

the gillespies and

# the Good News



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## OUR DEAR FRIENDS,

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There have been so many exciting things happening since we last wrote to you! Here are a few highlights of the beginning of 2010 here at Dartmouth.

## NEW LIFE AT DARTMOUTH!

We know of at least four students who have come to faith in Christ since November!

- **James and Matt** began new relationships with God through Jesus in the late fall as our team followed up on spiritual interest surveys that we took at the beginning of the year. Our teammate, Tony, has continued to meet with these men to establish them in their new faith, and they are really growing in knowledge of and love for the Lord.
- **Lizzie and Nayab** professed faith in Christ this winter for the first time. We're so excited to see what God is doing in the lives of these young women, especially because they are primarily being ministered to and discipled by other students. They each have close Christian friends (who are a part of our ministry) who were courageous and honest with them, and sought to share the truth of the gospel, not only in word, but through their lives. This is the vision we have for Dartmouth--that Christian students would so trust and enjoy Jesus that they can't help but talk with their friends about him.

## DISCUSSING DATING

Right after Valentine's Day Faye and I spoke to Agape, the Asian American ministry on campus, about dating. We don't get many chances to work together on projects, so it was really fun to prepare the talk and speak to the group together, especially on this topic! Our goal was, not just to present a picture of Christian dating (what does that mean when people didn't "date" in Biblical times?), but to build a foundation for how to let the gospel speak into all kinds of specific relationships and situations we find ourselves in.

We shared with them from Colossians chapters 1 and 3, focusing on Christ as the center of all of life and relationships, and then seeking to apply the principles for how we're called to care for all people to how we might be called to care for others in dating relationships.

Unfortunately, many young people base their decisions about dating on popular culture. Here are a few of the ways we contrasted Christ-centered dating with pop-culture dating:

- *Not Performing* by only showing your good side, but *Giving Grace and Speaking Truth* to encourage and build one another up
- *Not Isolating* and just spending time together alone, but *Inviting Others In* to the relationship to provide wisdom, accountability, and counsel
- *Not Depending Upon Your Partner* to meet your needs, but *Leaning on Christ* as Savior

The students found this counsel to be very encouraging and many have thanked us and requested that we come back to share more about relationships. Please pray for these students as they seek to follow Christ in the messy world of romance.

### PRAYER REQUESTS

- *Our relationships with God:* That we would seek Him wholeheartedly and desire Him more than anything else
- *Our relationships with others:* That we would grow in caring for one another, and together that we'd make time for building true and deep friendships here
- *James, Matt, Lizzie and Nayab:* Continued growth in Christ and for there to be supportive Christians around them
- *Our upcoming projects:* Growth and development over Spring Break; Sophomores to attend Summer Project
- *Our home-buying:* God's leading, wisdom and provision for us, and that we'd trust Him through the process

## PLANNING TO STAY AWHILE...

So much happens between these letters! At the staff conference we attended before Thanksgiving we met with our regional human resources team and decided together that we would commit to staying at Dartmouth for at least 5 years. We all feel it to be a great decision, especially because Faye and I have each been so transient for the past many of years. Our hope is that staying put longer will give us a chance to really grow in our marriage, become an integral part of our church here, and see a couple of classes through their four years at Dartmouth.



As a result, we began considering and praying about buying a house during December. Since the middle of January we've been looking at homes, consulting with family, friends and supporters in the area, and wrestling with all the financial and time commitments that buying a home entails. Now, after nearly 2 months, we have found a home in the neighborhood we want to live in (near Dartmouth and many of our close friends), with a great yard to host people outdoors, and amazingly in our price range – mostly because it's an older home and a bit of a fixer-upper. Please pray with us as we pursue purchasing this home. We have been asking God to lead us and He has answered many prayers along the way.

**Pictures of the house: from the road (left), in the living room (lower left), and out the backyard (140'x80').**



## UPCOMING ADVENTURES!

The next couple of months will be pretty busy; here's our schedule so you can track with us and pray for us:

### *March 12-28: Here's Life Inner City (HLIC) Spring Break Trip*

We'll be heading to Orlando, FL March 12-19 with the students from Keene State College to do missions and service work in the inner city. (While our primary focus is with Dartmouth, we are helping to coach Keene State long distance.) March 20-28 we'll stay and Dartmouth students will come down to work with HLIC.

### *March 29 – May 21: Dartmouth Spring Term*

We'll be back on campus for the first 8 weeks of the Spring term. We'll be focusing on reaching out to new communities at Dartmouth where the gospel is not yet penetrating, raising up and training new student leaders, and connecting Christian students more with local churches. Unfortunately, we will have to leave a couple of weeks before school ends for our summer assignment with Lifelines (see below). The rest of our team will finish out the school year with the students.

### *May 22 – June 26: LifeLines Summer Project in Acadia National Park, Maine*

LifeLines, Campus Crusade's outdoor ministry, uses activities like rock climbing, white water rafting, and hiking to help students see the ways they react under stress in order to expose the things they trust in apart from Christ (like safety, harmony in relationships, or being in control). From there, it's a natural jumping off point to speak the gospel to one another. The first two weeks of the project is for staff training, and the last two weeks the newly trained staff will work with students. This is the only Summer Project that Dartmouth sophomores can attend (they're required to take classes during the summer); please that pray more students would join the one who is applying to go.