

MAY 2022

# RAFIKI FOUNDATION MISSIONARY NEWSLETTER



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Missionary #254

*“The LORD my God lightens  
my darkness. For by you I  
can run against a troop, and  
by my God I can leap over  
a wall” (Psalm 18:28b-29).*

Dear friends and family,

When God brings us to a point of weakness, He also instructs us by His Word that He is strong in our weakness. Recently, we have had occasions to surrender to His strength and to be glad in it.

Our work here in interior Africa continues as we transition from the warm and rainy season to dry and cool winter. The tractor is repaired, the high grass is conquered, and incidents of malaria seem to be on the wane. We have started new academic terms in both the children’s school and the teachers’ college.

Much of our effort has been working with the University of Livingstonia leadership toward accreditation of our college by the Malawi government. We recently concluded an inspection by the accrediting commission and are awaiting the final report. The result: we believe our campus will be approved, but our curriculum will require refinement to include specific Malawian educational objectives. And we will be able to intake a new class of college students this year while these enhancements are being processed! We are weak but He is strong, and His plans will not be thwarted!

Our residents returned from school break with their extended tribal families—some glad because of the harsh nature of life outside of Rafiki, some sad to leave relatives no matter how “shirttail” the relationships may be. We tried to smooth the transition back into Village routine with a sing-around-the-bonfire night, a movie night in the dining hall, games and sports, and the familiarity of light chores for Village upkeep.



University of Livingstonia Leaders (L to R):  
Laws Campus Principal, Rafiki Campus  
Deputy Principal, University Deputy Vice  
Chancellor, Rafiki Academic Dean, Rafiki  
Campus Principal



It’s official! Installing the road sign

Being an orphan or destitute child turned over to Rafiki by a family unable to feed him/her almost always comes with questions about self-worth. And those uncertainties sometimes present as behavior problems and resistance to Godly authority. But the Lord has used these episodes to expose overt and hidden sins, some of



Our youngest resident boys are not shy!

which are habitual, or go back years. As a result, we have had the privilege of guiding young people in repentance, confession, and restoration. One young man traveling this uncomfortable path finally declared faith in Jesus as his Savior, praise be to God! We have seen evidence of real turn-arounds and regained peace among almost all our teenage boys. And now we are in a similar battle for our teenage girls. *Please pray for softening of hearts as twelve of our girls experience the corrective consequences resulting from sin.* We are weak but He is strong, in His love for these young women!

As the products of the West, the Richards are not as familiar with some of the manifestations of spiritual warfare that are more common in Africa. Not to say that it does not occur in the U.S. But we know there are witch doctors in the area and we know that witchcraft or sorcery is active and may be influencing a few of the children in our school. *But we also know that this cannot prevail against the God of Armies, so please pray with us for victory.* We are weak but He is strong and every square inch of Africa belongs to Him!

We are also looking forward to the arrival of three different groups of short-term missionaries (a total of six) who are slated to join us over the next few months. Of course, there is much work in seeing that they are taken care of, that their adjustment to a new environment is smooth, and that they have the experiences that give them a vision for what the Lord may have in store for them after they leave us. The ages range from first-year college to “seasoned” citizens like us. *Pray that they stay safe and that they hear from the Lord while in Malawi.* We are weak but He binds us together with unbreakable bonds!

As mentioned on our last update, the Home Office has authorized us to replace one of the two Village cars with another used—but hopefully less fatigued—vehicle. If you would like to help fund a replacement car, please prayerfully consider a gift by one of two ways:

- You can give online at <https://www.rafikifoundation.org/missionary/jay-and-maureen-richards-254>
- Or by sending a check to: Rafiki Foundation, PO Box 1988, Eustis, FL 32727

In either case, please note that your gift is for the Richards-254 Car Replacement Fund.

Soli Deo Gloria!

*The Richards*

Maureen and Jay Richards

## Prayer Requests

- *That God's mighty work will continue among the orphans and school children here that all may know His Son personally.*
- *That the recent relief from malaria and from the national shortage of cooking propane will continue.*
- *Continued progress toward government accreditation of our teachers' college as a campus of the University of Livingstonia.*
- *That funding will be provided for a replacement used vehicle.*