Next Wed 29 July
Parent Morning Tea - 9am
Whole School Assembly
- 10am
Please join us

Lilly dressed as an Indian girl for the JP special celebration day. Story Page 7.
Over the recent workbreak, over 1200 Christian educators from all around Australia and beyond came together for ITEC15, the International Transforming Education Conference that is held every four years. The purpose of the conference is to inspire, challenge and equip those involved in Christian education with the tools and knowledge necessary for such a task. The theme of the conference focused around the idea of Reading Word and World. How can we teach our children and students to read the full narrative of God’s Word well, and how do we teach them to read ‘the world’ with insight and clarity so that they are not seduced by its’ own enticing narratives?

The front cover of my New Living Translation of the Bible is introduced like this:

- **Genesis 1:1 – Revelation 22:21**
- 66 books
- 1,189 chapters
- 31,092 verses
- 1 story

One of the constant messages that came through the conference was that if we desire to teach our children and students how to read God’s Word, the Bible, well; then we must get them to understand the **whole story** of the Bible better and allow **that story to change everything!**

Bartholomew and Goheen in the preface to their book, *The Drama of Scripture. Finding our Place in the Biblical Story* believe that “many of us have read the Bible as if it were merely a mosaic of little bits – theological bits, moral bits, historical-critical bits, sermon bits, devotional bits. But when we read the Bible in such a fragmented way, we ignore its divine author’s intention to shape our lives through its story. All human communities live out of some story that provides a context for understanding the meaning of history and gives shape and direction to our lives. If we allow the Bible to become fragmented, it is in danger of being absorbed into whatever other story is shaping our culture, and it will thus cease to shape our lives as it should.”

This is a great challenge for all Christians, not only those of us who come together in Christian school communities. Are we allowing the unified story of ‘the Word’ to shape and direct our lives, or are we being sucked into the ‘other’ stories that are so pervasive in our world? (Gerry Beimers will unpack and reflect on some of these false stories next week in MECS Matters).

*The Insect and the Buffalo. How the story of the Bible changes everything* is a little book by Roshan Alipress & Andrew Shamy that I highly recommend. It will only take a few hours to read! In their introduction to the book they write a similar sentiment: “This is a book about the Bible and how the story it tells changes everything. When we read the Bible, it’s easy to feel like God wrote the wrong book. We come with twenty-first century problems and we are given a collection of ancient stories. Yet these stories form a unified narrative, one that points us to Jesus, and through Jesus, reshapes the way we see the world.”

At the conclusion of their 80 page book, they recognise that “we are people who live in between two ends of the Biblical story. We see Jesus, but not yet a full vision of the world that he is part of. We are people who understand that the Bible does not invite us to become part of a community defined by doctrine, ritual, institutional membership, or uniform thinking. Instead, the story of the Bible invites us to enter the story – to become part of the new race of human beings that God is redeeming to participate in the re-creation of the world. Our task is to participate in the revelation of the new Creation... we operate inside this fallen human world in order to bring about small, incomplete glimpses of the world to come. We are engaged in the translation from God’s future world to this world that is fallen, but being redeemed. We live out of His story. And this story, the story of the Bible – changes everything.”

Another significant encouragement that came through the ITEC15 Conference was to see the whole biblical story as an invitation into intimacy with God.

Jefferson Bethke, one of the inspiring conference presenters from America, suggested that instead of God pulling further away from humanity as we continue to live in disobedience, that in fact, the Bible records that God’s encounters become more intimate. He challenged us in our mindset towards reading the Word. It should be one of wanting to know God more, to enter into intimacy with Him, rather than out of duty or obligation.

He also encouraged intimacy in our friendship and relationship with others. When Jesus came to his last night on earth, he didn’t do a late-night cramming session with his disciples making sure they could remember all the teachings he had shared. He invited them to gather around a meal, a table of intimacy. It is around the table of hospitality and friendship that the Word flourishes and its’ truths are made known.

*(Check out Jefferson Bethke on the internet. He was fabulous and a ‘new face’ at Christian education conferences in Australia. He has some great resources available online.)*

Central and foundational to our mission to provide ‘Christ-centred’ schooling is to know God’s story, and the amazing plan He has for the redemption of the whole creation through Jesus. To know His story and our intimate place in it!

We believe that as God sows truth into the life of the staff here at MECS through experiences such as ITEC15, that He will bring forth fruit in the lives of our students. We thank you for your support of our workbreak program that enables us to provide such rich opportunities for our staff.

Narelle

MECS Principal
Welcome back to school

It is always good to welcome a new term! As always, the coming weeks are packed with exciting learning activities, opportunities to grow and enrich relationships and to ultimately understand more about God’s amazing creation and our response to it. It’s great to see staff members and students safely back at school and we pray for God’s rich blessing and protection over the coming term. It is particularly exciting to welcome eight new students this term! We hope they and their families settle in quickly and soon feel part of the MECS community.

Staff Workbreak

As usual our staff were back at work all of last week. However, for the first three days of the year the majority of our staff were delegates at ITEC15 – the International Transforming Education Conference held in Melbourne. This Conference, held every four years somewhere in Australia, is a fabulous opportunity for Christian educators to come together to be inspired, challenged and equipped to teach Christianly in a world that more than ever is captured by the idols and stories of our times. We were encouraged by the theme of Reading Word and World. How can we teach our children and students to read the full narrative of God’s Word well, and how do we teach them to read ‘the world’ with insight and clarity so that they are not seduced by its enticing narratives? Please see my editorial for further reflection on this theme.

FOCUS On... Buddies

‘A program of welcome, friendship and encouragement where everyone is someone special’.

One of the things I love about being a Senior Primary teacher is the Buddy program.

In this program, new Preps are paired up one-on-one with a Year 6 student at the beginning of the year. In most cases, these partnerships remain paired throughout the year. Specific buddy times occur once to twice a month for a 1 or 2 period session. This time involves a variety of different learning activities or games. Other unscheduled times may occur and ‘special events’ such as parties, Easter/Christmas activities, sport times, big buddies helping the little buddies with Literacy or other work, and shared reading time may be involved. Buddies may also share devotions together. Year 6 students are coached in how to encourage and work best with their buddies.

This program is helpful and rewarding for both the little buddies and the big buddies. Having direct contact in a one-on-one situation helps the Preps feel comfortable and not intimidated by the ‘big kids’ of the Primary School. We work hard at MECS Primary to develop a sense of community across the whole Primary School and the Buddies program certainly promotes this.

Buddies also gives a chance for our Year 6 students to shine in a new way. Every year I am thrilled to be surprised with at least one student who unexpectedly excels in this program. Most Year 6s love the Buddies program and it is a highlight of their year.

MECS has other buddy programs. We also have a program where Year 12 students are matched up with Prep children – symbolising the connectedness of our youngest and our oldest students. And when our Year 12s graduate, the buddies who they had in Prep (who are now in Year 6) write a letter of best wishes for the future to the person they were allocated to.

What a great way for us to grow and strengthen our school community!

Melissa
Assistant Primary Coordinator and Senior Primary Coordinator

Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability

All schools in Australia will participate in the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability this year.

The data collection is an annual count of the number of students with disability receiving educational adjustments to support their participation in education on the same basis as students without disability and will be used to inform future policy and program planning in relation to students with disability.

We are required to provide information on a student’s level of education, disability and level of adjustment to the Australian Government Department of Education and Training. Data will be de-identified; no student’s identity will be provided.


Please contact the school if you have any questions.

Jo & Shirley
Education Support

Staff News

Unfortunately, Helen, one of our Primary music teachers was not able to return to her teaching role this term. Helen needs to be available to care for a number of her family members who are experiencing significant health issues at the moment. We pray for her and her family at this time that God’s peace and presence will be known. We are thankful that Carolyn is able to extend her time to teach all the Primary students up to Year 4, and that Kathy will join us on Wednesdays to teach the SP music program.

Proud of our Kinder

We were thrilled to hear over the holiday break that our Kindergarten received an ‘exceeding’ rating in all areas under the recent DEECD (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development) Assessment and Rating visit. That means our Kinder is exceeding all National Standards! We are so proud of our Kinder staff and the awesome program that they are running. This rating just confirms what we already knew!

Whole School Assembly

We look forward to seeing you at our next Whole School Assembly next Wednesday 29 July at 10am. Why not come and join other parents and our Community Relations team for a cuppa at 9am before heading up to the gym for the assembly.
MECS Notes

Congratulations to Lanita

We would like to congratulate Lanita (VCE Class of 2013) for being one of 10 athletes selected to represent Australia at the latest Junior (U-21) World Orienteering Championships held in Norway from Sunday 5 July until Friday 10 July. This was a tough competition held in the heartlands of the sport and while Lanita and the rest of the team gave of their best, there were no medals forthcoming. Lanita has now represented Australia at the last three championships and this is a wonderful achievement.

Friends of MECS

Woolworths Earn and Learn

Please remember to collect these stickers if you shop at Woolworths. The program allows us to redeem stickers for educational materials for the school. Stickers need to be placed onto the ‘Earn & Learn sticker sheets’ - available from Woolworths, online or from the school office. Only 60 stickers can be placed on each sheet. The sheets can be dropped into the collection box in the main office. Many thanks.

Ann
Community Relations Assistant

Food Handling Course

MECS is offering a Food Handling Course: Level 1 which will be run by Glenn Booth, a qualified chef and the Hospitality teacher at Ranges TEC. At the conclusion of the course you will receive a certificate. The course will be run over two evenings, Wednesday August 5 and Wednesday August 12, from 6 - 9pm in the Main Staff room at MECS. Limited places available. No cost involved. Please email Ann to express your interest.

Nico
Community Relations Officer

Asthma Kids

Hi, I’m Chester! Join me on the Asthma Trail at asthmakids.org.au

Our new Asthma Kids site helps children and their parents/carers learn more about asthma in a fun and engaging way.

Monthly prize draws!
On successful completion of the trail, children can enter a monthly prize draw to win a Grit scooter and helmet or a voucher for Spencil stationery!

To find out more about asthma contact your Asthma Foundation on 1800 ASTHMA (1800 278 462).

Year 7/8 Performing Arts Presents...

Find Your Voice

An Original Production written by Jemimah Rankcom and Britney Bailey
(edited by Mrs Annora Hummerston 2015)

Wednesday August 12, 7.30pm
Senior School Theatrette - Gold Coin Donation

Bookings are encouraged to ensure we have adequate seating. Please use the Booking Forms in the Main Office and in your CS Classroom.

Dr Roger F
VCE Coordinator

JP Fundraiser

Last term Junior Primary travelled around the world in 54 days learning about world geography and how children live and play in different countries. We learnt that every person is made by God - in His image and likeness, and that no matter where we live or come from there are similarities and differences. Our Hand response (from Head, Heart, Hand) for this unit was: We honour God by loving Him and loving our neighbour as ourselves. We show this in the way we speak, think, and act.

The JPs decided that one way we can respond with our hands is to have a Primary School bake sale to raise money for two World Vision projects - send a girl to school, and early learning for an Indigenous child.

The JPs will be making fruit kebabs, honey joys, and decorated biscuits and selling them to primary students during recess on Tuesday, 28 July in front of the JP classrooms.

• Fruit Kebabs - 50c each, or 3 for $1
• Honey Joys - 50c each
• Decorated Biscuits - 50c each

All monies raised will be given to the projects. Donations welcome. We thank you for your support!

Susannah
Junior Primary Teacher

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Susannah
Junior Primary Teacher
An Exceedingly Good Kindergarten

For 2 1/2 years now, MECS has offered Christian education to many very little people at the kindergarten. Setting up a kinder as part of a school has been a steep learning curve as the compliance requirements are particularly rigorous.

At the end of Term 2, MECS Kindergarten underwent an assessment process as part of our Government accreditation. We were assessed on 58 different elements in 7 areas including the educational program, health and safety, staffing, partnership with parents, relationships with children, leadership and management and the physical environment.

Even though the MECS definition of ‘success’ in early years education differs from that of the government’s, it shares many of the values held by the national framework for early learning. So much hard work has gone into establishing a kinder that glorifies God and reflects the MECS approach to education, but that also meets our compliance obligations. We didn’t need an accreditation document to tell us that we have a great kindergarten, nevertheless, it was lovely to receive a rating of ‘Exceeding’ in all 7 areas, and to be reassured that we can operate a kinder that holds onto its biblical perspective, while balancing compliance obligations. Congratulations to the very hardworking and passionate kinder staff for achieving a wonderful result.

Natasha
School Services Manager

Primary GT
(Get Together) Dates
9am in the PUMP room

Term 3
Week 4 Monday August 10 MPA
Week 5 Monday August 17 JPS
Week 7 Monday August 31 SPC

Term 4
Week 6 Monday November 16 JPRH
Week 8 Monday November 30 JPT
Week 10 Monday December 14
Prep Christmas GT

Canteen Closure

Just a reminder that the Canteen will be closed for the rest of the year. We apologise for the inconvenience that this will cause some families.

Heather
Newsletter Editor

Book lists for Yrs 10-12, 2016

This year MECS will be partnering with Lilydale Books to organise the Years 10 to 12 text book lists for 2016.

Lilydale Books has been operating in the local area for 29 years, specialising in educational supplies for primary and secondary schools. They offer a flexible solution to parents for collection and delivery of required books. Many of our MECS families will already be familiar with the shop located just up the road from Ranges TEC.

Rather than ordering text books through the MECS stationery process later this year, textbook orders will need to be placed through Lilydale Books or through the supplier of your choice.

We encourage you to utilise Lilydale Books as they are working directly with our booklist and will ensure you receive the correct versions of books required. MECS also receives a percentage of book sales.

Lilydale Books will also be managing the second hand book service. MECS will no longer be facilitating the resale of second hand text books.

We will provide you with all the details you need for ordering through Lilydale Books later in the year when stationery and book lists are ready.

Natasha
School Services Manager

Front Gate Makeover

Steve & Tim stand proudly in front of the gates after their mini-makeover in the school holidays. Check out the colour photo in the web version of the newsletter for the full result.
Last week Year 10 and some Year 11 students undertook Work Experience.

Overwhelmingly the feedback from employers was how impressed they were with our students’ willingness to take initiative, ask questions and conduct themselves in a pleasing, friendly manner. Students came away with a new understanding of themselves and a clearer idea of their future career direction. It was also very exciting to hear that some students were offered ongoing part time employment.

The next round of Work Experience is from November 23 to November 27, so it is important for those involved to start planning now.

Amelia
Careers Co-ordinator, VET in Schools Coordinator

Some snippets from student reflections on their work experience.

I worked with a team of carpenters. We built walls, put up trusses, put in windows and built a decking. I was given tasks to go around and nail braces, clean the area, carry lumber around and a few other things. I learnt that I enjoy being independent - given a task that I can do myself.

Jonothan Dudley

I worked at a childcare centre with 4-5 year olds. I performed administration tasks, researched child development and provided an activity for the children. I learnt that although I felt confident in the childcare industry, I felt uninterested and bored. Although I felt the week was tedious, the experience was helpful and informative.

Emmi-lee

I worked for a shadow minister in his office. I got to write letters and got to look into certain issues and write about them. I got the chance to go into Parliament and experience it for myself. This was an amazing eye opener. Thanks to this experience I found my passion for politics. The atmosphere and the work made it exciting to go every day. I learnt that there are always two sides to a story, and that the words people say can be twisted and manipulated into something different. That is a lesson I will always remember.

Sarah

I worked at a local dentist. My dentist and the dental nurses that came in were really lovely, and they helped me a lot in trying to show me what gets used for certain things and telling me different diseases of the teeth and gums and showing me how they clean and sterilize the dental tools. I really enjoyed the experience.

Romina

I worked in an army base in Hawthorn. Throughout the week we did various activities to do with different jobs in the army. I learnt that I am more of a physical and outdoors person, who loves to be involved with others in a challenging environment. One of the biggest challenges was when we took a light machine gun to scratch (fully apart) and by memory had to put it back together. Overall the week was exceptional.

Cameron

I worked at a skateshop. I had a great learning experience and was shown all the necessary details about working in retail. The employers were also very friendly and we had some good discussions about skating.

Adam

Last week Tuesday we had a great MECS family social morning at the Roller Skating rink in Lilydale. During the morning we had about 30 kids and a few brave Mums join in the skating fun. After such wet and cold holidays, this was a great way for the kids to burn off some energy and the parents and grandparents to catch up over a cuppa. We hope you can join us next time!

Nicole
Community Relations Officer
What a Celebration! On Wednesday June 24 Junior Primary students had a wonderful day celebrating all that they had learnt about our world and the many diverse and unique cultures that they are part of it. There was an amazing array of colourful costumes reflecting many different countries. Each student came dressed to represent the country that they had researched in class. There were beautiful saris, elaborate outfits from Asia, amazing headdresses from the Torres Strait and Papua New Guinea and even Marcel Marceau! Families had a lovely afternoon visiting each classroom and learning about each country from the students. Well done JP students for all your wonderful effort.

Kaye
JP Teacher and Cluster Leader

Student Recounts

On Wednesday afternoon JPS set up our desks. We put cloths on our desks. We decorated our desks with stuff from our country. I dressed up as a native American Indian. We had visitors come in to see our posters and books. Then we went in to JPRH to report on their work and on our sheet there were a few questions we had to ask them.

Charlotte

On Wednesday all the JPs came to school in clothes from different countries. Ollie and I came as Mexicans. First, we set up our tables with our posters or books and any extra things that we brought. Then we had a practise of the interviewing we would do in JPRH.

Jenson

I dressed up as someone from Mongolia. I had a special dress and a funny hat. First we put a table cloth on our table. Then we put all the other things we brought on our table. I had a house called a Ger and a fur hat. Some people made posters and some people made books. I made a poster and my friend made a poster too. Lots of mums and dads came in. It was very crowded in our room.

Ambrie

I dressed up as a cow girl from the U.S.A. People came in and Zarah asked me questions about my country.

Sarah

Celebration Day was super duper!

Josiah

My favourite moment of Celebration Day was when my Mum came and I saw different food.

Caleb

My favourite moment of Celebration Day was when JPRH came into our classroom.

Amelia

My favourite moments of Celebration Day were Granny came to see me, and I saw other people’s work. It was awesome!

Kip

My favourite moments of Celebration Day were eating different food, and looking at Bailey’s work. His country was Papua New Guinea.

Ben-Noah
Room for Rent
Room available to rent in Kilsyth. 3 bedroom unit in a quiet area. Undercover car space included. Female preferred. Available now! Contact Margaret Robson on 0417 790 169.

Bookcase for Sale
Maple coloured, Aussie made tall/large bookcase with space to store your favourite novels and cookbooks on the 5-shelves. Constructed from solid pine and pine veneer with natural knots and timber variations highlighted. RRP $199. Selling for $100 - excellent condition. L 80cm x D 26cm x H 180cm.

Exhibition
Piecemakers presents a Quilts Plus Exhibition at Ringwood Church of Christ on Aug 6-8, 13 Bedford Rd Ringwood. (extra parking off Pitt Street). Entry $5. Fabric stalls and refreshments available. Contact Pat on 9870 4464 or 0412 112 880. Profits to aid missions.

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.

Starting Tuesday 28 July for 6 consecutive weeks at Croydon Hills Counselling Centre, 2-4 Bemboka Rd Croydon Hills. $120.

Contact Coleen 0412 129 842 or email: engaginglifeconsulting@gmail.com www.livinglife.net.au. In conjunction with Croydon Hills Baptist Church.

White Card Training
Ranges TEC is offering White Card training as a short course: CPCCOHS1001A Work safely in the Construction Industry. 28 July 4-9pm or 25 August 4-9pm $110 per person. Register now! Call Ranges TEC 9738 7100.

Bringing Up Great Kids
A six-week program using mindfulness and reflection to support parents in developing positive relationships and communication with their children. It aims to...
- reflect on beliefs, values and messages of parenting
- discover how early brain development influences children’s behavior
- explore new ways of communicating with children
- appreciate the importance of developing a positive self-identity.

Seville Community House, 8 Railway Rd, Seville, 12.30 - 2.30pm, commencing on Tuesday 28 July to Tuesday 1 Sep. Bookings essential. For referrals call Lauren Thorsen at Connections on 9724 2222.

Apples & Pears
The next delivery will be on Friday 31 July. Please hand your order in to the office in an envelope 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 9844 2471 ext 301 or memories@donvale.vic.edu.au. 

Calender

2015 Term 3 Week 1: 20 July - 26 July
Fri 24 July
Year 6 Positive Boys Day at Oasis
Sat 25 - Sun 26 July
Year 9 & 10 Performing Arts students performing at Dandenong Ranges Youth One Play Festival

2015 Term 3 Week 2: 27 July - 2 August
Tues 28 July
Parent Seminar B, Main Staffroom, 7.30pm
Wed 29 July
Parent Morning Tea 9-10am Staffroom Whole School Assembly led by Middle School 10-11am, all welcome
Thur 30 July
2016 Year 11 & 12 Information Session
Tues 28 July
Yarra Valley Vineyard service on Sunday. They were some keys were handed into one

2015 Term 3 Week 3: 3 - 9 August
Tues 4 August
Year 9 & 10 AFL & Netball
K3 Bluebirds Connect Morning Tea 9am Staffroom Student Leaders/Board Dinner
Wed 5 August
VCE Studio Art Excursion
Food Handling Course Week 1, 6pm Staffroom
Thur 6 August
2016 Year 10 Information Evening
Fri 7 August
K4 Excursion to Montrose Park

2015 Term 3 Week 4: 10 - 16 August
Tues 11 August
Year 11 & 12 AFL & Netball
SP Futsal Clinic Excursion

2015 Term 3 Week 5: 17 - 23 August
Tues 18 August
Past Staff High Tea Sun 29 August 2015. 3-5pm.
Past Student High Tea Sat 29 August 2015. 3-5pm.
RSVP by 17 August to Lee Giliam on 9844 2471 ext 301 or memories@donvale.vic.edu.au.

Notices sent home this week and on Website

- Careers Newsletter No 10, July 17
- Year 6 Positive Boys Letter
- SP Term 3 Letter
- Kinder Connections 6
- Senior School Term 3 & 4 Dates/Calendar
- Year 10 Central Australia Trip Letter
- MP Yarra Valley Excursion Notice
- Year 9 and 10 Performing Arts Letter
- SP Futsal Program
- Prep Pipeline 5
- Unit 3/4 Biology Excursion Letter
- 3yo Kinder Connect Morning Tea Invites
- Year 7 & 8 Performing Arts Letter

KEYS FOUND
Some keys were handed into one of the staff during the Yarra Valley Vineyard service on Sunday. They were found outside. There is a company web address on the key tag: www.taureands.com.au.
If they belong to you contact Helen Schubert, Yarra Valley Vineyard Christian Fellowship, 9739 7945.

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