Dr Seuss comes to MECS

Matthew getting into the swing of things during Dr Seuss day - celebrating Literacy and Numeracy week
Being agents of grace

Hopefully you have finished pruning your roses! According to accepted gardening wisdom, a ‘hard prune’ in July will see abundant blooms in spring. I need no encouragement to give something a drastic cut-back in the garden. I have a reputation has a bit of a ‘hacker’. Once I get going there is often nothing left of the bush. I like to make things even and symmetrical, so one snip leads to another, and then another. Often I am rewarded by my ruthlessness, but certainly I am not known for my light-handedness!

My desire to ‘clean things up’ and ‘sort things out’ is both a strength and a challenge for me. It’s certainly productive and often necessary, but I’m continuing to practice and learn the importance of compassion and gentleness, just as God is gracious and gentle with us.

The following description of the coming Messiah, particularly what we read in verse 3, is one of my favourite biblical images of Christ.

‘Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations. 3 He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. 4 A bruised reed he will not break, and a smouldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice. Isaiah 42:1-3

I’m sure we have all experienced times when we feel like a ‘bruised reed’ or a ‘smouldering wick’. To experience the compassion and grace of God, through others, is often what we see as a way to help others. We often don’t need someone to ‘fix’ our problems; we need encouragement, support, and gentleness.

The challenge in any Christian community is to be ‘as Christ’ to one another. This can sometimes be hard – it can take time, energy, patience and tears. It sometimes means standing up for someone when others think we should ‘cut them loose’. It sometimes means being misunderstood by others in the Christian community who don’t know the full story. But the example of Christ is clear. The Gospels are full of stories that show Christ tending the ‘bruised reed’.

If we look at just one chapter in Luke, Chapter 7, we not only read about Jesus responding in compassion to a widow’s grief at the death of her only son, but also the gentle and patient exchange with a “woman who had lived a sinful life”.

Luke 7:11-15

Not long after that, Jesus went to the village Nain. His disciples were with him, along with quite a large crowd. As they approached the village gate, they met a funeral procession—a woman’s only son was being carried out for burial. And the mother was a widow. When Jesus saw her, his heart broke. He said to her, “Don’t cry.” Then he went over and touched the coffin. The pallbearers stopped. He said, “Young man, I tell you: Get up.” The dead son sat up and began talking. Jesus presented him to his mother.

Luke 7:11-15

When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is – that she is a sinner.”

“Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. 43You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. 44You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. 45Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown…”

These two women have been ‘bruised by life’, but in Christ they find someone who shares their grief, who understands their story and who offers hope and forgiveness. To know that our stories ‘break the heart’ of Jesus is great comfort. God is not indifferent to the circumstances of our life; as Christians we cannot be indifferent to the needs of others. To know that Jesus does not condemn us, but offers compassion and forgiveness, also brings great comfort. As Christians we also need to be agents of extravagant grace, not the ones who ‘snuff out’ smouldering wicks.

Of course, this doesn’t mean that everything always works out as we would like. Sometimes our encouragement and support is not enough. Sometimes forgiveness is not well understood. Sometimes grace means letting go rather than holding on! But as a community of God’s people, may we not give up on the call to be more Christ-like in who we are and in all we do.

Narelle
MECS Principal

On Monday, a group of Year 7 and 8 boys attended the Interschool Football event at Greaves Reserve, Dandenong. The boys competed against five other schools in a ladder competition for the Interschool Green Flag of Glory. The day greeted them with wind and rain, but arrived just short of victory. Captain Luke took the helm and encouraged and lifted the team’s spirits. Their resilience was commendable as they powered on despite their initial loss and surged towards a clean and crushing victory against their remaining opponents, dominating the next three matches. Although they did not win the Interschool Green Flag of Glory, in many other ways, they have won glory for themselves, their team and their school.

Duc
Year 7/8 Teacher

Narelle
MECS Principal
**SKETCHER’S SCOOP**

**Parent Partnership Opportunities**

On Tuesday night we held the last of our Parent Seminars for the year. The opportunity to share with our new parents some of the key values and ideas that shape our understanding of Christian education is a key commitment to parent partnership. To partner with someone or some group, is more than just giving tacit approval to some generic idea of ill-defined activity. It signals a real commitment from both parties to work together to make sure that the relationship that they have entered into, or the activity that they are working on together, has common purpose, a shared language, an agreed pathway. Our Parent Seminars are just one way we seek to do this as we partner together in the education of young people.

Another important way we do this is by conducting parent-teacher interviews. These afford the opportunity for parents and teachers to come together to make sure they are on the ‘same page’ when it comes to learning. Expectations are made clear, strategies shared and encouragement offered. We look forward to meeting with parents over the next two weeks for these important conversations.

**CEN Curriculum Project**

On Monday and Tuesday of this week, Di and Jacqui participated in an initiative organised by Christian Education National (CEN) to come together with other invited curriculum leaders to develop documentation incorporating a Christian perspective on key Australian Curriculum areas. This is a project that CEN have wanted to facilitate for some time to provide a useful resource for Christian schools across Australia. We were happy that we were able to provide two senior staff to assist with this process and we trust this will be a valuable tool for our own staff when it is made available.

**‘Faith and Freedom’ - Government Briefing**

This week Gerry and I attended a state government briefing at Parliament House. This was an opportunity for the Liberal party to clarify its position on a number of issues, particularly those in relation to the Equal Opportunity Act which protects our freedom to employ Christian staff. A change of government at the next state election will see this freedom challenged as Labour seeks to amend the legislation in this area. They wish to re-introduce the idea that only ‘bona fide occupational requirements’ are fair exemptions from the Equal Opportunity Act. Some will argue that faith is only an ‘occupational requirement’ if you teach subjects such as Religious Studies or have Chaplaincy duties in a school, but not required if you teach Maths or work in the office. Obviously a school like MECS has very different views about this. We will pick up this issue in more detail in subsequent editions of the Newsletter.

**Literacy & Numeracy Week celebrated with Dr Seuss**

On a lighter note - what a colourful, fun day to see all the Primary school students and teachers dressed up as Dr Seuss characters’ on Tuesday! I love how our school provides so many varied and interesting activities for our students to be part of. Thanks to the Primary staff for making this happen.

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**Children at Play, Educating Year 10**

The children were rolling in as the air caught whispers of the coming spring season. The Year 10s waited with great anticipation for instructions from our developmental psychology teachers.

Split into groups, we talked and played games with a large variety of children coming from a range of ages and genders, trying to grasp an understanding of their way of thinking.

We talked to parents, grandparents and siblings, discussing issues from toilet-training to sleeping patterns. We discovered many interesting things in a child’s development by comparing what we found to famous theorists, and to our own knowledge and experience.

The teachers handed out drinks, cakes and fruit, and the students engaged in games and played pretend. The room was abuzz with laughter, chatter and games. It was a wonderful experience of learning, but also gaining insight into the thought patterns and the world through the eyes of young children.

Katie
Year 10 Student
**MECS Notes**

**To Parents of Year 7 & 9 girls**

You will be receiving a brochure this week about checking your daughters for the condition known as Scoliosis (curvature of the spine).

The Spine Society of Australia recommends a yearly check for all girls in the age range 11-13 to detect this common condition. Around 2.5% of all adolescent girls will suffer this condition and it is easily detected by a simple forward bend test which can be done at home. Early detection means early treatment and this brochure will explain what Scoliosis is, how to check your daughter and what to do if it is present.

Please take the time to read through this brochure and check your daughter. It only takes a couple of minutes. I have personally suffered this condition which wasn’t detected until it was too late for treatment so this is something I highly recommend you do!

Thanks for your cooperation.

_Melinda_

*First Aid Officer*

**Industry Week Sales**

Year 9s this week have transformed into an industry called ‘Recreate’ with the task of making the most environmentally friendly, fun and fantastic products.

We have different departments including woodwork, food and textiles, that have been working hard to produce the main products. ‘Recreate’ will be selling bread boards, spinning tops and tic tac toe games all produced by our Woodwork team. Alongside them, the Textile team have been working hard to create a variety of oven mitts, phone cases, pencil cases and heat packs. Our cooks have been busy making delicious treats and snacks such as fudge, salted caramel fudge, tomato relish and lemon butter. Our sales team have been brainstorming the company name, slogan and logo.

Next week (Tues-Thurs), ‘Recreate’ will be selling our products on September 2, 3 and 4 at the main office and primary car park from 3-3.45pm. Feel free to come along and purchase what we have made.

_Daniel_

*Year 9 Student*

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**Friends of MECS**

**Cook Off day**

**Monday September 1, 9am-1pm**

Our big Cook Off day to fill up the Community Freezer is next week! Thanks to those who have already donated grocery items.

We still need a lot more items, so if you have been thinking of contributing now is the time to do so! Please especially note there are now fresh items on the list as well:

**Fresh:**
- Onions
- Eggs
- Zucchini
- Carrots
- Sweet Potatoes
- Potatoes
- Apples
- Mushrooms
- Tomatoes
- Apricot Nectar
- Apricots
- Chicken Stock
- Corn
- Curry Powder
- Beans

**Tins/Jars/Containers of:**
- Tomatoes
- Apricot Nectar
- Apricots
- Chicken Stock
- Corn
- Curry Powder
- Beans

**Packets of:**
- Red Lentils
- French Onion Soup
- Rice Noodles
- UHT Milk
- Mixed Herbs
- Also needed are takeaway or foil containers (to freeze meals in).

We hope you can either help out on the day, or donate some of the items listed above and support this so we can have a freezer full of meals to bless our families with.

Please contact Amanda or Nicole through the office or by email if you are able to help on the day.

_Amanda & Nicole_

*Community Relations Officers*

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**Father’s Day Stall**

**Helpers Needed!**

**Volunteers are needed** between 9 and 3pm on Friday, September 5 to help with manning our Father’s Day stalls. If you are able to help even for 1 hour it would be very helpful. Please contact Amanda or Nicole in the main office or email.

_Nicole Nyhouse & Amanda Steele_

*Community Relations Officers*

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**Father’s Day Stall**

We have an exciting range of Fair Trade and locally produced items available for purchase at the Father’s Day stall on Friday Sept 5. By purchasing these products, you will be supporting local suppliers and communities in:

- Uganda
- Thailand
- Cambodia
- Africa

**These are some of the gifts available:**
- coasters
- chocolate
- wristbands
- honey
- plants/herbs
- wallets
- chutney
- scarves...

We have a wonderful selection of gifts ranging from $2 - $15. Please explain to your children that the money they spend is being used to help support people in other countries who do not have the same opportunities that we do here in Australia.

Primary school students will be taken by their class teacher to purchase their gifts. Please have your child’s money in a named envelope; coins or small notes is preferable.

Middle School students will also have the opportunity during class time to purchase a gift.

Senior School students please come to the PUMP room at lunchtime.

Thank you for supporting this venture.

_Friends of MECS_

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**Prayer Chain**

Did you know our school has a prayer chain? Did you know that you could play an important role in our school simply by praying for the needs of our teachers, other staff and families? We are all hopeful for our children, for their futures and the directions their lives might take. We are hopeful that they will grow and learn in a loving and supported community. Because my hope rests in our Lord, I am a part of the prayer chain. Please join us as we support the staff and community as a whole in this way. If you’d like to receive weekly emails of prayer and praise for our community please email me at prayer@mecs.vic.edu.au.

_Kerrie_

*Prayer Coordinator*
Lst Thursday we had our Term 3 music recital. We have 3 recitals per year and this one was for students with surnames starting ‘E to M’. Students had been working hard preparing for the evening and we were treated to some fine performances. Pippa Powell did an amazing job decorating the stage in a ‘Spring’ theme so the theatrette smelled like flowers when we walked in. Katie Ormrod was the MC for the night and in between announcing the items, she gave us many interesting facts about the benefits of learning an instrument. A big thank you to all the students, staff and volunteers that made it a fantastic night. Music is a gift from God and learning to play an instrument enhances our lives in so many ways.

We still have a few vacancies for guitar, piano and drums. You can get an enrolment form from the office if you are interested.

Brett
Instrumental Music Coordinator

The Wilsons Prom Camp is coming up in Term 4 for Cycle A, Year 7 & 8s. It is the camp which requires the most equipment in Middle School and it can be tough for parents to get all the right gear at the right cost. This year, we are trying something new in order to assist families with this process.

We are asking if families have equipment they would be willing to lend, sell second-hand or give away such as:

- Hiking tents (lightweight)
- Hiking packs (55-70 litres, no exposed frames)
- Hiking stoves
- Hiking shoes/boots
- Sleeping mats
- Warm sleeping bags

Our plan is to collate a list of the items you nominate, and give it to parents of Cycle A parents through a webpage. There is also an opportunity for Cycle A parents to add what they need.

There will be no contact details involved, just a family name. If a parent is interested in an item, you can use the MECS directory, or ask that your contact details be passed on to the family offering equipment.

To contribute what you are willing to lend, sell second-hand or give away:

- Go to http://goo.gl/ujG6Sq and fill in the form. It will automatically collate this into a spreadsheet.
- Wait on contact from parents who may like to utilise your camping equipment, and then email Neil Amery (personneldirector.isa@gmail.com) to let him know the item needs to be removed from the list
- Please contribute by Wed 17 Sept, so if people need to pass on messages they can do it before the holidays

To inform people of what you need, use the same form:

- Go to http://goo.gl/ujG6Sq and fill in form
- Go to http://goo.gl/0lqIA and see which families may be offering what you need
- Email Neil Amery (personneldirector.isa@gmail.com) to let him know the item needs to be removed from the list

We are happy to talk anyone through this process and the links will be on the website under MECS updates. Cycle A will have more information available to them in coming weeks.

For those on Facebook, there is also an unofficial yet complementary group running (search for “MECS Yr 7/8 Wilsons Prom Camp News” or go to https://www.facebook.com/groups/553207961467972/) and ask to join. This is a place where families can share news about sales or good buys and other tips as the camp draws closer.

We really hope this will be used to make it easier for parents and would appreciate your support! Thanks,

Neil, Mic & Nicky
Preps Celebrate 100 Days at School

Last week Preps celebrated their 100th day at school.

They did lots of counting to 100, made hats with a hundred dots and legs on 10 crabs that added up to 100. 100s and 1000s were put on bread - measuring 100 mls of lemonade to go with it. Children covered a 100 board in Numicon shapes, and made pictures with 100 colourful pegs. We lit 100 candles on the 100 shaped cake. The day also involved dressing up. That guaranteed 100 percent fun!

Jan
Prep Coordinator/Teacher

Prep Chesterfield Farm Excursion

“I wish we were only just arriving” said River as the bus drove out of the gates of Chesterfield Farm. The Preps had such an exciting day learning about various farm animals and having many pats and cuddles at the animal nursery. We went in the Discovery Barn to learn about how useful animals can be to make various materials such as wool and leather. The Preps had a tractor ride around the farm and went on a walk where we got to feed camels, alpacas, deer, goats, cows, sheep and even an emu (for some of the brave Preps). They all had a turn at milking a cow and the birthday girl Keira bottle-fed a hungry lamb. There were many tired Preps and parents by the end of such an exciting day.

Rebekah
Prep Teacher
PS Dr Seuss Day

Oh, the things you can think when you think about Seuss!

This Tuesday was a beautiful bright day - both with the weather and with the Primary School's special Dr Seuss day. The event was held to celebrate National Literacy and Numeracy week. Our students came to school dressed as Seuss characters or in bright, patterned clothes and they looked absolutely fantastic. There were so many spots, stripes and colours one couldn’t help but be dazzled!

We kicked off the day with a GT, where SPUDS brilliantly (just a bit of bragging about my class there) presented a play called ‘Seussville’ which involved facts about Dr Seuss, some quiz questions and a pretty cool dance at the end. (Boy, can those SPUDs bust a move!)

The rest of our day was spent with the students in multi-age groups rotating through some Dr Seuss themed activities which included listening to stories, making Lorax finger puppets, making crafty Seuss inspired creatures and designing and naming our own Seuss style characters.

The celebrations finished with ice cream and sprinkles on the primary oval - nothing to do with Dr Seuss but yummy and a fun way to finish our day.

Thanks to all the Primary team for making this such a wonderful day and to the parents for supporting us with those awesome costumes.

Mel
SP Teacher
Accommodation Urgently Required
A missionary family (2 adults and 3 kids) is looking for accommodation (preferably house sitting) from the start of October through to the end of the year. One of their children recently commenced attending MECS.

If you know of any possible leads, please contact Gary on 0428 640 790 or garyewa@yahoo.com. Thank you.

Shopping Tour Fundraiser
Bek and Kerrie Goldsmith (from one of our school families) are running a shopping tour on Saturday October 11, to raise money for research into PSC. This is the liver disease that saw Bek need a transplant 2 years ago, and this, and it's complications continue to plague her with poor health. We'd love you to help us find a cure!

Cost is $31/head. Pick up at 7.40am and drop off at 6pm at Doncaster Park and Ride. Payment can be made by cash, with correct money in an envelope with your name and contact details handed in to the office marked for attention to Craig Goldsmith. For more information please phone/text Kerrie on 0425 067 346 or email kerriej1221@gmail.com.

Come celebrate 50 years of Calvinettes & GEMS

Starting at 1:30pm for lunch, meetings and mixing friends and finishing with afternoon tea around 3:30pm. Please bring a small plate to share for afternoon tea.

If you have photos or other memorabilia which you would like to share please bring them (clearly labelled) to display or email them to 50yearscalvinettesgems@gmail.com.

RSVP by September 15, 2014
To RSVP and for more information please see Karen McKenner or email kerriej1221@gmail.com. For more information please phone/text Kerrie on 0425 067 346 or email kerriej1221@gmail.com.

Yarra Ranges Athletics
Join Yarra Ranges Athletics, Little athletics to Senior Athletics, where you can run, jump, throw...smile!

If you're unsure, why not take a two week free trial. Season commences Saturday October 4, 2014.

Registration Day: September 13, 9-11am, Morrison Reserve Mount Evelyn.

Enquiries 0432 911 129
www.yarrarangesathletics.org.au

Vacation Care Program
Mount Evelyn Primary School OSHC will be running a Vacation Care Program in the September school holidays. Melissa Mc Donald (formally Morrisons OSHC/Vacation Care Coordinator) is now the OSHC/Vacation Care Coordinator.

For enrolment & booking forms please contact 9736 2233 or osh@mevelynps.vic.edu.au.

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Rabbit Free to Good Home
Black female rabbit (2 years old), loves to cuddle.
Please contact Sandra on 0422 882 339.

Apple Man
Next visit of the apple man will be Friday 29 August. The following varieties will be available: Pink Ladies, Fuji, Granny Smith, Golden Delicious, Pears: green and brown. All apples $10 a bag and pears $8. Bags are 5-6kg. Please drop into the office if you would like to place an order.

Cassie Nation
Receptionist
Mount Evelyn Community House Art Classes
Weekly after school art classes are available. Our multimedia classes will provide experiences in drawing, painting, sculpture, ceramics, textiles and collage. Our friendly tutor Tara will deliver an Art program that will extend your child's creative development within a safe and welcoming environment. Commencing Thurs 21 August. $60 for 5 sessions includes all resources. 4-5.30 pm for 8-12yr olds. Held at Mount Evelyn Community House, Station House Facility, 50 Wray Cres, Mount Evelyn. Phone 9736 1177 to enrol. Limited Places.

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