



The Atkins Family

Jason, Emily, Savannah,
Nathaniel, and Miriam

Serving in Guinea-Bissau,
West Africa

December 2022

Our shipping container is
due in port in early January.
Please pray for fair taxes!

Cake Fit For A King *by Emily*

Every Tuesday evening 6 to 10 women gather together for discipleship group at our church. We sing, listen to teaching, share prayer requests, and pray for each other. Normally we take turns teaching and leading worship, but starting in the beginning of December, we decided to try something different. I volunteered to teach a 12-week study taking us through the whole book of James looking at the theme of true faith. This series has been really good for all of us as we have been reviewing themes and building on them each week.



Emily loves to prepare to share God's truths!

My favorite part of preparing any sermon is thinking through different comparisons and illustrations that help the truth of the message come alive and be memorable. In the first week of this series in James, I was talking about trials and perseverance working in us to make us complete, fully fitted for the kingdom work God has for us. This got me thinking about cake (what can I say, I love to bake!) Lots of ingredients go in, some tastier than others. What if while baking I decided that hard boiled eggs are more to my liking than raw ones and subbed those in? Then what if I tasted the bitter baking powder and just left that out entirely; and while I was at it, I doubled the sugar and cut the boring flour in half? Well, in the end I wouldn't have much of a cake, would I? Life is like that. Slimy things and bitter things, sweet things and boring things fill our days. And, if we keep focused on God and what He's doing in and around us in the middle of all of it, He will use every part to make us "mature and complete, not lacking anything." (James 1:4)

First Bungalow Taking Shape *by Jason*

In July we shared how excited we were about pouring the slab for the first guest bungalow at our new place. I'm happy to report that even though our crew had a reduced construction schedule while we were away in the rainy season, the bungalow now looks a lot like the illustration we showed back then! The crew has been working hard to lay block and pour columns and headers. Today, the bungalow is ready for its top bond beam to be poured, and then we'll be on to the roof! It's been very exciting to stand in the bungalow day by day and see it taking shape.

While we know that the bungalow probably has more work ahead of it than behind with roofing, a ceiling, plaster, paint, tile, and fixtures, we're encouraged to know that the bungalow has taught us a lot of lessons and worked the kinks out of several processes that will be used in building all of the other buildings that will follow. We're looking forward to work accelerating as we tackle larger projects like our house and the shop.



A Promising Start! *by Jason*

One dream that we have for the new workshop (once built) is to be able to share the extra floorspace, electricity, and equipment we have with other metalworkers in our region who don't have access to those things. There are many (especially previous graduates of the vocational school) who have some experience or training in welding but don't have enough equipment or reliable enough power to start their own shop. Our vision is for them to be able to bid their own jobs and then come and use our machines/electricity to be able to build them in our shop space to help support their families and hopefully (eventually) save enough money to buy their own equipment. We're not sure yet exactly what model this will follow, whether it will be a small monthly subscription fee to use the shop, or whether we'll trade work time on the shop's internal (ministry) projects for access to equipment to use for these projects.

Although we've only poured the footings for the new shop, as I was looking around last week, I realized that potential for success in this kind of program is so strong that this program has really already begun even though we haven't started it yet! This month, one of the guys on my crew (a vocational program welding school grad) won a small contract for fabricating burglar bars. He welded them on our equipment during his lunch break at the site in the little garage-shop we have set up to facilitate construction. At that same time, another of my workers, a former vocational school welding instructor was working on fabricating a set of pews for a church in the region, again on lunch break, but in my current workshop. Finally, another group which included the other vocational school instructor and a different welding program grad were working on a contract for burglar bars and a pair of gates! The goal for this initiative is to eventually allow all of the great equipment we've been blessed with to also be a blessing to others as they work to support their families, and although we don't have the new shop yet, that goal is really already happening! We're excited as we look to the future and imagine how much more we'll be able to help in the years to come with the new workshop.



Amona, a bivocational pastor and member of our construction crew, working on church pews for a church whose pastor saw the ones he made for his own church and wanted them as well!



The cashew trees at the land are beginning to blossom!



We had a little Christmas camping stay-cation at the project land as a family. We hope your Christmas was full of fun!



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