The Science of Fun!

Zoe tests her skills in the CSIRO Incursion, learning about the science of toys.
Teaching as Christian Practice -
Planning for Christian Learning

During Term 3 Work Break, a contingent of MECS teachers headed across the border to South Australia. Our purpose was to take part in a teaching intensive at Torrens Valley Christian School. The week long seminars were centered on Christian teaching as a practice, led by Professor David S from Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

We had the pleasure of hearing David speak for the first time at the CEN conference last year. Following that conference we had a number of staff discussions about what we had gained from David’s talks, and it was clear that he had brought a fresh and practical point of view to our perspective on Christian education. So when the group of MECS staff met at Melbourne Airport on the Sunday afternoon before our big week, there was a buzz of expectation and anticipation for the coming week.

To give the school community a snapshot of our time at the conference, we would have to talk in metaphors. David used two profound images to capture our attention in regards to teaching as a Christian practice.

The Garden of Delight –

Throughout the Bible, the cultivation of land and a lush garden are symbols of delight and pleasure. The Garden of Eden is a good example of this. The wilderness on the other hand is a metaphor for death, where there is only distress and misery. David used these two images and linked them to our approach to teaching.

The idea of ‘gardening’ is to foster a desire for learning, as we would tend a tree. Ultimately, the Garden of Delight is a place where we find pleasure in pursuing knowledge, but also in pursuing virtues such as kindness and justice; in doing so we will flourish in our relationship with God.

As teachers our goal should be to facilitate learning that isn’t interested in ‘entertainment’, but rather focused on enabling our students to grow spiritually. We should endeavor to seek virtue together as a community. The challenge with this idea is that the job will never be done, however it is a task that we should grapple with anyway. Our shared imaginations should involve the thought that we are called to grow a garden where a wilderness has sprung up.

A Loaf of Bread –

David referred to teaching as ‘feeding’ our students. Bread should be the staple ‘food’ in our classes: we should see our curriculum as bread that we bring to each lesson, which our students can get their teeth into and chew over.

As teachers he dared us to bring fresh bread to each lesson, rather than stale year-old units that we are no longer receive nourishment from or are excited by. Furthermore, we need to know the difference between ‘bread’ and ‘cake’. While cake may be tasty (or entertaining or fun), it isn’t really a meal of substance. The bread that we bring to class should be content that causes our students to grow, gain nutrition from and move onto the next part of their lives. In addition to this, we as teachers should understand that we need nourishment as much as our students! We need to find sustenance in what we are doing as educators.

Finally David challenged us as teachers on how we break our bread. He made the point that when we break bread with our students, we should do it in such a way that causes our class to see Jesus.

It is such a blessing to be part of a school that supports its teachers in development such as this. As we sat through the seminars we realized that MECS has a long tradition and legacy of thinking about and working through a number of the perspectives that David shared. It is with a spirit of enthusiasm and inspiration that we continue to grapple with these ideas.
Staff Notes from Martin, Principal

Welcome back Sue from Long Service Leave and cheerio to Di as she takes up the LSL baton. At the end of her trip Di will spend time in two of our Christian Schools in remote Arnhem Land. We look forward to hearing about these places upon her return.

This week we welcome Craig as the new Accountant taking over from Tony, who is moving onto Mountain District Christian School. Tony and Craig will overlap for the rest of this term to ensure a smooth transition.

We have interviewed for a number of roles for next year. It’s good to be doing this early in Term 3 so that planning for next year can be well in hand. We now have three new primary staff members starting next year: Rebekah (Prep), Matthew and Carmen (Middle Primary).

We have also completed the appointment process for the interim Deputy Principal. This is a one year appointment whilst I am on leave in 2013 and Paul steps into the Acting Principal role. We are very pleased to announce that Jacqui, who has been the head of Secondary at Mountain District CS is joining our team as the Interim DP. Jacqui will also take up a teaching load in the secondary science and maths areas. We will provide more of a profile on Jacqui later in the year.

Family Directory
I am pleased to tell you that today we sent home (via mail) the Family Directory. A large number of families ‘opted in’ to have their details included, so we believe it will be a useful resource to assist communication between parents for matters relating to your children - arranging parties, sleepovers, trading information etc. We ask you to use the information for its intended purpose, and never for marketing purposes.

Visit from Allan and students from Sattler Christian College (NT)
This week we’ve been hosting a bunch of Year 8 students from Darwin along with their Secondary Coordinator (our very own) Allan. They will catch a Geelong match at Etihad on Friday night. How privileged are they! Another piece of NT news is that Colin and Merran will be back down here next year after their time of serving up at Sattler. It’ll be great to welcome them back.

Olympics Celebration Day - Celebrating Sport, Celebrating all nations
We are so glad that we postponed last week’s big day. The BOM got it right. We’re hoping that predictions at the time of writing (Tuesday) are correct and the chance of late showers holds off. We look forward to a great day of celebration and fun together.

The fundraising that has occurred to date has raised an amazing $3695.70 for the two schools in Uganda and Cambodia. This should exceed $4000 after all the lunch fundraising on Thursday. Thanks for your generosity.

The Official Year 9 Opening
Even though we’ve unofficially been using this new facility all year, we needed to formally open the Year 9 Open Village. Therefore on Monday morning the member for Evelyn, Christine, joined us and unveiled the plaque. The Year 9 student leaders went on to spend time with Christine. We haven’t really known Christine before this time as the school is located in the state seat of Monbulk (James); however a significant portion of the school community would reside in ‘Evelyn’. It was good to meet her.

Year 9 and 10 AFL and Netball

Netball
We had a great day of competition last Friday with 2 teams entered in the Inter-school round robin. We originally thought we would have one team of 11 players but instead entered another team and had all girls playing every game without a substitute. Our Year 10 girls team won 2 and lost 2, leaving them 4th overall. Our combined Year 9 and 10 team did really well only losing to Balcombe A, which meant they were runners up. Our Year 9 team won 3 out of 5 games and were 3rd overall.

It was a really good display of teamwork, challenge and fun. Well done girls.

Anne-Maree
Secondary Sports Coordinator

AFL
"Plaaaay on, plaaaay on, plaaaaay on" was all we heard for the first game as the vocal umpire took charge. The Year 9/10 boys took this in their stride as they met the challenge of AFL against the other schools. On a wet and cold day with a rain soaked ground, MECS was able to win all their games but one - and that was lost by only a few points. The games were played in a great spirit and the effort put in by the MECS boys was brilliant. Well done boys.

Cliff
SS Coordinator
Parent Seminar (Evening A) Invitation

As new parents Partnering with MECS we invite you to attend the Christian Education Parent Seminar (A) Thurs 23 August 2012

Parent Seminar (Evening A)

An Introduction to Christian Education

• Parent partnership
• Religion
• School Governance
• Community
• MECS Core Values

Seminar begins at 7:30pm and concludes at 9:30pm, in the Main Staff Room.

Supper included.

Next Seminar (B) - Tues 30 Oct

Q&A

“Why do Drama?”

When my daughter was little one of her favourite movies was ‘The Man From Snowy River’. In her games she would take on the role of Jessica (the Heroine), while my husband was assigned the part of Jim (the Hero) and I was enlisted to play Jessica’s father (the Grumpy Old Dad). Now we could get distracted analysing the implications of her casting, but what I really want to talk about is how natural it is for us to take on roles. Children instinctively play in this way from a very young age, enacting stories, using their imaginations and stepping into someone else’s shoes. It is no coincidence that the word ‘play’ refers to both engaging in games and a theatrical performance. Unfortunately, it seems that we lose this natural inclination to pretend as we grow older, and yet it is a basic element of being human.

Drama in schools gives students the opportunity to ‘play’, which might mean taking on a lead role in a major theatre production, creating and voicing a puppet or participating in a simple game. But ‘playing’ can be serious stuff. Students have to engage actively with others, they learn to co-operate, be spontaneous, take risks (good ones!), develop confidence, demonstrate leadership, solve problems, express themselves, communicate with their bodies, communicate with their voices, develop literacy through writing and reading, empathise, learn about the world around them, consider the past, envisage the future, be responsible, be independent, create, refine, present, analyse, evaluate and learn about the many elements of theatre as an art form. Phew!

Drama can be great fun, though, and I’ve often reflected on how lucky I am to be teaching a subject in which my students regularly-and legitimately- make me laugh! It can also be extremely challenging. Just ask any VCE Drama student who has completed the Solo Performance Examination! This is the case in all schools. But what’s unique about MECS students (and I can say this, having worked elsewhere for many years) is their sense of freedom and individuality, and their willingness to embrace creative endeavours. We may not all be especially gifted in the performing arts but we are all children of a creative God who has made us in his image to be, among other things, creative people.

Extra Special

Chicken only Sausage Rolls. Limited stock - only $2.00

MECS Kitchen

Weekly Special

The Weekly Special this week is a Kitchen made Potato Bake with bacon - $4.50

Sascha’s Olympic Hopes

The Mount Evelyn Mail ran a story on Sascha (Year 12)who will compete as part of the School Sport Victoria State Cross Country Team, competing at the end of August.

Keen on sport, having previously played football, tennis, soccer and swimming, he has given these away after discovering a passion for cross country and triathlon.

Sascha trains an hour and a half every day, getting up early to fit in school. He hopes to head to University next year and pursue a career as a professional athlete.

Congratulations Sascha on your selection to the State team and all the best for your future goals. It will be fantastic if we get to cheer you on at the next Olympics.

Heather

Newsletter Editor

MECS Kindergarten Open Evening

Wednesday 22 August 2012, 7.30pm in the MECS Pump Room

This is an Information Evening for 2013 Kindergarten parents and others enquiring about enrolment to:

• Introduce the MECS Kindergarten
• Talk about the 3 year old and 4 year old Kindergarten Programs
• To discuss what a Christian Kindergarten looks like
• Outline how we differ from other Kindergartens.

This is an Open Evening so invite please invite those you think would be interested in the MECS Kindergarten. RSVP to MECS Office, 9738 6000.

Road Works Next Week

Road works will commence on Monday 20 August on Hawkins Road, to construct 2 speed humps. We have been advised that the work will be avoided during school start and finish times, however, can you please ensure that you do not park along Hawkins Road during the construction time and be sure to follow all traffic signs and warnings. Work is not expected to take more than a few days, weather permitting.

MECS Notes
Parents & Friends

Coles Vouchers/ Woolworths Stickers

Both of these programs are now finished so can you please put your vouchers and stickers in the appropriate boxes in the office by Monday 20 August. Thank you for your support and we will give you a final tally next week.

The 5 Greatest Challenges for Parents in 2012

Presented by Dr Michael Carr-Gregg

Tonight!

Thursday 16 August, 7.30pm

Entry is Free

Mount Evelyn Christian School Gymnasium, Enter via Gate 2, Senior School Entrance, Hawkins Road, Mount Evelyn.

1. Milennial parenting
2. Alcohol
3. Online safety
4. Sleep
5. The five secrets of resilience

Dollarmites Banking

Don’t forget Wednesday is Dollarmite Banking Day. If you would like to open an account for your child please contact me. Remember that the school gets a commission of 5% of all deposits so it is a great way to fundraise for the school.

Evelyn
P&F President

MECS Notes

Vis Comm Student Art

SP Poetry Incursion

On August 7, a famous poet, Cameron, came to talk us about poetry. One of my favourites were Dibble poems which had 4 sentences. At the beginning of both the sentences there is an ‘ing’ word and at the end of the first sentence the word has to rhyme with the last word in the poem. I enjoyed this very much.

Jacinta

Cameron came out to teach Senior Primary how to write poetry. He read and performed four of his amazing poems. Cameron explained poetry and how it can be anything inspiring. We learned how to write diddles, burst writing and haikus. They were all very enjoyable and interesting. Cameron also told us that you don’t have to be good at English to write poetry and poetry doesn’t have to rhyme.

Telisha

Cameron explained that there are many different ways of writing Poems. Everyone asked him if he could act out one of his poems, so he did. He was a very good actor and was very funny. He told us we should try and write about something we like, using the examples he gave. We then read our writing out. We all had a little laugh at some people’s Haikus. I was very nervous about reading out my work but it was a good day.

Jennifer

Nebula Haiku

A cloud of star dust
A funeral for a star
Spectacular sight

Josh

Soup

Creamy potato soup,
Sitting at a pink table on a cow stool,
Happy to be at Grandmas, Marshmallow and lollipop soup,
Served by penguins in Wonderland.

Megan

Snail and maggot soup

Tastes so delish! I think I should add some birds

Aiden

Before I perform

Looking out, a million eyes stare back
A smell of smoke drifts past me
Heart as fast as lighting
It feels like I’m glued to the stage
I force my mouth open

Brianna

Newspaper soup

Eating in the kitchen the daily gossip gets caught in my braces.

Meggie

Football

Playing some football,
In a massive grand final,
We are just losing.

Matthew

Leek and potato soup

Leek and potato soup,
Ordering it from the canteen,
On a cold winters day!

Amara

The wonderful place

Amazing. Just the sound of the soft smooth music,
Wearing astonishing sparkling shoes,
A room full of beautiful swaying girls,
I can’t wait until I can come back to this wonderful magical place.

Emma
Toy Science Incursion

The Science of Fun

Last week MPs had an incursion about ‘Toy Science’ to support our study of ‘Inventors’. The students had a wonderful time exploring the exciting world of toys, from simple and ancient toys to the complex and latest in technology. The students enjoyed the hands-on experience allowing them to experiment with a range of different toys to find out the scientific phenomena behind them that allows them to work the way that they do. By the end of the session the students understood that all toys have science behind them and were encouraged to rediscover their own toys at home as scientists. The students wrote great explanations about they toys they explored.

How Music Boxes Work

Music boxes are peaceful.

Music boxes work by turning a handle that spins a cylinder which has bumps on it. Next to the cylinder are lots of little strips of metal. Each strip of metal makes a different sound. So when the bumps hit the metal it makes a sound. If you put the music box on a hard flat surface it makes a nice loud sound.

So that is how a music box works.

Diver Dave

Diver Dave is a toy that I would love to have. He is really awesome!

He is made out of a plastic bottle, a plastic tube with clay on it and water. The bottle is full of water with a bit of air up the top. If you squeeze it gently Diver Dave will go to the bottom and if you let go he will go to the top again. How it works is if you squeeze it, the water will push the tube and it pushes the water so there’s less air. If you let go all the air will come back.

I loved playing with Diver Dave because it was fun watching him go up and down.

Zachary

Ghost Ball

Ghost Balls are fun ways to look at circuits and it’s my favourite toy.

The Ghost Ball works like a human power line. It is a foggy white ball with a ghostly red light and two steel slits. One steel slit is connected to a battery. The one next to it is connected to the light. You have to make a connection from slit one and slit two. You put your finger on one slit and someone else puts their finger on the other slit and if you touch the other person the Ghost Ball lights up.

In summary I would recommend a ghost ball for a fun toy.

Jacob

Afghanistan

MPK has been learning a bit about Afghanistan as it is our chosen country for the MECS Olympics Day. Last Tuesday we had some lovely visitors who have been involved in aid work in Afghanistan to share with us a powerpoint and stories of their experiences.

On Tuesday 7 August, Vicki and Mark, with their kids Aisha, Joel and Caelen, came to MPK. They talked about Afghanistan. They showed us a slide-show with lots of pictures. They laid out some cloths which is their way of having a table. They told us to take off our shoes (that’s tradition in Afghanistan) and they shared some Afghan Naan bread with us which was like garlic bread. It was so nice! Then they passed around Afghan clothes. They looked a bit strange.

Ellie

When the T’s visited MPK they told us about Afghanistan and what they did there. They helped poor people in need and rebuilt a hospital that had been bombed.

Nathaniel

MPK got a visit from the T’s. They came to teach about Afghanistan because we were learning about it for Olympics Day.

Vicki told us how Afghanistan is landlocked, which means there is land all around the country. We saw a photo of children who had big stomachs because they were not getting enough food. Mark showed a slideshow of the streets and how bumpy the road was because of bombs landing on it. We saw pictures of families living in tents when it was snowing and cold. I think it was a great experience.

Patience

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Ellie

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Nathaniel
On Monday 13 August, we had the privilege of formally opening the Year 9 ‘Open Village’ complex. We were fortunate to have the company of our local member of State Parliament, Christine, and to acknowledge the contribution the State Government made towards funding the centre. After the assembly, student leaders in Year 9 were accompanied by staff and Christine to a brief morning tea in the staffroom. We were able to spend some time with Christine and ask questions about the role that she plays in her community and the responsibilities of her leadership. We learnt that throughout her career she has dealt with a vast range of issues. She said that the most enjoyable aspect of her job is connecting and communicating with people, rather than all the tiresome paperwork. We enjoyed the experience and look forward to the wonderful memories that will come from such a brilliant facility.

Faith & Jordan

Prep - 100 Days at School

After keeping count most days by putting objects into little bags and doing tally marks and stickers on the calendar, our Preps celebrated their 100th day at school on Wednesday.

We did lots of problem solving, counting and measuring using the number 100.

We counted to 100 by 1s, 10s and 5s.

We had a cake with 100 candles on it and had yummy bread sprinkled with 100s and 1000s. We poured 100 mls of lemonade into our cups.

We found out the jar of jelly beans contained quite a few more than one hundred!

We are busy finishing our big book about 100 things we have done so far at school.

Thanks so much to the mums and former student teacher Mr W who gave of their time either baking or helping on our exciting day.

Jan and Wendy
Prep Teachers
2012 Term 3 Week 4: 12 AUG - 18 AUG

Mon 13 - Fri 17 August
Preschool Visits and EYCs

Mon 13 - Sat 18 August
Sattler Christian College Yr 8 Visit

Thur 16 August
Michael Carr-Gregg Seminar 7.30pm Gym

Fri 17 August
Yr 6 Positive Boys and Empowering Girls

2012 Term 3 Week 5: 19 AUG - 25 AUG

Mon 20 - Fri 24 August
Preschool Visits and EYCs

Mon 20 August
Year 10, 11 & 12 Drug and Alcohol Info Session
Dance Lessons for 40th Anniversary Ball 7.30pm Gym

Wed 22 August
Yr 5 & 6 Hoop Time
Kindergarten Open Night for 2013 (for new Kindergarten parents and others) 7.30pm

Thur 23 August
VCE Drama Unit 2 Excursion
Parent Seminar (A) in Staffroom 7.30pm

Fri 24 August
Yr 6 Positive Boys and Empowering Girls
SP Space Expo in Gym

2012 Term 3 Week 6: 26 AUG - 1 SEPT

Mon 27 August
Yr 11 & 12 Interschool AFL & Netball
Preschool Visits and EYCs
Dance Lessons for 40th Anniversary Ball 7.30pm Gym

Tues 28 August
Prep Connect Morning Tea 9am

Wed 29 August
JP Planetarium Excursion
Yr 3 & 4 Hoop Time

Thur 30 August
VCE Music Recital 7pm
Dance Lessons for 40th Anniversary Ball 7.30pm Gym

Fri 31 August
Yr 6 Positive Boys and Empowering Girls
Fathers Day Stall, Lunchtime Only

2012 Term 3 Week 7: 2 SEPT - 8 SEPT

Mon 3 September
Dance Lessons for 40th Anniversary Ball 7.30pm Gym

Tues 4 September
Year 7-12 Tribal Athletics

Thur 6 September
Yr 7 & 8 Well Being Program
Bandfest 7pm Theatrette
Dance Lessons for 40th Anniversary Ball 7.30pm Gym

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
11am Tuesday on published week. Email articles (images attached as jpg) to the Newsletter Office

MECS COMMUNITY NOTICES
MECS does not endorse the products or services of any private advertiser. No responsibility is accepted by Mount Evelyn Christian School for the accuracy of information contained in advertisements or claims made by them.

Studio Apartment For Rent
Central to Mount Evelyn. Suit single or married couple. Good off road parking. No pets. Phone Theo.

Car for Sale
Mitsubishi Magna TH, 1999 model. Super reliable. White sedan, 6 cyl auto. 10+ months rego. 174,000kms. Full service record. $4000 ono. Lachlan.

Alto Saxophone For Sale
Alto Saxophone in excellent condition and all accessories.
For more information, please call Jade.

Book Publishing Seminar
Author of 7 books in the Teen Talk series, Sharon Witt will cover every stage from how to get your ideas down on paper, to having your printed book on the shelf.
Saturday 18 August, 2012, Mount Evelyn Christian School. For details go to: www.yourpublishingsuccess.com

Holiday Home For Rent
In Shoreham (near Flinders) on the Peninsula. A 4 bedroom holiday home is available for rent, not far from the beach. If you are interested in renting it for a few days, a weekend, a week or longer, just let us know. Very reasonable rent. 1 week is available in the Sept school holidays.
Please ring Maria and Henk.

Don’t forget MECS Ball Dance Lessons!
Ball dance lessons commence this Monday 20 August in the School Gym, starting at 7.30pm and concluding at 9pm.
All details have previously been supplied but this is a reminder that your interest needs to be registered at the office by tomorrow - this Friday 17 August.
Lessons are being offered at a bargain rate so come along and help us celebrate being part of the MECS community!

MECS 40th Anniversary event details:
This week the invitations have been sent out for the MECS 40th Anniversary Ball - this event launches an exciting 12 months of celebrating 40 years of MECS. The Ball - being held on October 20, is a celebration for the current MECS Community.
March 16 and 17, 2013 - we will be celebrating with our pioneers and founders, early staff members and students by re-enacting the Opening Ceremony held on the grounds 40 years ago. We will continue celebrating with an afternoon tea and a formal dinner, then on the following morning we will be joining with the Mount Evelyn Christian Reformed Church in a celebratory Church service. Invitations will be sent out soon.
October 26, 2013 - will be our Reunion-Festival day, all past students and staff are invited to come back for a wonderful day of re-connecting, reminiscing and celebrating 40 years of MECS together.
If you are interested in being involved in organising any of these events I would love to hear from you.
Nicole
Community Relations Officer

NOTICES SENT HOME THIS WEEK
(can also be downloaded from website)
- Family Directory (via mail)
- Year 7 Drama Note
- Cycle A Wilsons Prom Info Reschedule Note
- Centre Trip Letter