



"All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep His covenant and His testimonies" (Psalm 25:10).

Dear friends in Christ,

We trust you are well and resting in the grace and love of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have been at peace knowing God is in control of all things and that the paths in which He leads us will reveal His love and faithfulness.

On May 31, we celebrated our fifth wedding anniversary. We are thankful to the Lord for bringing us together and keeping us together. Lusubilo is still on medical leave, but in between her medical issues she has been able to volunteer in many ways with the Widows Program. This month Tom harvested his maize from his first time trial of the *Farming God's Way* method and he is doing research on how it can be integrated into the Rafiki Teachers College Program.

In our last newsletter we mentioned that we were preparing for the arrival of Judy Stokes and the commencement of her sewing training with five Zambian ladies as part of the Widows Program. Judy started teaching the ladies on April 24, and has been meeting with them four days per week.

Four of the ladies—Christine, Sellina, Linda and Esnaya—were interviewed and selected by Rev. Wedson Kamanga, the director of the Skills Training Programs of the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ). RCZ is one of Rafiki's ministry partners in Zambia. RCZ also made a furnished house available for Judy to stay in and to conduct the training on the campus of their beautiful Justo Mwale University (JMU).



Guest house that Judy is staying in



Lusubilo and Rev. Kamanga

Anne Phiri is from another ministry partner, the Reformed Baptist Church in Zambia. We pray that her involvement in rural missions alongside her husband, Chikondi, who serves as an elder in the church, will be instrumental in expanding the program to areas that Rafiki may not be able to reach.



Anne and Judy

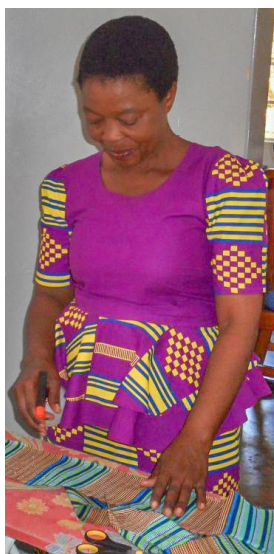
The ladies are a perfect fit for how we envision the program to run. Their love for the Lord shines in spite of the challenges they face at home. They have exceptional leadership skills and we are confident

that their training will benefit many more other ladies in their churches and communities. They work together like a team and complement each other in many different ways. We pray you will be encouraged by the news of how the training is going and the women's faith and determination.



Linda, Sellina, and Esniya

Christine Phiri is a married forty-nine year old woman. Her household consists of seventeen people, which includes seven biological children, three grandchildren and five orphaned relatives. Her husband is terminally ill and so she is primarily responsible for providing for her family. Three of her older children have not been able to continue with their education past grade twelve, and so are now working to help support the home. It has always been Christine's unspoken dream to learn professional tailoring. "It's a miracle that God handpicked me out of a congregation of 300 people," she exclaimed with great emotion on her face! She also emphatically states that the Rafiki Bible Study (RBS) that the women do together every day at the beginning of class has been a tremendous blessing to her and her family. She testifies how the Lord is using the RBS and her time in class to take away the bitterness that she has been harboring for years.



Christine

Sellina Banda is a widow with seven adult children and seventeen grandchildren. She finds it hard to believe that the Lord could open a new door and opportunity of learning at the age of sixty-one. Rev. Kamanga, who once was her pastor, recommended her on the basis of her leadership and commitment to the local church. She walks two hours to get to her training when she has no means for paying her \$2 bus fare.

Linda Mwendela is fifty years-old, divorced, and a mother of two children. She has always had an interest in learning how to sew. With a big smile on her face she says, "I have always loved the sound of scissors working through fabric, now to think that I am actually learning how to do it professionally is a real blessing!" Her home is miles away from where Judy is conducting the training so she has had to relocate to stay with a family member; she walks for forty-five minutes from her temporary home to get to class.



Linda

Esnaya Zimba is fifty-nine years old and a mother of four children. She is married and her husband also has a terminal illness. Her family's income is dependent on a rental property which fetches about \$26 a month, supplemented by her small home business of selling foodstuff and some groceries.



Esnaya

Anne Phiri is married and has five children. She runs a tailoring business and employs women to do the bulk of the work. Though she has this business, she has not had any formal training in tailoring. She had been praying for a while for the Lord to provide her an opportunity to do some specialized training as a means of expanding her business opportunities and for the ability to employ more women. She is passionate about rural missions and hopes the Lord will use her new knowledge to help empower disadvantaged women.

Praises:

- Judy's praises for the program: "The women's particular giftedness and talents are becoming more evident. The women are not willing to settle for passable work but are striving to produce their best for God's glory, fame, and honor! We express gratitude to God all during the day as we see Him give us victory in new challenges!"
- We also give thanks to God for getting Judy settled quickly in a nice home and workspace.
- We were finally able to find a house to rent, which will facilitate some of Tom's new assignments offsite.

Prayer requests:

- *Protection for Christine who lives in a dangerous neighborhood and is worried for her children and grandchildren.*
- *Comfort and peace for Christine and Esnaya's terminally ill husbands.*
- *That the Lord would provide transport and resources for these ladies as attending the training has taken them away from the activities that provide income for them.*

- *Wisdom and strength for Judy Stokes in training the ladies and developing products to be used for future widows groups.*
- *Pray that the skills the ladies are learning will lead to a better standard of living for them and that they will in turn be willing to teach others and become good role models of faith and trust in the Lord.*
- *For funds for Tom and Lusubilo due to increased expenses from living off site of Rafiki and Lusubilo's medical needs.*
- *Lusubilo's health and God's leading and direction on her work status with the government after the end of her medical leave in July. She is bonded to serve the government for three years for the financial support she was granted for her university training.*

We hope to be able to report to you again in a few months on the progress of our ladies in the sewing program. Thank you for your continued support of us which in turn benefits these ladies. May your paths in life lead you to the Lord's steadfast love and faithfulness.

With joy in Christ,

Lusubilo and Tom

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