself to them and taught them who they were—a holy people, set apart for His glory. And that is our prayer always—that our teachers would faithfully discipline, teach, and train these students to know God and how to be a people set apart for His glory. *Please pray for us, that our efforts will bear fruit for His kingdom.*

I am thankful for the work here at Rafiki and for the teachers' hearts for the gospel. Their faith has encouraged and strengthened our school. When they are challenged by me to work and teach for the glory of the Lord, they lean in and faithfully trust in the Lord to do the work. We grow together each morning in Bible study, sing hymns to the praise of our God, and we pray unceasingly for our students. I ask that you will continue to support the work and pray, pray, pray.

Love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amber + Paul Okoth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Amber and Paul Okoth