

Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year to you and yours from Jim and Esther Bartsch!



A year ago we served at [Scotland Community Church](#) in Scotland, SD. This year we greet you from [Cornerstone Bible Church](#) in Mountain Lake, Minnesota, where I am serving in my sixth church as Interim Pastor.



Our oldest son Brian and his wife Christa still live in Omaha, NE. He works for [Orion](#) and serves as an elder in their church. Christa efficiently manages the household and continues to home-school. Matthew does free-lance video editing, currently from Omaha; Jonathon works at [Physician's Mutual Insurance](#); Katie and her husband Jonathan Krutz await the arrival of their first child in April; Sarah now serves with [Child Evangelism Fellowship of Omaha](#); and Emily is a Sophomore in High School.



Our second son Dave and his wife Jen live in Doha, Qatar. Dave teaches English at Qatar University, while Jen manages the household and serves their church as a secretary. Alex (9) and Andy (7) attend school, while Keila (4) goes to pre-school. We could not see them last summer

because of COVID restrictions. We hope to see them in the summer of 2021!

Our third son Jeff and his wife Chantel are in the midst of an uprooting. Jeff continues to work as a free-lance video editor. But when one of his clients, A. Smith, (American Ninja Warriors) decided to have its editors work from home during COVID, Jeff decided home could be anywhere. They are in the process of moving to Chantel's city, Cleveland. They will spend some time at our home in Omaha, en route. They have two children, Levi (5) and Noa (2). Their dog Saint has already moved to Cleveland with Chantel's sister.



Our fourth child (and favorite daughter) Erica and her husband Cornel Tuns live in Lincoln, NE. Cornel is presently serving at [Lincoln Southeast High School](#) in Environmental Services. He plans to begin studies as a Certified Nursing Assistant, and eventually as a Registered Nurse. Erica oversees the home front and home schools. Laura (11) is learning violin and Merry (9) is learning piano. Levi (6) is in Kindergarten, while JD (5) is learning to read at home. (See next page.)



2020 has been an unsettling year in more ways than one. COVID has put a damper on life. By the grace of God, Esther and I have both survived COVID and are none-the-worse for wear. Wearing a mask really damages communication in many ways.



Proponents cite “science” when mandating mask-wearing, but I have not heard of a single “double-blind” scientific experiment on the wearing of masks and “social distancing” as opposed to doing neither. That does not sound scientific to me. It sounds arbitrary.

Frankly, because of what I have experienced in 2020, I have lost a significant amount of faith in our government, in our political processes, and in our medical community. I see too many opportunists, and I do not see a preponderance of truth.

Yet I can turn joyfully to the only reality of which I know, God, His Word, and the love which He has demonstrated for all mankind by becoming one of us!



About 2000 years ago, “the Word became flesh and camped out among us, and we gazed upon His glory – glory as of the only-born from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14, [JTB](#)). After His baptism by John the Baptist, God immediately anointed Him with His Holy Spirit to be the ultimate Prophet, Priest, and King.

During His life and ministry, Jesus served primarily as Prophet (Matt. 5-7). At the close of His life, He as the Great High Priest willingly offered Himself up as the Ultimate Sacrifice for sin (Heb. 9:11-12). He is presently serving in heaven at the Right Hand of the Father, primarily appearing as Priest, where He always lives to make intercession for us (Heb. 7:25).

But He is coming back in power and great glory to reign in Jerusalem as King over Israel and King over the entire earth (Rev. 19:11-20:6; Zech. 14:9). He will reign in righteousness and fairness (Isa. 11:1-5). There will be peace in the animal kingdom (Isa. 11:6-9) because the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Isa. 11:9). At last, peace will prevail upon our earth (Isa. 2:1-4)!

Meanwhile, it is our task to recruit as many subjects for His kingdom as we can (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8)!

We invite you to join us this Christmas season in trusting in and submitting to the King of kings and Lord of lords, who loved us so much He died to pay for our sins (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8)!

Merry Christmas!

Jim and Esther Bartsch

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