



# The Rafiki Foundation, Inc.

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*“For behold, ‘I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. . .’” (Isaiah 65:11).*

Dear friends and family,

Happy New Year! And aren't we grateful for new beginnings! For 2010 marks not only the beginning of a new year, but a new decade and many new opportunities. We are so very grateful to God for the many ways He has allowed us to serve Him through the work we get to do while here in Malawi. Of course, it has blessed us as well! While we missed spending Christmas with family and friends, we had the privilege of celebrating our Lord's birth with eighty-seven little children and some of our teammates.



RAFIKI CHILDREN TAKE A BOW AFTER PERFORMING A CHRISTMAS PAGEANT FOR LOCAL VILLAGERS

This year we watched the Rafiki children perform a Christmas pageant, helped them make sugar cookies to pass out to villagers, and went caroling. Malawians are unfamiliar with Christmas carols. This was a wonderful way for the children to spread "tidings of great joy" through singing and sharing about the greatest gift God has given the world, and new life that comes through Jesus Christ.

## New Face and Families



ONE OF OUR NEW RESIDENTS, SARAH PHIRI

This year we began with five new children who now have a wonderful new home here at the Rafiki Village where they are receiving love and care. One of our latest arrivals is three-year-old Sarah Phiri. Sarah now has a mother, Mama Alice, along with

nine other sisters. She will begin her first year of school along with five other three-year-olds at the Rafiki primary school where she will also learn about a God who loves her through the RBS (Rafiki Bible Study). The Rafiki Bible Study is taught daily throughout each of the ten Rafiki Villages.

## New Opportunities



SERVING LUNCH IN THE DINING HALL—DAVEY, JOHN, AND NATION

There is much to accomplish daily, and many opportunities to serve at a Rafiki Village. Have you ever considered going on a MiniMission with the Rafiki Foundation? In addition to other duties this year, John also enjoys managing dining hall operations. The dining hall is the hub of much activity where hot meals and snacks are prepared daily for approximately 160 children, teenage girls, and staff here at Rafiki. Many of our teenage girls walk long distances to attend the JSS (junior secondary school) each day. For some girls, Rafiki provides the only nutritious meals they will receive each day.

## New Friends

This year the Rafiki JSS has added a new class, and now has a total of three classes of day-students. Seventeen new girls aged twelve to fifteen will be attending classes who otherwise would not be able to go to school. Many Malawian girls are unable to attend secondary school because their families are too poor to pay required school fees. These fees average 5,000 Kwacha or \$35 plus books a semester. At the end of 2009, of 1,122 private schools inspected in Malawi, only 281 remained

open and met minimum government standards. We are excited to say that the Rafiki primary school was one of forty-two private schools that passed. The Rafiki secondary school is also looking into the process of seeking accreditation. Making new friends and learning new things will be the highlight of our children this coming year. Portland looks forward again to teaching music to eager primary and secondary students.



THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS, EAGER JSS STUDENTS RETURNING TO SCHOOL

### A New Future

Outside our back windows we are reminded daily of the extreme poverty, need, and enormous challenges that face Africa. By contrast, the Rafiki Village is providing hope and we pray a new future for Africa through the lives of the Rafiki children and teenage day-students. At the end of 2009, we began construction on two new cottages. One will be used to train new Rafiki Mothers, and the second cottage



will eventually provide future housing for ten new little children here at Rafiki.

OUR BACKYARD NEIGHBORS AND CONTRAST OF TWO WORLDS

### We are grateful for your ongoing support, and ask for your prayers for:

- Receipt of our temporary employment permits.
- Good health and safety as we travel, and for a sweet reunion with family and friends.
- Portland's travel to upcoming CMDA Conference this February in Kenya.
- God's wisdom, strength, and joy as John juggles various jobs.
- God's protection and strength for our teammates and for a healthy Village with no medical illnesses.
- The Rafiki children to continue to grow and learn daily as they begin school this new school year.
- Protection of each JSS girl and for commitment to attend school, new friends, and joy as they learn all God has for them.

On March 5, 2010 we will be returning to Dallas, Texas, for a four-week visit. If you are interested in hosting a coffee for us, would you contact our friend Mrs. Dana Cooper? Her e-mail address is: [dcgabby1@gmail.com](mailto:dcgabby1@gmail.com). Her cell phone number is: (214) 763-9641. Dana is also coordinating one of our fellowships and can provide you with additional information if you would like to help or attend. Also, Sunday morning, March 21, 2010, at The Heights Baptist Church in Richardson, Texas, our Adult Bible Fellowship is planning a fellowship in the West Wing. If you would like additional information, please contact Mrs. Kathy Tidwell. Her e-mail address is: [katidwell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:katidwell@sbcglobal.net)

May the Lord richly bless you each of you this New Year, and we look forward to seeing many of you soon!

With love and gratitude,

*John & Portland*

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