

MERRY CHRISTMAS

and a Joyful New Year from the Van Wijngaarden Family in Europe



As many of you know already, our first season of church ministry in Cambridge came to an end this summer, and we are now being prepared for our second season in a new context. In the midst of this transition the end of the year is coming closer, and this makes us think of the idiom that time flies, in particular when you're having fun. Well, the year did fly, so to speak, but it was not all fun... Quite the opposite actually as we found it regularly intense, overwhelming at times, and for sure we knew ourselves to be broken through it all. So time can go fast, and that is also when you are not having fun. Of course time has no variation in pace, and we will leave it up to others to explain when it seems to fly, and when to crawl. Nevertheless there is another possible perspective, which we would argue is more than just beneficial (even perhaps being vital). We are talking about the perspective of time as a river, a river we are all on. And with such a perspective your relationship with time is (hopefully) being challenged. Instead of asking yourself how you *manage your time* (as if life is about efficiency), the question becomes how are you *living your life* as time is (and keeps) flowing. What are you living for? And maybe more importantly, who are you living for? Because after all, "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:19; and see also Proverbs 4:23).

Broken jars...

We are grateful that this past year not only intensified the reality of our brokenness, but it also has brightened and deepened our love for God, and our life in Jesus Christ. You might have heard of kintsugi (and if not google is your friend). Tim Keller once made us aware that the philosophy behind this art resonates with the reality that we ourselves can (and are meant to) be more than *just* broken jars. If you answer the call to trust and follow Jesus, you will receive restoration, yet with the cracks still visible. If that is the reality of your life, your brokenness actually becomes a part of you that may be seen with glory shining through the mended cracks.

With Christmas on the horizon we hope that you will be encouraged in remembering that Jesus Christ is not only Savior and Lord, but that He came in particular for the ones that *realize* they are broken (see Mark 2:17). We all fit that description, and we are all called by Jesus to come out of hiding, to trust Him who once came, and will come again. And until His return, may Jesus shine through your brokenness as you trust and follow Him, so you will truly live.

We wish you a Merry Christmas, and a joyful 2025!

Greeting you all with the warmest regards,

Andreas, Katharine, Luca & Sem van Wijngaarden

Ways to be involved:

You can become a partner in the ministry! If that is of interest, send us an email: Fam.Van.Wijngaarden@icloud.com

PRAYER SUPPORT

We would love you to pray with us and will inform you with several prayer letters throughout the year.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

In the **USA**, we are part of Presbyterian Mission International (PMLweb.org/avw.php). You can choose from the following options to donate tax-deductible:

- join the Monthly Support Team by filling out the EFT form (PMLweb.org/EFTformPMI2020) and sending it in;
- mail a check and include to write "Van Wijngaarden" on the memo line and send it to PMI, 12330 Conway Rd, St. Louis, MO 63141;
- or see the following link (PMLweb.org/donations.php) for alternative ways of financial giving.

In **Nederland** zijn we aangesloten bij de ANBI-Stichting Samen op de Bres en kan er belastingaftrekbaar worden gedoneerd. Dit kan worden gedaan door geld over te maken naar IBAN NL35INGB0001152914 t.n.v. St. Samen op de Bres en o.v.v. "Wijngaarden planten." Het is ook mogelijk om de donatie automatisch te laten incasseren. Stuur ons een bericht en wij zullen het benodigde formulier dan toesturen.