

# rejoice

FEAR NOT, FOR BEHOLD, I BRING YOU GOOD NEWS

December 2013

## The Atkins Family



### We Made It *by Emily*

Thank you so much for praying for our trip back to Guinea-Bissau. God's been watching out for us and our family has made that trip across the ocean eleven times now without ever losing a bag or having a serious problem in customs in any of the many countries we've stopped in along the way. God gave all four of us the grace to take everything in stride and even have fun on the journey. Settling in, unpacking our house, cleaning the storage room mold off of literally everything, catching up with friends, and showing off the newest, chubbiest member of our family has been keeping us busy our first two weeks here ☺

### Surprised by Joy – Savannah in Action *by Emily*

Since the day she was born Savannah has never ceased to amaze me. When we were in the car at 6 am on our way to the airport and I was trying to get ready emotionally for the days ahead, Savannah took the last bite of her muffin, looked at me in the darkness, smiled, and said, "Time for an adventure. Best day ever!" That was pretty much her attitude for the entire trip.

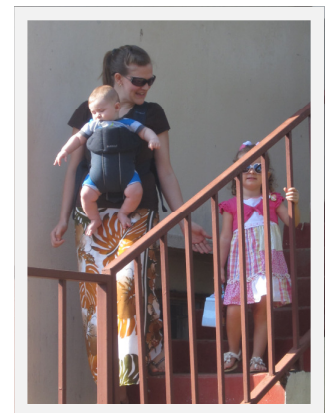
When we pulled into the parking lot of the guest house in Dakar at 7 am dazed with jet lag after the overnight flight she jumped out of the taxi, looked at the bleak expanse of concrete surrounded by towering walls, clasped her hands together and announced, "I love this guest house!"

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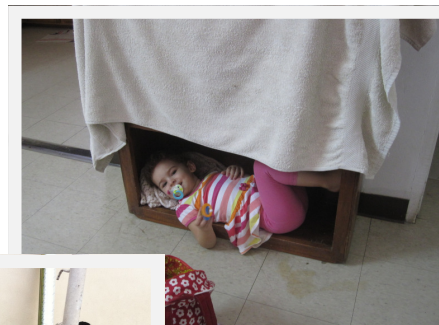


Jason and his best helper putting our furniture back together as we move everything out of the storage room and back into our apartment.

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Headed down our stairs and off to church on our first Sunday back in Bissau.



Savannah made "the best fort ever" with a towel and a bookshelf in our guest house in Dakar.



Once we got into the inside waiting area Savannah actually fell asleep like this!



Waiting to get onto the boat, tickling my little bread-munching frog ☺



Getting on the overnight ferry to the south of Senegal.

Continued...

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Our cabin on the boat. We briefly thought about making bed for Nathaniel in the drawer, but decided on a soft blanket on the floor instead.

When we arrived at the port in Dakar, Senegal too early for our boat and had to sit in the sun on a bench next to the dusty road for an hour and a half she looked at the flies buzzing around and exclaimed, “Oh yay, let’s pretend to be frogs! Frogs LOVE to eat flies!” And she pretended to catch flies with her frog tongue for twenty minutes.

She waited patiently in lines, shared toys with other kids, ignored rude stares, distracted her brother when her parents were busy talking with customs officials, and ate peanut butter sandwiches and bananas for nearly every meal for four days, and was truly joyful all along the way.

On the trip back to Guinea-Bissau my daughter was my role model and I’ve never been prouder of the kind, precious, joyful child that God gave to our family.

**Outa Here ☺** by Jason

With lots of help and no small amount of borrowed ingenuity, we managed to get everything we hoped to get into the container! It was loaded at PTL Engineering in Lapeer. A semi with a flatbed trailer brought the empty container, backed it up to the loading dock, and four hours later, drove it away full of equipment and goodies for several different families and ministries here in Guinea-Bissau. The container was carried by truck to the Detroit train station, where it was loaded on a train bound for New York. From there, it was loaded onto a ship across the Atlantic headed to Brussels on December 5, to arrive here in the port of Bissau on Christmas Eve! Once it arrives we'll begin the 6-8 week process of clearing the paperwork to be able to rent a truck here to bring the container to us. Very exciting!



The well organized mountain headed to Guinea-Bissau in our shipping container.

**Thank You!!!** by Jason

As we reflect on the Thanksgiving and Christmas season, our family is grateful for the opportunities God has put in front of us and the many supporters who enable that vision. Our time in the States this year was wonderful for catching up with family and friends, lots of grandparent time for the kids, and an innumerable amount of library books read to Savannah. We had the opportunity to go bargain hunting for a lot of equipment at industrial auctions, pack those treasures up in the container, and send it off. We'll enjoy Christmas in February when the container arrives!

We'd like to especially thank all of you that made sacrifices in your finances to support the work God is doing over here this past year. We were incredibly blessed by those who continue to support us financially and in prayer, many going above and beyond to allow us to send the container over. We pray God will use all that's being done to His glory in Guinea-Bissau!

Jason + Emily



Taking a break from cleaning and unpacking to have a glass of sweet tea and a snuggle.

AND THE ANGEL SAID TO THEM, “FEAR NOT, FOR BEHOLD, I BRING YOU GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY THAT WILL BE FOR ALL THE PEOPLE. FOR UNTO YOU IS BORN THIS DAY IN THE CITY OF DAVID A SAVIOR, WHO IS CHRIST THE LORD.”

LUKE 2:10-11

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