



The Atkins Family

Jason, Emily, Savannah,
Nathaniel, and Miriam

Serving in Guinea-Bissau,
West Africa

July 2025

A few weeks from
our first
high-schooler!

Summer *by Emily*

Since we started homeschooling 9 years ago, the majority of our summer breaks have been in the U.S. Even on years when we didn't travel to the States over the summer, we usually only took a few weeks off before jumping in the next school year. That gave the kids a break, but for me it was really just enough time to pack up the previous year's books and curriculum and get reorganized before we dove back in. Last year we actually started the school year while we were still traveling around the U.S. so that we could take a whole 6 weeks between school years here in Guinea-Bissau.

We are about halfway through that summer break and it has been weird and wonderful.

With the kids growing in their ability to entertain themselves, I have been getting lots of things done. I have been writing and teaching an 8-week series on the "each others" of the New Testament, researching and planning a conference I would like to teach to introduce new curriculum for Sunday school teachers who work with teens, and doing some extra activities with my kids' Sunday school class. This past week I took a group of 10-14 year olds to an evangelism conference where they learned simple ways of sharing their faith with their friends.



85 kids attended the conference, 14 from our church.

Of course this summer has also been challenging. The week before Jason left for a month, the water pump in our well broke, so I have also been spending time hauling buckets in from the well each day. And about a week after Jason left, the internet connection from Project Hope to our house went down in a way that I haven't been able to fix. Luckily, we have a well close by, the internet connection at Project Hope is still going strong (about a half-mile walk from the house), and Jason can get the parts he needs in the U.S. to fix things when he gets back. I don't think more things break when he is gone, I think that things just have a way of breaking all the time here, but when Jason's around broken things get fixed, haha.



Our kids' Sunday school teaching team: Sara, Me, Jozadaque, and our intern Eugénia.

Things Fall Apart *by Jason*

Unfortunate news arrived while Savannah and I were in the U.S. My existing shop (not the new one we're building) at the former vocational school is still powered by the solar system that the school left behind. The church who took over the building is now responsible for it, and we rent the space from them. The system went down while I was gone and through some remote diagnosing with a local tech, it seems that while the system can be patched up to meet the needs of the church, it won't be fixed in a way that will allow (almost any of) my metalworking or carpentry equipment to function there again.

We are fortunate that this problem, which five years ago would have been a crippling blow to our ability to get almost anything done, will have a much smaller impact now, shifting a few plans, but can be worked around because of the space and electricity available at the new shop. It will mean that we lose access to the plasma table and (cont'd)

Things Fall Apart (cont'd) by Jason

... carpentry equipment until likely late this year when more of the new shop roof is done, and lose access to the machining equipment until it can be brought over to the new shop, where it has space waiting. I had planned to wait to move those machines until after the monsoons were done, but now might not be able to wait if we have work that's held up by the lack of ability to use that equipment.

While it's frustrating that it seems like things are always falling apart here, that's part of the reason we're spending so much energy to build the new site to be as resilient as we can. The climate here is hard on things, so we overbuild, stock spare parts, and do what we can. Thank you again to all of you who have put us in a position to be able to be building toward a more stable future for our ministry, enabling us to be more helpful to those we've been called to minister to.



Our return trip started with a train to Chicago, and some delicious pizza on the way to the airport!



Savannah and I got to explore Madrid for a day, including the San Miguel food market.



On our way through Senegal I saw this crew shoveling out the storm drain trough. If you look carefully you can see a single guy actually shoveling. Teamwork!



Did you know that in Europe bathroom stalls don't have gaps all around the door?



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