



# The Atkins Family

Jason, Emily, Savannah,  
Nathaniel, and Miriam

Serving in Guinea-Bissau,  
West Africa

February 2026

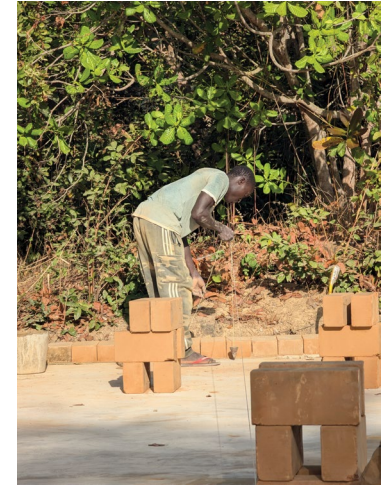
Walls are climbing in  
our new house!

## Squaring Up *by Jason*

After we were done ponding water on the newly-finished house slab the first week of February to help it cure, we spent some time carefully trueing up the square of the house and setting the blocks that would form the corners. With those key blocks mortared in place, we were able to verify and tweak the positions of all of the interior walls. With first and last blocks of the first courses set, we were ready to run string lines and start building walls. So exciting!



*Above: The completed house slab curing.  
Right: Libani using the plumb bob to transfer alignment stakes onto the slab to locate an interior wall.*



## Big Group Games *by Emily*

In Guinea-Bissau, Carnival is a 4-day festival held before Ash Wednesday each year. Like the Carnival celebration in Brazil, it combines Portuguese-Catholic and indigenous African traditions into a massive celebration of music, cultural dance, and animistic spirit worship; and things can easily get out of hand. Because of this, churches all over Guinea-Bissau have activities for kids and teens in the afternoons and evenings of those days as an alternative to the wild parties in the downtowns of every city across the country—it's basically our version of a harvest fest.

This year the team from Simpson Park Camp was here during Carnival, and I recruited some volunteers for the kids' events at church. We played all of the usual big group games, and Kelly and Joan helped me teach kids to flip water bottles, play Simon Says, and even do a craft. Even though they are loud and messy, kids have a contagious joy in any language and I think the volunteers had as much fun as the kids did.



*Savannah teaching her group how to assemble our bracelet craft.*



*Hot, dusty, happy kids after several hours of very active outdoor games.*

## Simpson Park Team *by Jason*

The 2026 Simpson Park Camp team arrived at a fabulously fun time in the chronology of building our house. With the slab having been completed in January, the cement cured, and the measurements for the walls scratched into the floor, we were ready to start making the fur fly! When the team arrived, most of the walls were about a foot tall (excepting a couple that had been built taller on slab sections that had been poured last year, surrounding the master bedroom/bathroom and Emily's office). The team was a tremendous encouragement and helped with making (cont'd)

## Simpson Park Team (cont'd) by Jason

(...) blocks, building walls, running water lines, and electrical in both the house and the workshop. It was a great blessing to have them help, lots of fun to show the progress since last year's trip, and a joy to be around them for two weeks.

*Below: While the team was busy building walls, I was busily trying to stay ahead of them in the parts of the walls that needed electrical conduit.*



*Libani teaching the team how to lay block. What a beautiful place for a house!*



*Chuck and I did some problem solving to figure out how to insulate hot-water pipes inside a solid block wall.*



*What a privilege for Emily to translate as her lifelong friend, Joan Dewing, preached at our church in Guinea-Bissau. It was a powerful sermon about the love of God and six people came up for prayer afterwards 🙏*



*The walls of the house all getting taller!*



*The team from Simpson Park had a great time working together with the guys from Project Hope.*



*It's been fun watching relationships grow as several team members have invested the effort to make the trip multiple times.*



*Ferrying the team to lunch at our current house in Project Hope's moto-truck-trike.*



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