



The Atkins Family

Jason, Emily, Savannah,
Nathaniel, and Miriam

Serving in Guinea-Bissau,
West Africa

Dec 2024 / Jan 2025

We've hit the ground running with help from many friends!

The Journey Home *by Emily*

On our way back to Guinea-Bissau in December we spent half a day in Chicago, a day in London, and a long weekend visiting friends in Germany. Then, after layovers in Portugal and Morocco and a night in the capital, we finally arrived home in Canchungo. Traveling to different countries always involves fun food—deep dish pizza, pasties, sausages, and custard tarts to name a few things from this trip—but more than that, it gives us a little space between the hard, emotional goodbye on one end, and the enthusiastic hello on the other.

We had a first this trip that we were not too excited about. After 18 years of countless trips across the Atlantic with no baggage issues, we arrived, but our suitcases didn't. Actually, nearly everyone on our entire flight had to leave the airport with no luggage. However, thanks to the dedicated efforts of good friends, we did manage to get our suitcases right before Christmas.

We had a little over a week to adjust to the time difference, clean everything, and get regular life (including homeschool) up and running again before we

received our first guests: our coworkers with Hope Remembered, Travis and Sara Lacy and their 3 little kids.

They were here with us for a few days, catching up, teaching me how to install drip tape in my garden beds, and giving tons of general growing advice.

Just a few days after the Lacys left, Jim Redyke, a friend from Tulsa, came out to help us for about a week and a half. The plane that whisked Jim back to Europe in mid-January brought 8 more guests: the 2025 team from Simpson Park Camp, and they were with us until the end of January.

In the middle of all of that, the kids and I got more than a month of school done, and I jumped back into all of my teaching roles at church. I know listed all out it sounds like a big pile of crazy, and in some ways it was, but there was also so much joy. The people taking care of our house while we were gone did a great job, the guys on Jason's crew made steady progress over the last 6 months while Jason was managing their work remotely, our guests over the last month were a wonderful encouragement, our church family here welcomed us back with open arms, and honestly, it's just so good to be home!



Visitors Working Hard *by Jason*

We had a wonderfully busy January. My crew had worked diligently while we were in the U.S., but that meant that there were a lot of things waiting for me to do and fix at the site when we got back. Fortunately, we had some great help. One of the more urgent needs was for more blocks to continue building the new shop walls. We needed to both get the block maker's engine going again as well as get a bunch of dirt dug for making blocks. Jim's trip was a big boost to both, as he spent days piling up clay for us from the mine and helping troubleshoot the block making machine's issues. Fortunately, in the end we were able to get the machine going and are catching back up with the masons! Jim, in addition to being a big encouragement, also did a lot of tractor work including grading the front yard of our new house (cont'd)



Visitors Working Hard (cont'd) *by Jason*

(...)and working on the road that leads to the project which the rainy season had rutted up while we were gone.

The flight that traded Jim for the Simpson Park team began two weeks of working in several different arenas. The team, half who had already been here before, set to work making blocks, helping the masons cut and lay them in the shop, painting walls and hanging doors in my new office, and helping Emily's garden project by building compost piles and running irrigation lines.

It was a busy month after a busy furlough, but it was great to have so much help and get started again with a big boost!

Over the next month I'll settle in to some of the more technical projects waiting for me including roofing the first corner of the shop (my office and a storage room), installing the first set of solar panels in the place where they'll stay permanently (on that roof), and beginning the full installation of the electronics of the solar power system inside the storage room. What an encouragement to start this term with such a push!



Jim in his "office" leveling everything in sight!



To Give Online:

At JasonAndEmilyAtkins.com/give you can make a one-time donation or set up an automatic monthly donation by EFT or credit card.

To Give By Check:

Please make checks payable to:
Hope Remembered / 1105 Southview Lane Ste 103 /
PMB #159 / Tuscaloosa, AL 35405
with "Atkins" in the memo.