Term 3, 2015 Begins on Monday July 20

Collingwood Players Visit MECS

Kyan with Collingwood players Jamie (left) and Corey. Story page 6.
Time for Contemplation

Dear God,

Let us prepare for winter. The sun has turned away from us and the nest of summer hangs broken in a tree. Life slips through our fingers and, as darkness gathers, our hands grow cold. It is time to go inside. It is time for reflection and resonance. It is time for contemplation. Let us go inside. Amen. (Leunig Prayer)

As you head into this holiday break, it is my prayer that you and your family will have time for reflection and contemplation. An important part of my contemplative life are various collections of prayers, poems and reflections. I find wisdom, encouragement, solace and hope in the simple words of others. There are also verses from the Bible and words from hymns that resonate deep within me. I share some of my favourites with you in the hope that God will use these words to speak deep into your soul over these winter months.

Narelle
MECS Principal

Dear God,

We rejoice and give thanks for earthworms, bees, ladybirds and broody hens;
For humans tending their gardens, talking to animals,
cleaning their homes and singing to themselves;
For the rising of the sap, the fragrance of growth, the invention of the wheelbarrow and the existence of the teapot, we give thanks.
We celebrate and give thanks.
Amen.
(Leunig Prayer)

He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the dimly burning flame. He will encourage the fainthearted, those tempted to despair.
Isaiah 42:3 (The Living Bible translation)

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father, I Thy true son;
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Be Thou my battle Shield, Sword for the fight;
Be Thou my Dignity, Thou my Delight;
Thou my soul's Shelter, Thou my high Tower:
Raise Thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,
Thou mine Inheritance, now and always:
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,
High King of heaven, my Treasure Thou art.

High King of heaven, my victory won,
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.
(Ancient Irish poem from the 8th century)

God of life, there are days when the burdens we carry chafe our shoulders and wear us down;
when the road seems dreary and endless, the skies grey and threatening;
when our lives have no music in them and our hearts are lonely, and our souls have lost their courage.
Flood the path with light, we beseech you; turn our eyes to where the skies are full of promise.
(Saint Augustine)

O God, You know me inside and out, through and through.
Everything I do, every thought that flits through my mind, every step that I take, every plan I make, every word I speak,
You know, even before these things happen.
You know my past, my future.
Your circumventing presence covers my every move.
(Psalm 139)

Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can
In all the places you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.
(John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church)
SKETCHER’S SCOOP

Exciting news from our Assistant Principal Secondary – Karissa

“When we travel the hard road, it is sometimes difficult to see God’s hand at work all around us, working things out for his purpose.

My husband Josh and I have struggled with infertility issues for the past 8 years. Throughout this journey God has grown in us strength, peace and resilience beyond comprehension. Little did we know that he was in fact moulding and shaping us for this next chapter... we are getting a daughter!

God has opened doors in unfathomable ways for us to be able to adopt a little 8 month old girl. We are currently in a process of transition and she will be living with us full time from 4 July!! It has been a whirlwind of emotion and ‘nesting’ as we only made the decision to travel this path 4 months ago. But we serve a mighty God who has amazing plans for our (and our beautiful daughter’s) lives.

There is still a path ahead until everything is signed, sealed and delivered, but we are continuing to have faith that God will uphold us throughout this process.

I am planning to take some time off at the beginning of next term in order to bond with my daughter (gee, I love saying that) and then I will be continuing in my role for four days a week. Josh is very excited to be able to be a full-time stay-at-home dad.

I wish to thank the community for the way you have upheld me in prayer over the past years. Your support is amazing.”

As this news has filtered through our school community, we have been blown away with the show of support for Karissa and Josh and can I invite you to continue to pray for them in the months ahead? As Karissa has explained, Josh will be their daughter’s primary care-giver, but at the beginning of next term Karissa will be taking a few weeks leave as they begin life as a family. During this time, Jacqui will be acting Assistant Principal Secondary. Brad will be ably assisting her in this role as they both continue to lead the secondary school. As also mentioned, on Karissa’s return she will be handing over her Year 7 Maths class to Ileana who will teach this class for the remainder of the year. Karissa will continue in her Assistant Principal role 4 days a week.

Long Service Leave

Di, our Assistant Principal Primary, is heading off on her well-deserved long service leave next term and will be travelling through the north of Australia for much of this time. Primary families have received a more detailed letter earlier this week letting you know of all the arrangements and happenings in the primary school. Adam (SS teacher) and Wilma (Science Lab Technician) are also enjoying a few weeks long service leave at this time.

Staff Workbreak

From July 13-15, all teachers will be attending ITEC15, an international Christian teacher’s conference being held here in Melbourne. Every four years, Christian Education National (CEN) organises a conference that seeks to equip teachers for the task of effective Christian education. Over 1200 delegates are meeting together to be inspired by a host of international and national speakers. It will be three fabulous days of inspiration and we are thrilled that because it is in Melbourne all of our teaching staff will be attending. The theme of the conference is ‘Reading World and Word’, a recognition that our teachers and students need the skills to navigate and read the world, just as much as being able to read and understand God’s Word. We look forward to sharing some of the highlights after the break.

Staff will then be preparing for the term ahead on Thursday 16 and Friday 17 July, before welcoming students back on Monday 20 July. We appreciate the opportunity for staff to be able to commence the term in this way, even though we know this adds extra pressure for some families in regard to child-care. However, we are committed to making sure that as a community we are working together to provide the best quality Christian education that we can.

Holidays

I’d like to take the opportunity to wish you all a safe and relaxing break. It’s been a busy and long term, and I’m sure you are all looking forward to having some ‘down time’ with your children without the relentless routine of getting them to school each day! Enjoy whatever it is you have planned, even if that is nothing!

Playgroup at MECS

Did you know MECS runs a wonderful playgroup we call Busy Bees?

Our Busy Bees gather each Thursday during the school term in the Kindergarten room. There are two sessions:

- 9am to 11am
- 11.30am to 1.30pm

The groups are run by our very experienced Playgroup Leader Lynda who does a wonderful job encouraging social play and preparing the children for a more structured setting.

Both groups currently have limited vacancies so if you are interested in joining please contact me at the school office.

Paula
Administration Support

Welcome to our new babies!

Recently we’ve had two wonderful arrivals into the MECS community.

Deliah Elisabeth arrived on June 10, making it 3 beautiful daughters for Ali and Liz. And Bec and Ben welcomed their first baby - Isaiah Benjamin, on June 17. We praise God for the safe arrivals of these precious babies, and pray for a blessing on both of these families.

Natasha
Office Manager

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Natasha
Office Manager
MECS Notes

Special Church Service

You are invited to join us in ‘Celebrating Christian Education’ on Sunday 12 July 5-6.30pm, at Scots Presbyterian Church, 156 Collins St (Cnr Exhibition St), Melbourne.

This service will kick off the CEN Transformational Education Conference, ITEC15. For parents, families and teachers not able to make the conference, here’s your chance to join in the fun and celebrate the blessing of Christian education. Feel free to join in this wonderful occasion.

Car Parking: Wilsons Scots Church car park is located at 181 Little Collins St. A $10 flat Sunday rate is offered and the car park is open until 10pm.

Lost Property

Please check lost property (near First Aid) for your children’s missing clothing. The racks are overflowing with un-named clothing (mostly jackets/jumpers). There are over 80 items on the racks!! During the holidays unclaimed items are donated to an op-shop so please check the racks by tomorrow.

Sandra
Administration Assistant

Friends of MECS

Woolworths Earn and Learn

From Wednesday 15 July to Tuesday 8 September you can collect Woolworths Earn & Learn Stickers from the checkout at Woolworths and pop them on an Earn and Learn Sticker Sheet. You receive one sticker for every $10 spent on general groceries. Once completed, place the sticker sheet in in the collection box in the Main Office.

Anytime you happen to be shopping at Woolworths, remember to collect the stickers so MECS can order teaching resources courtesy of this program.

Entertainment Book

Don’t miss out! Order your new book now.

With the school holidays approaching there are a variety of vouchers to use with your children. Check out the display book in the main office and see the things you can save money on.

Order through the office or online at: www.entbook.com.au/193f695.

Preps Learn Games from Buddies

What better way to learn how to play games than from our Year 6 buddies? Our buddies are important members of the school community who help the Preps adjust to school. The Preps were able to learn ‘old fashioned’ games such as skipping, snakes and ladders, trouble, sack races, paddocks and naughts and crosses.

Jan
Prep Coordinator/Teacher

FOCUS On... Mathematics

What a joy when I arrived to look after my grandchildren last Friday to be greeted by Abbi (4 years old), jumping up and down outside the front door, excited to see Nenny and Pampa driving in. An even greater delight when I got out of the car to find she was calling out, “I can do Mathematics with you!” In we went and out came her box of ‘Mathematics’ and straight away we got down on the floor and started doing the puzzles. I had been working with her older brother to help him gain a little bit more confidence in his Grade 6 Maths and Abbi couldn’t understand why she couldn’t join in with this special time. She was determined to find out what this Mathematics was all about. What a unique opportunity for me to have some involvement in her new interest in this subject.

As I talk to parents about mathematics I find they fall into two distinct camps: those who remember their school experience of mathematics as something they really enjoyed and so feel confident enough to try to help their children; and then there are those who were glad to leave mathematics far behind and never see it again! The latter group often feel they have nothing to offer their children when they see them struggle.

Encouragement and support are key in all learning and even if mathematics is not your area, you can still make a difference by showing interest in your child’s work. Expectations can lay heavy burdens on students but giving praise along the way can make a strong impact on the process of learning.

Mathematics as a subject is not just about learning concepts, but also developing curiosity about pattern and finding ways of modelling our world which God created. Quite often as adults our own experience of skills-based learning has strongly influenced the way we approach learning in mathematics. Burger and Starbird in their book, “The Heart of Mathematics: An invitation to effective thinking”, present the picture of a dodecahedron to illustrate their approach to thinking in Mathematics. “The mirrored-faced dodecahedron (a 12-sided regular solid) reflects how mathematics allows us to see and understand our world with greater clarity. It also illustrates how mathematics allows us to abstract nature and see the world in new ways. Finally, the mirrored-face in front reflects the power of mathematics to help us see ourselves with greater focus and fresh dimensions.”

There is something exciting in the feel of this description of mathematics. It shows us the beauty of this subject and points us to our Creator.

Jenny
Senior Mathematics Teacher
MECS Notes

Social Skills Drama Program Semester 2

Social Skills Drama is a program that uses drama games and role play to teach social skills and self-confidence in a safe and creative small group environment (4 or 5 students), and has been offered at MECS for the past 12 years. Choice Learning and Social Lights provide the program to MECS. Parents, teachers and students themselves anecdotally report a significant improvement in social skills, behaviour management and confidence. A research partnership with Latrobe University has recently confirmed these reports.

Each session consists of three main components to assist students in these areas including: conversation skills, non-verbal cues and role plays. Through the program, students are provided with skills to successfully manage a number of everyday situations, including:

- conflict
- meeting new people
- friendly conversations
- anxiety
- losing at games
- sharing and taking turns
- appropriate skills for the workplace (for senior students)
- identifying and expressing emotions

Students are invited to join the program in Semester 2, 2015 (2 terms) when a 12 week program will be offered.

Term 3 will commence on Thursday 30 July, Thursday 6, 13, 20 August and Thursday 10 and 17 September

Term 4 will run on Thursday 15, 29 October, 5, 12 and 19 November, and Thursday 3 December.

MECS recognises the positive impact of the Social Skills Drama program, and has subsidised the program for a number of years. Students who have previously participated benefit from the ongoing nature of the program. We are now enrolling students for this drama program at a cost of $230.

If you would like your child to attend in Semester 2, please ask for a form from the front office and return by Monday 23 June. If you have any questions, requests or suggestions, please contact Jo or Shirley at school 9738 6000 or email.

Shirley
Primary Education Support Coordinator

Year 11 Mock Trial

On Tuesday 2 June the Year 11 Legal Studies class took part in their first and only mock trial for the year. With many roles to go around we had celebrities such as our principal, playing the leading role of Judge Narelle, as well as the Year 12 Legal Studies class, starring as the professional jury. We all dressed up in our Sunday best, and took to the floor to prove the accused, Juliette, guilty or innocent.

Things soon got underway and the witnesses were examined and cross-examined and then sometimes re-examined again, and again. Objections were made and usually overruled, though occasionally they were upheld. Witnesses, one of whom appeared to have just got off the plane from Vegas, lost their temper and tried to sell their publications in court.

It was a great opportunity for the class to actually experience the adversarial proceedings of the Victorian Court system, and to gain insight into problems sometimes faced by the courts, such as unreliable or inconsistent witnesses.

Nicholas
Year 11 Legal Studies Student

Celebrations & Farewells

Tuesday this week there was a staff meeting with a difference. We all gathered together to celebrate the arrival of new babies, and bid farewell to Derek, Janine and Sheryl who are moving on to other things. We will miss those who are leaving but wish them God’s richest blessings on their futures.

Heather
Newsletter Editor
The news just got better… not only were Collingwood AFL players coming to MECS – it was Jamie Elliot! To say I was excited was an understatement. The kids were thrilled too and MECS was abuzz with excitement (well, many of us were!)

That afternoon Jamie (one of the AFL’s best players) and Corey (up and coming star) did indeed come to visit us. And what a visit it was. Jamie was awesome and Corey was just lovely. Oh, and they played some footy with us too. They took us through some drills, answered some very important questions for us (apparently Jamie now has 4 Weetbix for breakfast but used to have 11) and just all round reminded us how good footy, particularly Collingwood, is.

It also gave me a chance to politely ask if they could beat Hawthorn this year and Jamie told me he would see what he could do. The players were friendly and patient as they signed many bits of paper, jumpers, phone cases, footy boots and even arms. Surely this was one of the best days in MECS’ history!

A completely unbiased report by Mel
Assistant Primary Coordinator & Senior Primary Teacher/Coordinator
Wow! What a term the Preps have had while thinking about our community and the people who God gives to help us. We have visited the local shops, had a visit from a fire truck, had dads and mums come and tell us about their work including Di talking about the Gapuwiyak community, a mechanical engineer talking about robotics, a violin maker, two nurses, a policeman (and his car!) and of course our final visit was with our local Vet Nurse Debbie and her pet dog Hugo, from Mount Evelyn Vet Clinic.

The Preps came prepared and arrived at school with their own pets (toys of course) and they enjoyed the chance to ‘fix’ all of the pets’ ailments. They learnt about animal’s body language and what we should do when approaching an animal. They practised asking the owner before patting a dog and what to do if an unrestrained dog comes up to them without an owner. The children loved patting Hugo and seeing him perform his amazing tricks.

Throughout our visits from the various workers in our community, the Preps have developed great questioning skills. Some of the questions asked by one deep thinking Prep person were:

- Do vets have to go to university?
- Do you have to practise being a vet on toy animals first so you don’t hurt real animals?
- How are vets and vet nurses different?
- Do you look after all types of animals in the world or just certain types?
- Can vets look after big and small animals or is their extra learning for special animals?
- Are vets vegetarian?

Good questions!

Alison
Prep Teacher
House to Rent Needed Urgently

Does anyone know of a house to rent, preferably with a little land, within a 30 to 40 minute radius from MECS? My family and I were planning to move to another house but have been told it’s no longer available, and need something in the next couple of weeks. Please contact me either at school Friday, or on my mobile 0432 633 226 email inoble@meecs.vic.edu.au anytime! Thank you! Leana.

Tuning in to Teens

Tuning in to Teens is a six-week program to equip parents with the skills of emotional coaching, listening and responding to the emotional experience of their child. Material based on research by Melbourne University. The program will cover:

- Setting out to raise emotionally intelligent children
- Naming emotions
- Understanding your child’s emotional experience
- Self-care, problem solving and coaching fears and worries
- Emotion coaching your child’s anger
- Emotionally intelligent parenting now and in the future.

Tuesday 21 July, 7.15-9.15pm for 6 consecutive Wednesdays, at Croydon Hills Counselling Centre, 2-4 Bemboka Rd Croydon Hills. Cost $120.

Contact Coleen 0412 129 842 or email: engaginglifeconsulting@gmail.com
www.livinglife.net.au. In conjunction with Croydon Hills Counselling Centre, 2-4 Bemboka Rd Croydon Hills.

Movie Days

Discovery Church Kids will again be hosting movie days over the upcoming school holidays. We will be running ‘Night at the Museum: Secrets of the Tomb’ on Wednesday, July 1 and ‘Paper Planes’ on Wednesday July 8.

89 Monbulk Road, Mount Evelyn. Gold coin donation: Sausage sizzle and lollies for sale. Information 9736 2323.

Apples & Pears

The next apples will be delivered in the last week of holidays (staff workbreak) on Friday 17 July. Please hand your order in to the office in an envelope with your name on it by 10.30am that morning and ensure you have your name and order written on the front of the envelope, with the correct money enclosed. Varieties available include Fuji, Granny Smith, Pink Ladies, Golden Delicious and Green Pears. Bags are 5-6kg and the cost is $10 for apples and $8 for pears.

Cassie Nation

Receptionist

Donvale Christian College

Celebrating 40 Years

Past Student High Tea Sat 29 August 2015. 3-5pm.
Past Staff High Tea Sun 30 August 2015. 3-5pm.
RSVP by 17 August to Lee Giliam on memories@donvale.vic.edu.au.

Cyber safety info session

Wed July 22, 7-8.30pm, Mount Lilydale Mercy College, 120 Anderson Street, Lilydale.
RSVP Monday July 20 on 9735 4022
Join in a discussion with an ACMA Cybersmart expert. Arm yourself with the knowledge of what is trending and how to assist your child navigate safely online.
Free event, tea and coffee provided.

Library Holiday Program

Ferntree Gully Community Arts Centre and Library are running a July School Holiday program.

The library has activities every week day during the school holidays ranging from free to $14.50 per child, including pottery, craft and stories. Most activities require booking and have limited places. For bookings phone 9750 9180 or book online at www.yourlibrary.com.au or visit the centre at 1010 Burwood Highway, Ferntree Gully.

Celebrating NAIDOC Week

Ferntree Gully Community Arts Centre and Library, 1010 Burwood Highway, Ferntree Gully, Wed 8 July, 11-4pm.

There is something different every hour, some with limited places that require booking. Information and booking 9758 9100 or 9800 6455.

FOUND

Car/house remotes & Toys

Please collect from the main office.

Notices sent home this week and on Website

- Careers Newsletter No 9, June 19
- Martyrs Bus Change
- Year 12 Legal Studies Excursion
- Year 6 Empowering Girls Notice
- JP Core Studies Letter (last week)
- Year 10 World Views Excursion
- Primary Newsletter