 **COMMON GROUND**

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**More Than I Bargained For**

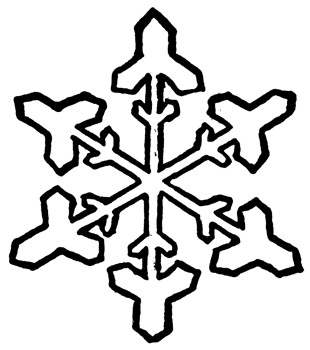
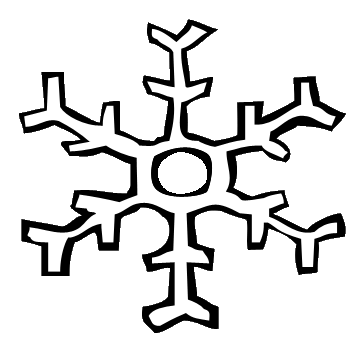
Welcome back to the Spring semester! We had a great break as a family, and a nice Christmas. We always take several days to open all our presents (maybe even a week) we have always done this.  The girls love to sleep in, that is their best Christmas present. (Except for whatever you might have given them!)  We enjoyed being in Phoenix and the mountains around Sedona are always beautiful and even more so when covered in snow.  We played cards with my mom, took a tour of the area and laughed a lot.  I hope that your break was relaxing and peaceful as well.

 On the way home we hopped over to Spokane and drove down to Moscow, Idaho to take Eryn, our daughter, back to school.  On this drive we wanted a 4 wheel drive vehicle because the roads there in January can be dicey.  We were given a near new Jeep Grand Cherokee, and it had amazing bells and whistles; heated seats in the front and the back, heated steering wheel, rear backup camera, lights that light up if you had a car beside you, three different buttons to adjust your seat, vents for the front seat (making you cold almost instantly, of course for the summer, but I had to try it).  The vehicle also would raise and lower to three different levels, like a low rider, so many features and 5 different ways to turn them all off and on.  I wanted the 4 wheel drive for safety and it was expensive but received two days worth of entertainment and being amazed.

This reminds me of God!  Forty years ago at a church camp on the plains of Nebraska I only wanted safety!  Save me from the depths of hell.  I have received so much more.  This was expensive, Christ paid the ultimate price for you and I. Wisdom, compassion, council, provider, helper, comforter, etc.  God has so many ways to help us and so many ways that we can connect to Him.  I am so happy that there are several different Christian groups that you can connect with and many different churches in Fairbanks that are strong congregations.  I hope that you will join us this semester for worship, Bible study or Weekend activities.  You are always welcome!

God Bless!

David



**UPCOMING UNITED CAMPUS MINISTRY EVENTS**

**Tuesday Evening Worship** is at 7PM in the same location, ***Brooks Building Room 302***. We call this worship service Vespers (evening worship service). Vespers consists of singing, student testimony, a short message, and a time of quiet reflection. **Starts January 19th!**

**Thursday Lunch Bunch** is in the ***United Campus Ministry office*** (306 Constitution Hall) every ***Thursday from 1PM-1:45 PM***. This semester we will continue our study of the book of Ezra. Feel free to bring your own lunch; we will provide cookies, milk and Ramen.

**Chena Hot Springs Trip** Friday January 22, we will meet at the UCM office at 5:30PM and head out to Chena Hot Springs for a time of relaxation and fun. Please either bring dinner or eat before hand as we will not be eating at Chena. We should get back to campus around 11PM and the cost $10. Don’t forget to bring a swimsuit, towel, and change for a locker (~$1 in quarters but you can split lockers too)

**Spring Break Trip!!!** We are going to Anchorage and will be leaving **Friday March 11th –Tuesday March 15th**. We will be staying the night at St. John’s United Methodist church and will be helping out at the Empty Bowl Fundraiser for Beans Cafe, worshiping at St. John UMC, Skiing at Alyeska, and more. For a complete list of times, events, and items to bring, please contact the UCM office. If money is a problem please see David. **Cost is $150 if you are skiing and $100 if you are not skiing.**