

The Atkins Family

Jason, Emily, Savannah, Nathaniel, and Miriam

> Serving in Guinea-Bissau, West Africa

We're forging ahead as fast as we can with only a few months left before we fly to the US!

New Shop Gets Vertical by Jason

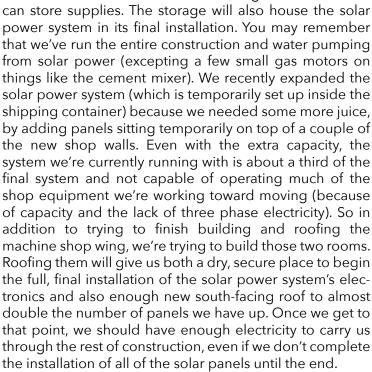
We have been making exciting progress on the new workshop! Walls are finally starting to go up! Since the last shop update in December, we've now completed enough slab pours to have laid half of the total shop floor. The machine shop (the wing we're trying to complete first so that we can move the equipment into it) now has one of its 60' long walls done and the three 20' long walls half done. The remaining wall will only be able to be built once we have poured the adjoining floor sections and set the six steel columns that will support the roof.

The opposite corner of the shop will be a pair of small rooms: an office for me and a lockable storage room where we



The shop construction is making progress, day by day! This drone photo is a few weeks old, before we had even more floor poured.

The last few months have at times felt like quite a grind. Week after week have been spent in endless cycles of buying and screening gravel, prepping another floor section, and then pouring it. Over and over. The heat is ratcheting up, and concrete work is unforgiving in it. The deadline of our early June flights back to the States looms large and doesn't leave room for any breaks. However when I step back, it's encouraging how much is being accomplished and amazing to realize what a privilege it is to be able to build a project that we've been dreaming about and wishing for for so long—a permanent home for our ministry that has enough space and is ours. While we're still in the thick of construction, it's exciting to look forward to the possibilities that this place has to be a blessing to our community.





The Year Of The Dads by Emily

We have had so many special visits this year, but nothing can top the tremendous joy of hosting both of our dads about a month apart from each other. My dad was here for the very first time for 2 weeks in January and we put him to work tiling the floor of the guest bungalow at Esperança (the project land). Jason's dad arrived in mid-February for his third trip over to see us, and he will be with us until the end of April. We've currently got him doing the design, prototyping, and building of the doors and some of the windows in that same little guest house.

Jason and I both loved growing up with dads who could fix anything, and having them here to use their tremendous skill sets in our construction has been great, but



Michael T. and Dad (Chuck) setting the first row of tiles.

that's not the best part. Inviting them into our daily routines has also been wonderful -yawning around the breakfast table, admiring the kids' latest school work, eating giant shrimp fresh from the ocean, bed time stories with Grandpa-but that hasn't been the best part either.



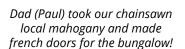
Dad (Chuck) and Ray Haskell painting the walls of the guest bungalow. Check out that lovely view out the front door!

Over the years Jason and I have developed the skill of knowing which parts of our life here require extra context or explanation to an American audience, but our kids haven't. Guinea-Bissau is their normal, so it's quite difficult for them to remember that everybody doesn't know what it's like to have fisherman coming to your door with their latest live catch, or to have the responsi-

bility to greet everyone as you walk to your destination (and know the age-appropriate greetings to use),

or how to walk through the deep dust of the paths between houses in the dry season. Having people in their family understand the context of their stories without explanation because they've been to those places, seen those

things, walked on those dirt roads—that's the biggest blessing for our whole family. We are so thankful for the sacrifice that both of our dads made to come all the way over into our little corner of the world this year!





Dad (Paul) screening the windows the Tulsa team made before installing them.



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