



RAFIKI

FOUNDATION
MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER

August 2020 – Shakiyla Solomon Ishaku

“Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people. For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior” (Titus 3:1-6).

Dear friends and family,

As I read through Paul’s letter to Titus, I cannot help but feel those words in my heart. Paul knew what was to come in Crete. Paul knew that the people were in disarray and that sin had overtaken the desire for righteousness. Paul knew that the churches needed a reminder of who God had called them to be and how it was possible through Christ alone. I know that things do not necessarily “make sense” right now. I am sure each of you, at one time or another, has found yourself angry or frustrated with something in the media, news, or checkout line. I am praying that we can take heed to the encouragement Paul sent to Titus as he too was called to transform a nation, not through cultural wars or forced assimilation, but by engaging with the people of those cultures and living a life that displayed the regenerative love of Christ. I am hopeful that God’s people will use those truths in calming the flame of this social, economic, and health wildfire.

In my last newsletter, I announced that we would go ahead with the wedding. We decided not to risk doing anything large, given the outbreak and government restrictions, so we had as small of a ceremony as we could. Since my family was unable to attend, I appointed the senior girls as bridesmaids. They loved being able to choose their

dress styles and have their hair and makeup done. I ran late, so I thought it necessary to include the picture of me running out of the house while on the phone with my pastor who was saying, “You’re late, where are you?” No surprises there! Although it was not what we were expecting, it was a testament to God’s provision and protection over our lives. I FaceTimed my momma and sister before the wedding, and one of my nieces stayed on FaceTime with my family during the entire ceremony. We danced and blew kisses to them after saying our “I wills,” and for that, I thank God. Wedding pictures are at the end of this newsletter.

Here, at the school, we have gotten government approval to re-open campus for our senior students. This includes those in grade eight and grade twelve for them to prepare for national exams, which start next week. We have been socially distancing the desks, wearing face masks, and washing our hands regularly on campus to abide by federal regulations. It is everything but ordinary, but the students are making do, and the teachers are of great help.

Our maintenance staff has worked tirelessly to renovate the new classrooms. As the children grow up, graduate, and move off-campus, their

cottages are renovated into classrooms, and the staff is doing a great job with the renovations, reconstruction, and painting so the children will have larger, more accessible learning spaces.



Our great maintenance staff

The campus is looking more breath-taking as the days pass. I don't think I have shared pictures of the compound since my first month here in November 2019, but look at how beautiful God's creation is! This picture below is the view from right outside my office.



Although the children miss being in school, they are undoubtedly enjoying uniform-free days. I remember that feeling! They have been exploring different styles, colors, and ways to incorporate Nigerian fabric with their own "touch."



Jennifer in her new skirt

Since moving off of the compound, Ishaku and I have invested our free time in the renovation of local shops. It is a service that we did not see as service until it came to fruition. God put it on our hearts, and without hesitation, we obeyed. It started with our favorite restaurant. The owner, Mommy Sarki, was mentioned in my newsletter from October 2019. She has been a beautiful picture of Jesus in my life since moving here. We re-tiled the floor, fixed the ceiling and roofing, and re-painted the building. If you recall from the October newsletter, she had been robbed, well, that happened many times since, so we were able to install higher security doors and windows in her shop. She is family. Her family is family, and we cannot wait to see where God puts us next.



Emmanuel painting the shop

Please continue to pray for our senior students. As they begin their exams and prepare for life outside of Rafiki; the expected anxiety is setting in. We have talked much about time management, money management, pure devotion to God, and intentional growth. Pray that God would calm their hearts and minds. Pray that He would make Himself even more known to them through His word and His people. They are a small class, but they have big desires and a high calling to impact Nigeria.



The Rafiki seniors

As always, thank you for your continued support, prayers, and encouragement. Please share the newsletter to anyone you think would be interested in knowing more about what's happening with us in Nigeria. As our family grows, so will our needs. *Please pray alongside us for people to join in this life ministry of service to the Kingdom. We love you!*

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