

Spring is here. I grew up on a farm in North Dakota and spring was always a welcomed time. Typically it meant that the snow and cold would be gone (yet the timing of that varied throughout the years). My dad raised sheep and spring always brought the excitement with having numerous lambs born. Seeing them bounce around and showing the energy that came with their new life was always a joy. As a small grain farmer, spring also meant the beginning of seeding the crops. Much work was done yet the excitement of the newness of those crops and anticipation of what they would yield provided us with the drive to do that work.

As I look forward to spring now, there is still some of the same excitement. Yet, there are differences from rural North Dakota to urban Arizona. But, I still cherish the smell of the fresh cut grass and appreciate being able to open our windows to hear the birds chirping and feel the 'fresh' air. Working in the schools, I continue to look forward to the Spring Break that is part of the school calendar. This year was especially exciting because it was the first year Graceland University and my school district had the same break. It worked out perfectly for us. Our family of 4 were able to spend the week together, with our children's girlfriend and boyfriend joining our family for our vacation. We went to Anaheim/Disneyland. We had a delightful time there; being together and sharing together.

*Isaiah 35:1 The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing.*

The excitement continued as we heard about the progress of the Graceland Men's Basketball team. They kept winning in the NAIA tournament. What a thrill to follow them! I followed everything about that experience. What a vehicle to bring the people from all over into a special community as we all supported the team. As many have seen, the excitement after that buzzer beater 3 point shot was incredible! All that I saw and heard from these past few days has brought great pride. Pride in the statements that have been made by the coaches and the players, pride in the fans and community as they supported the team and shared with each other, and pride in knowing the both my children are able to experience such a wonderful community.

*D & C 163, 11a. Chief among these is the power of community in Christ expressed locally in distinctive fashions while upholding a unity of vision, foundational beliefs, and mission throughout the world.*

Barb Bear