

# free

Faye Jaffee 28 Village Green, W. Lebanon NH 03784 603-252-1142 faye.jaffee@uscm.org

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My dear friends,

It's hard to believe I'm saying this, but happy 2006! Tomorrow we will begin our *fifth* week of the quarter (there are actually only nine weeks of classes in the winter term), and that will only be the beginning of February! I'm definitely still adjusting to the quarter system—everything happens so fast! The enclosed newsletter is one from our first annual Boston Winter Conference (themed “Free”), which I worked at during the first week of January. I'll save the general info about the conference for that newsletter.

I had a couple of jobs at the Winter Conference, which turned out to be *so fun*! My primary job was to be stage crew, so I got to move podiums and turn off TV monitors! ☺ I even got to run one of the video cameras for a number of the main sessions, and I wish you could have seen how cool and professional I looked with my headset on... I think I may have missed my calling.

I also did a seminar at the conference that about 30 people attended, entitled “Let's Be Honest”. I talked about how God has designed us to grow in community with Him and with others, and that we each need an environment of safety and honesty to continue to become more like Jesus. It was faith-stretching for me to teach in a forum like that, but I ended up really enjoying the experience, and learned a lot *myself* about how much I need to be in relationships of “grace and truth” (see Cloud & Townsend's How People Grow).

The one student from Dartmouth who ended up coming was **Melanie** (a sophomore). We were pretty disappointed, initially, about the lack of effect our recruiting efforts had, and concerned that Mel would have a pretty bad time since she didn't have any friends at the conference. But, as I'm sure you know, God most often surprises us, and it turned out that Melanie had a really wonderful time. So wonderful, in fact, that she came back to campus with new energy and drive that has rubbed off on all the rest of our students!



Ever since I came to Dartmouth we have been dealing with the dynamic of trying to drag students toward Christ and growth opportunities. All of a sudden, as Melanie has shown excitement and taken the initiative to lead, **student initiative and excitement has been popping up all over the place!** They are mentoring younger students, talking with other students about their relationships with Jesus, leading our weekly meeting, and interested in missions opportunities! It has been shocking, humbling (why couldn't we make that happen?!), and wonderful to watch.

For the love of our Savior,

### Prayer Requests

- For our **students**: That they'd continue to lead & take initiative with others, and grow in their heart for wanting others to know Jesus
- For our **staff**: That God would show Himself to be very present in the midst of some significant challenges and heartache.
- For our spring break trip to **Israel**: That God would raise up all the money that the staff & students need (11 ppl x \$1600), that He'd give wisdom to the people planning the trip, and for safety & security issues in that country.