

APRIL 2023

RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



Crystal and Theodore Wilson

P.O. Box 750-00618
Ruaraka Nairobi
Kenya EAST AFRICA

Individual contact information
Crystal:
crystalw@rafikifoundation.org
(330)328-2882

Theo:
theo@rafikifoundation.org
(330)564-5999

Missionary #258

“The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you” (Philippians 4:9).

Jambo, from Kenya!

“Seize the day!” As the morning assembly concludes, you can hear Rafiki students joyfully shout these words when prompted with the Latin phrase “Carpe diem.”

At the time of this publication, we have been in East Africa for about 4 months. It is hard to believe how fast the time has gone by! But with time, we have felt an even greater assurance that Rafiki Village Kenya is exactly where God wanted us to serve in this season of our ministry. The waking hours have supplied many opportunities to serve, disciple, and share the love of Jesus with the Rafiki children, both individually and corporately.



Getting our bearings in the Village

Taking on the role of school administrators has been both amazing and challenging. The school year in Kenya is based on the calendar year, with the first trimester beginning in January. When we arrived in early December, we had a warm welcome from Paul and Amber Okoth (the missionaries we would be replacing). They provided us with a lot of practical knowledge during our turnover, and then departed for their new assignment in Uganda.

Our first assignments before the school year began were to begin a Bible study, to prepare a 10-day series of teacher training sessions for the current faculty, and to interview and hire teachers to fill some open positions. Thankfully, we had the assistance and insight of Kenyan nationals who are part of the Village’s administrative staff.

January 2023 started off with a bang as we developed trainings and activities that would help us get acquainted with the teachers, enhance their big-picture understanding of classical Christian education, and help them to integrate a biblical worldview more fully into each of their subject areas using Rafiki’s Africa-tailored curriculum. It has been a blessing to get to know and lead these dedicated and godly young people (most of whom are about our children’s age).

In March, faculty, administrators, and students participated in the first ever Rafiki Matriculation Ceremony. The purpose of this centuries-old tradition is to celebrate the admission of students to a new class, a new school, or a new college, and affirms the gathering of individuals

into a unified body to be educated. The highlight of the event, attended by day student families, was the keynote speeches delivered by two former Rafiki residents and graduates—which brought wisdom, real-life experience, and encouragement to the current student body.

Troubling times, faithful God

As it was in the wake of 2007 election, many Kenyan citizens and members of the opposition party have become frustrated with the policies and spending of the new administration. Demonstrations were scheduled twice a week to disturb government operations in response to rising costs and shortages of food and other necessities.

At times, teachers felt compelled to stay home or to leave school mid-day, because they rely on public transportation (“mu-TA-tus”) and their only travel route was through the crowds of angry protesters. Parents were encouraged to drop off and pick up children at their own discretion when transporting their students to school, since “demonstration days” brought with them real safety concerns.

Prior to Easter the weekly protests were canceled, but Mr. Odock, a national who serves as the Village Administrative Assistant, continues to keep us updated on public safety issues and Theo’s security “antennas” remain up. When we do have to leave the Village for food and other necessities, we have been more cautious about our travel routes and times. Although the name Emmanuel is usually associated with the Christmas season, we can say with assurance that God has been “with us” through this season as well: blessing the Village, our day student families, and our staff.

On a lighter note, a school-wide competition, known as The Rafiki Games, was introduced during the first term of school, to build school spirit and celebrate students’ godly character, academic work, athleticism, and artistic abilities. Points are awarded or deducted from a student’s team (Wisdom, Justice, Temperance, and Fortitude) in any of these areas by teachers, administrators, or Village staff. This virtue challenge has led to increased student accountability for their work product, deportment, service, behavior, words, and deeds during the school day.

During the Easter break we had the opportunity to plan activities for the residents to enjoy and to reflect on. Residents created art projects, participated in a hymn sing, and gathered for a “biblical movie blitz”—which spanned from Maundy Thursday to Easter Monday. Students were introduced to epic classics: *The Ten Commandments*, *Ben-Hur*, and *Jesus of Nazareth*. There were many occasions to “stop the tape” and make connections to real-life issues, challenges, and individual choices. The children also participated in an Easter sunrise service on the Village grounds, (where Theo preached on Jesus’ last words and the meaning of His Resurrection for all). This was followed by a special breakfast treat of homemade cinnamon buns.

PRAISES

- Grace was extended by all as we got settled, learned people’s names, and practiced Swahili phrases.



Rafiki graduates at Matriculation Ceremony

Prayer Requests

- *A new bore hole needs to be drilled in the Village to allow for a more consistent water supply.*
- *Long-term financial relief for the Kenyan people who struggle to make ends meet (on average wages of \$3.00/day) and now face skyrocketing food and fuel prices.*
- *Political parties will find areas of compromise; peace, justice, and security will cover the country.*



Grammar students with artwork



Celebrating Rafiki students after a local chess tournament win

- God's peace and counsel has covered us, as we made decisions involving the school.
- We have been granted our 3-year work permits by Kenya's immigration office.
- The 3-months rainy season has come! Gardens and open spaces are vibrant with color once again.
- Short-term missionary, Lizzie Raynor, has helped tremendously with school and resident activities.

Please also pray that God will provide the needed funding so that we can continue our service here. God is moving in the hearts of these young people. We can see the impact of your faithful prayers and support. If you have not yet given financially, would you prayerfully consider a donation at this time? You can send your tax-deductible gift to the Home Office at: PO Box 1988, Eustis FL 32727 or, to give securely on-line, visit <https://www.RafikiFoundation.org/missionary/theodore-and-crystal-wilson-ii-258>.

“Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding” (Proverbs 23:23).

Solus Christus (through Christ alone),

Theodore and Crystal

Theodore and Crystal Wilson



Logic students in library



Rafiki students with Lizzie