

MAY 2023

RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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Missionary #254

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9).

Dear friends and family,

Our daily Village-wide Rafiki Bible Study has us currently in the Book of Joshua. Here we are commanded to hold fast to biblical truth and the commands of Yahweh, and to be strong and fearless. Our journeys in Malawi of late have taken us to the other three major cities in the country on a variety of business. Those that related to dealing with the various layers and agencies of government on behalf of our Village are not always pleasant. Yet we go boldly before the magistrates and technocrats knowing that the Lord is with us. Before immigration, revenue, labor, and social welfare authorities—in a system that sees us not so much as a Christian organization lifting orphans, widows, and destitute families out of poverty, but as a seemingly “rich” NGO to try to tap into or otherwise control—we have stood and declared we work for Christ. For example, we were recently ordered to close our school on the one Malawian national “holiday” that is Muslim. We refused. Like Peter and John before the Sadducees, we have declared “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge.”

But other encounters are much more delightful. For example, the Home Office team came for another visit and rather than making the long drive up and back from the capital city airport, they arranged with Africa Inland Mission International (AIM) to charter one of their Kenya-based planes and fly direct to the airstrip in Mzuzu! Having a plane actually use this airstrip is about a twice-a-year novelty. We had to coordinate air routing and permits with the national government, purchase and ship jet fuel in barrels from the south for refueling, coordinate for customs agents to be onsite, etc., etc. And on their departure three days later, all the traffic on one of the main paved roads through town came to a standstill as crowds lined the airfield fence to watch the plane taxi and take off. Thank you, AIM, for supporting our Home Office team!



Africa Inland Mission

Here is another fruitful and delightful encounter. As we continue on our journey to get the Rafiki Institute for Classical Education (RICE) teachers’ college accredited, we hosted a contingent of Directors and Chief Education Officers from the Ministry of Education, who traveled up from Lilongwe to see what this college of classical Christian education was all about. Along with our University of Livingstonia partners, we introduced them to RICE and Rafiki; and they were highly impressed. We feel we

have a supportive partnership from this Ministry as we continue forward with plans to become a campus of UNILIA.

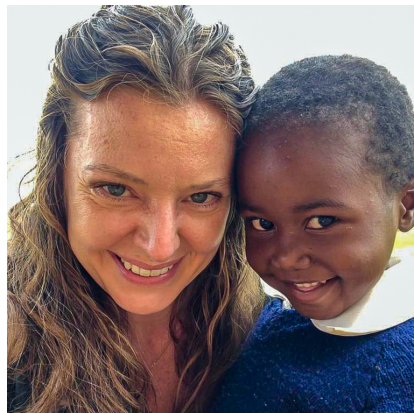


Ministry of Education and UNILIA officials with our teachers' college in the background

Additionally, we traveled to the southern city of Zomba to deliver several boxes of Reformation Study Bibles and supporting materials to our partner denomination's seminary in that city. These Bibles are sent to us for distribution by Crossway Publishers who partner with Rafiki to provide our African brothers with Bible resources. Then we visited the biggest city, Blantyre, to submit a permit application for a new missionary who is slated to join us this year. May Nealey from Houston is a newly minted (commissioned) Rafiki Missionary who is raising support to join us! *Pray that she is able to gain sufficient support to come to Malawi soon, and that the government will grant her permit expeditiously.* And, if you are led to support May or would like to learn more about her, here's a link to her Rafiki webpage: <https://www.RafikiFoundation.org/missionary/May-Nealey-259>

Our final travels took us to Lilongwe for a meeting with the U.S. Embassy and a stop at an ex-pat grocery store for things not available in Mzuzu, like bagels, cream cheese, and taco shells—Yum!

Our resident children continue to thrive and grow in wisdom and stature before the Lord and our community. Our girls choir recently sang at a commencement ceremony at UNILIA with the President of Malawi in attendance. More donors have signed up to sponsor our day students like this little cutie pictured with our school Headmaster Anna! Without the gracious support of a Rafiki donor, this little girl would have not been able to remain in our school. Thank you!



Headmaster Anna with student

Prayer Requests

- *That every one of our children will embrace the love of Christ and be placed permanently in the palm of His hand.*
- *Praise that the scourge of deadly cholera of the last few months has faded with the beginning of dry season. There have been no new reported cases in May.*
- *For increased Rafiki donations and financial means to fully fund our graduates in tertiary education and allow more day students to receive a Christ-centered education.*
- *For new Missionary May Nealey that the Lord will provide full funding and that she will join us soon.*
- *For the Lord's favor in gaining government accreditation of our teachers' college.*

And with the repair of some bikes as reported in our last newsletter, expeditions like this one are helping to strengthen ties with our older charges.

Finally, we have really enjoyed our monthly greater Missionary Fellowship gatherings and cookouts for prayer, Bible study, food, and encouragement. One of the American missionaries in this group is a family of eight. Being an MK (missionary kid) has some challenges, but also unique advantages and experiences. For example, how many kids get to have their own pet monkey?

Thank you for your continuing prayers and support. Be bold! Be strong! For the Lord your God is with us and with you!

Soli Deo gloria!

Love,

The Richards

Maureen and Jay Richards

