Teaching for Responsive Discipleship - An Introduction to ‘Threads’

The opening sentence of the first chapter of MECS’ Transformational Education book reads ‘Learning in this Christian school has a clear purpose; the transformation of students and teachers so that they might have the mind, heart and life of Christ and be His disciples.’

Many educational approaches see the student primarily as a thinker and learning is focused on cognitive things or on the ‘head’. Biblically, it is the metaphorical heart (kardia) which is the seat of learning and formation. The ‘heart’ reflects the fabric of a person’s life and shapes the formation of their character. Whilst the heart is at the core, Christian education doesn’t stop at the heart. It aims to instruct the mind, shape the heart and equip the hand. The phrase ‘head, heart, and hand’ captures well this understanding of holistic formation.

At MECS we are looking for ways to be more intentional about the way we design our curriculum to allow for this kind of responsive discipleship. Some of these responses have been captured in our new ‘Threads’, which we hope to weave throughout our curriculum, assessment and classroom practices. Threads are expressions of what it means to be responsive disciples of Jesus, pointing others to the Kingdom of God. Threads are action responses; they are challenges that God calls us to live out.

Woven throughout the fabric of God’s Story, God spells out His intentions for how his people can live in harmony in His Kingdom. These intentions were fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Through Jesus’ death and resurrection, evil was conquered and all things were reconciled to God. With the power of the Holy Spirit in us we are God’s earthly ambassadors bringing about his will. Threads are our responses to these revelations of God about life. By weaving Threads through our curriculum here at MECS, we encourage our students to become part of God’s restoration project.

There are 23 Threads that have been identified and they are briefly outlined as follows:

1. Loving God
Students respond to God’s love by loving God in return and their neighbour as themselves.

2. Building Community
Students are active contributors and encouragers of others as the community is built up.

3. Caretaking Earth
Students actively respond to God’s call to carefully manage all of creation.

4. Celebrating Life
Students embrace the full suite of God’s provisions in life and live in such a way that all may flourish.

5. Challenging Distortions
Students identify and critique areas impacted by sin and then discern God’s purposes.

6. Discovering Patterns
Students explore and discover God’s patterns and designs for delighting in and/or using for the benefit of all.

7. Embracing Diversity
Students respect and celebrate the built-in differences between cultures and peoples, given for the enhancement of all.

8. Expressing Words
Students use words to build up, make choices, and express life.

9. Getting Wisdom
Students go deeper than understanding and knowledge to seek the insight of God.

10. Imagining Innovations
Students innovate and renew for good purposes and thereby praise the Master Designer.

11. Imitating Humility
Students gratefully accept God’s grace and respond by humbly serving Him.

12. Overcoming Setbacks
Students overcome setbacks through the strength of the Spirit and live in hope and faith.

13. Pondering Creation
Students contemplate both the Creator and His handiwork and respond in delight and praise.

14. Practising Hospitality
Students welcome and accept others, and use their gifts to embrace others into community.

15. Pursuing Peace
Students bring healing and restoration to people and areas of brokenness.

16. Reflecting Creativity
Students praise God by reflecting their Creator in making expressive and inspiring things and ideas.

17. Relishing Play
Students have an attitude of joy-filled play as they respond to what God has provided and Christ has restored.

18. Seeking Justice
Students act as agents of change by identifying and responding to injustice.

19. Shaping Culture
Students understand their cultural context, discern its errors and its virtues, and seek to ‘shake and shape’ it for the Kingdom.

20. Showing Mercy
Students respond to God’s mercy by likewise, being merciful to others.

21. Transforming Thinking
Students let every thought be captive to Christ so that their thinking is transformed by the renewing of their minds.

22. Understanding Vocation
Students discover the vocational task in which God has called them to serve.

23. Unwrapping Gifts
Students enrich theirs and others’ lives through developing and using their gifts.

I welcome your feedback and thoughts regarding these 23 threads. You may even have ideas for a thread or two that should be added. Please do not hesitate to join the conversation and contact me at jstok@mecs.vic.edu.au.

Jacqui
Director of Teaching, Learning and Innovation
SKETCHER’S SCOOP

Secondary Timetable
Parents of Year 6 and Year 7-11 students received an email this week confirming the changes to the Secondary timetable for 2016. In summary, the entire Secondary School (Years 7-12) will follow a structure of eight 40 minute lessons, with the school day ending at 3.30pm.

The structure of the day will be as follows:
8.45am start time for SS, 8.50am start time for MS
Period 1  9.00-9.40am
Period 2  9.40-10.20am
Period 3  10.20-11.00am
Recess     11.00-11.25am
Period 4  11.25-12.05pm
Period 5  12.05-12.45pm
Lunchtime 12.45-1.30pm
Period 6  1.30-2.10pm
Period 7  2.10-2.50pm
Period 8  2.50-3.30pm

Thank you for the many emails we received in regard to this change. We appreciate your input into this decision, and look forward to the positive changes in the Middle School next year. The Primary School timetable, including the finishing time of 3.15pm, remains unchanged.

NAPLAN
Parents of students in Years 3, 5, 7 & 9 will have received their NAPLAN reports in the last week, as well as a short letter from myself. I trust this letter provides some explanation as to the way we view NAPLAN testing across the school. That is, be encouraged that while we take these tests seriously, both in the way we conduct them and in the way we analyse what they tell us about the learning of each child, they only make up part of the picture.

The bigger part is not only the way in which each teacher knows each child, but in the ongoing partnership we have with parents as we seek together to grow and nurture each child in knowledge, skills and maturity. We look forward to continuing that relationship with all of our parents well into the future.

Instrumental Music Coordinator
Unfortunately, Jodie has had to resign from her position as Instrumental Music Coordinator due to family reasons. However, you will be pleased to know that she is still continuing as one of our vocal teachers. Annora will take over this role for the rest of this year, so please make contact with her if you have any concerns or queries about private music lessons or any other aspect of the instrumental music program.

2015 Victoria - Education State Consultation
Last week I mentioned a combined meeting of Christian School Principals with the State Education Minister, and Deputy Premier, Mr James Merlino. I can report that this was a very successful meeting. Mr Merlino gave of his time generously and is well aware and sympathetic to the issues affecting Christian schools across the state. Further to this, CEN has just submitted a paper on behalf of Christian schools in Victoria as part of the Minister’s call for contributions to his ‘Education State’ initiative. This paper outlines a number of core concerns around future growth, funding, curriculum, student well-being, freedom of religion, vocational education training and students with disability. We are fortunate that we have national bodies like CEN (Christian Education National) and AACS (Australian Association of Christian Schools) who advocate on our behalf in the political arena.

FOCUS On... Information Literacy

Information literacy is knowing when and why you need information, where to find it and how to evaluate, use and communicate it in an ethical manner. In a nutshell, information literate people are those who have learned how to learn. They are lifelong learners.

We live in the Information Age and ‘information’ is increasing at a rapid pace. We have the internet, television, radio and other information sources available to us twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. We are constantly bombarded by messages from several media and online resources, books, friends and other people. An important step in developing information literacy is to evaluate the source of information, especially for online information. When your child is looking at online resources, encourage them to consider the following:

• Who is the author of the information? Are they an expert, respected in the field?
• Why was the information written? Is the author trying to persuade you to buy something?
• Does the information present fact or opinion?
• Is the information current? When was it published?

Parents and teachers can help children develop research and information literacy by sharing their love of learning. Encourage their curiosity about the world and desire to find out more. If a student graduates from school having learned how to learn, their analytical, critical thinking and problem solving skills will stand them in good stead for their lives after school.

Fiona
Library Manager
MECS Notes

After School Rules

We have had an increasing number of after school incidents in the playground this term. The rules for after school are the same as during school time. This means no tackling, no sticks, no swearing or bad language, no running in the car park or entering a car parking area without a parent (and all other school rules). These rules are important for the safety of our students. The Primary students have been reminded of these rules in GT this week. They have been told that if they break rules after or before school they will not be allowed to wait in the playground and will have to be picked up from their classroom and taken straight home. In the event of this happening you will be notified beforehand.

Please also remember Di’s request from last term to leave the school playground in a timely manner after school and not to stay around, as this is a ‘danger’ time for students in terms of misbehaviour as they are tired from the hard work of the day. Thank you for helping us to make our playground happy and safe both during and out of school hours.

Melissa
Assistant Primary Coordinator

ZooWhiz Online

Dear Primary Parents,

With today’s newsletter you should receive a card offering discounted access to a new program called “ZooWhiz Online Learning”. In past years, some families have participated in a similar program from EdAlive (the company that makes this product) where you were able to purchase their educational software at reduced prices. This option is still available on their website (www.edalive.com) and they still discount products from time to time. The difference with this new program is that it is all online (you need Internet access to use it). It is also a subscription, meaning you will need to renew your access each year (like Reading Eggs and Mathletics). While the card suggests our school is using the program, we are currently not using it; but this will not stop you from using the program fully at home. By participating in this program, MECS gets access to a free school licence, which will give us the option to evaluate if it fits with our educational goals for next year.

If you are interested, check out the information on their website. The details are on the card. It is totally optional so only sign up if you feel it would benefit you and your children. If you didn’t get a card and would like one, please contact the office or myself. Thanks.

Mic
ICT Coordinator

Volunteers Needed

Tomorrow - Friday is our Father’s Day stall and we need some volunteers to help on the day, between 9am-2pm. If you can come, even for a few hours we would greatly appreciate your help. Coffee and lunch provided. Please let Ann know if you can help by emailing ann.

Nicole
Community Relations Officer

Woolies Earn and Learn

The promotion is nearly finished - the last day to shop and collect stickers is September 8.

Thank you to all those families who have supported this and collected stickers. Please remember to hand in any stickers you may have as soon as possible. Thank you.

Nicole
Community Relations Officer

Sausage Sizzles

Thank you to all the families that supported the sausage sizzles over the past 2 weeks. The Ranges TEC team raised over $820 towards their Trade Mission trip to Darwin! They are now running a Canteen Day on Tuesday Sept 8, details below.

Canteen Day - Tues 8 Sept
Middle School can come and purchase from the Canteen at 1.20pm.

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 and Senior School students can come to the PUMP Room at lunchtime.

“Think Global and Local”

is the theme of our Friends of MECS

Father’s Day stall again this year, Friday Sept 4

We will have an exciting range of Fair Trade and locally produced items available for purchase at the Father’s Day stall on Friday 4 Sept. Gifts will range from $2 - $15.

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 and Senior School students can come to the PUMP Room at lunchtime.
Book Week 2015

Last week, the Library and the Primary School celebrated Book Week. Each year, schools and public libraries across Australia spend a week celebrating books and Australian authors and illustrators. The idea behind Book Week is to highlight the importance of reading. Research has shown that reading for enjoyment has an impact on academic achievement.

This year, the Book Week theme was ‘Books light up our world’. Every lunch time, we held special activities in the Library based on the Children’s Book Council of Australia shortlisted books. We had special guest readers (big thank you to Nicky, Sue and Sharon), then the students engaged in a range of fun activities, such as making bookmarks, Pig the Pug dogs, stone lion face masks amongst other things. We had many entrants for the colouring in competition and the winners and runners up are as follows: Prep winner: Grace, runner up: Orielle. Junior Primary winner: Kayla, runner up: Sarah. Middle Primary winner: Lily, runner up: Ella-Jane and Senior Primary winner: Holly and runner up: Star. They will each receive a Collins Bookstore book voucher. Congratulations and good work, guys. Thanks to all students who came along and participated in the Book Week activities.

Fiona
Library Manager

MP Money Week

In our Maths lessons this week we wanted our students to practise their money handling skills in a practical, real-life way. So at the start of the week, they were divided into shop keepers and customers. The aim was for our customer groups to plan and budget for a 25 person Christmas party with a strict budget of $60. The shopkeepers had the task of choosing products and prices that would be appealing to the customers facing this challenge while still looking to make the biggest profit they could. After a week’s hard work, it all came together on our shopping day where the sounds of bartering, bargain hunting and careful calculations could be heard. A memorable and profitable learning experience for all involved.

Alistair
Middle Primary Cluster Leader
Cycle A Special Week

Last week we had Special Week. One funniest moment was when Tristan sung his song. It was so funny because the song was simple yet comedic. Another highlight of Special Week was eating bread and chicken and also being in the character of a medieval peasant woman. We also made banners to represent our family name and decorated them to represent what our families stood for. Overall Special Week was really enjoyable because we got to learn how it was to live back then by actually living it.

Patience

Some things I have learnt about medieval times are:
- the black death
- what people used to wear
- how they used to dance and have festivals
- what the instruments they played looked like
- the games people played.

Kiara

We started off the week with an incursion. The first thing we did was look at early and late medieval weapons, armour and shields. We then played some games that were invented in the Middle Ages. At the end of the day we listened to many medieval musical instruments and did a fun dance. On Tuesday and Wednesday each class made a ‘tapestry’ and each person made their own banner with a heraldic meaning. On Thursday we prepared for the Friday feast. We also learnt a dance for Thursday presentation night and Friday. On Friday we were all seated in ‘the hall’ and we saw the presentations, plays and poems for the King (whose crown kept falling off). We finished off with feasting on bread rolls and chicken.

Hamish

I learned a lot from Special Week about medieval times. One of the things I learned about was knights. You needed to be a rich nobleman to be able to afford the armour and the weapons. The armour for one knight would weigh about 20-30 kg, so most people couldn’t afford it! One of the highlights was to have a look at the armour that knights used in battle. It was awesome. Another thing I learned about was shield walls. Soldiers in the medieval times used shield walls a lot, they were very powerful because you were well protected. We did one on Monday and it was lots of fun!

Daniel

Some things I have learnt about medieval times are:
- the black death
- what people used to wear
- how they used to dance and have festivals
- what the instruments they played looked like
- the games people played.

Cycle B Special Week

This term, Cycle B has been investigating a range of issues impacting the developing world in the ‘Our Neighbours’ Lives’ unit. As part of their learning, students have been visited by a number of experts working in fields such as Aboriginal health, refugees and asylum seekers, and food security. During Special Week, students were tasked with creating fictitious aid and development organisations focussed on a specific issue. They created names, logos, and slogans, developed strategies to bring about positive change in people’s lives, and decorated stalls from which to present their knowledge at the World Issues Expo, held at the Middle School Showcase evening on Thursday night. The Expo was a great success as students ably and passionately informed parents, visitors and teachers of some of the everyday struggles faced by people around the world, and reminded us of our responsibility to actively practise God’s love and care in the lives of others. The Cycle B teachers were incredibly proud of the organisation, hard work and enthusiasm that students brought to Special Week.

Bradley
Middle School Coordinator
Year 9 Special Week

Last week, all of Year 9 took part in Industry Week during Special Week. We were all given spots in the industry such as apprentices and department managers. In preparation leading up to the week, we had to write a cover letter and resume and then go through the interview process. The teachers appointed each individual with an appropriate job which meant our week ran much more smoothly.

There were three different departments that were producing products: the textiles, woodwork and food industries. Throughout the week, the different departments each produced a wide variety of products now available to purchase after school. Some of these include fudge, pillows and chopping boards. The sales team were in charge of creating a name, logo and slogan for a product and advertising our products. We came up with the name Everlife and the slogan was ‘for the people, supporting those in need.’

The week ran without any major problems and most individuals put in the hard work to create Everlife as we know it today. Everyone felt a sense of pride in the work which was shown in the happiness they had on the Thursday evening. As General Managers, we felt it went well and we experienced happy customers and happy workers!

Micah & Beth
General Managers

Primary GT

On Monday SPC hosted GT.
We taught the Primary School community about our CS subject; Japan.
We had lots of fun performing our skit called the Japanese Cold Seat.
Our skit was a game show based on the Hot Seat except the Japanese edition.
I (Evan) was one of the main characters. Caleb said a prayer. Overall we had lots of fun!

Evan & Caleb

Kinder Bike Day

Last week the Possum and Koala children brought their bikes to Kinder. They rode around the Primary School basketball court, practising the road safety skills they learnt at the Kew Traffic School the week before. The children followed a slalom course, changed direction and stopped on cue. They all had lots of fun together!

Wendy
Early Years Coordinator
### Calendar

**2015 Term 3 Week 7: 31 Aug - 6 Sept**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thur 3 Sept</td>
<td>K4 Dad’s Night 5:30pm Kindergarten</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 4 Sept</td>
<td>Father’s Day Stall</td>
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**2015 Term 3 Week 8: 7 Sept - 13 Sept**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 7 Sept</td>
<td>Senior Primary Hooptime</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 8 Sept</td>
<td>Canteen Day Year 9/10 Performing Arts at Donvale Christian College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 9 Sept</td>
<td>Middle Primary Hooptime VCE Music Recital Belgrave Heights CS Empowering Girls Mother and Daughter night 7.30pm Staffroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thur 10 Sept</td>
<td>SP Japan Day JP Connect Morning Tea 9am Staffroom Year 9/10 Performing Arts for Year 10 2pm Parent Teacher Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat 12 Sept</td>
<td>Centre Trip Departs</td>
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**2015 Term 3 Week 9: 14 Sept - 20 Sept**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thur 17 Sept</td>
<td>SP Positive Boys Blokes Night 7.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 18 Sept</td>
<td>SP Positive Boys Billy Cart Races 2pm Last Day Term 3</td>
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**2015 Term 3 Holidays: 21 Sept - 11 Oct**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sun 27 Sept</td>
<td>Centre Trip Returns</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat 3 Oct</td>
<td>Daylight Saving Time Begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 5 - Tues 6 Oct</td>
<td>Year 12 Practice Exams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thur 8 - Fri 9 Oct</td>
<td>Year 12 Intensives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 9 Oct</td>
<td>Friday Working Bee 9am-1pm</td>
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**Lost Necklace**

Missing: Silver best friend charm necklace - half a heart (right hand side) with chain. Please hand in to the Main Office if found.

Notices sent home this week and on Website www.mecs.vic.edu.au/Resources/Downloads/Notices-Home

- MP SP Hooptime Notice (last week)
- Hooptime info for attending parents (last week)
- Yr 9 & 10 Performing Arts Notice (last week)
- Gawa Gift Program (Primary School only)

### 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.

**Parent Teacher Meetings**

The Parent Teacher Meetings are being conducted on the following dates and times for all Prep to Year 11 students:

- Mon 7 Sept: 3:45-6pm (PS & MS) 3:45-9pm (SS)
- Thurs 10 Sept: 3:45-9pm (Prep-11)

Please call the office if you need assistance or have any questions.

**Corrie Irons**

**Admin Support**

**Hardy Book Launch**

You are warmly invited to attend the launch of a book about Bill and Gwen Hardy, prepared by the Mount Evelyn History Group as thanks to two people who gave deeply and continually to the community for nearly sixty years.

Books will be available at the special launch price of $12 each – after the launch the price will be $15 per copy.

Saturday September 12, 1:30pm, Hardy House, 49 Birmingham Road (the RSL Hall), Mount Evelyn. Light refreshments to follow. All welcome.

**Waverley Emergency Adolescent Care**

Foster Carers are desperately needed for adolescents aged between 12 and 18. Foster Care is the temporary care of a young person within your home, during a time when they cannot live with their families for various reasons. It is for a planned period of time, with the aim of reuniting young people with their families.

There are different types of foster care. These include:

- Respite Care, which gives parents or existing foster carers a regular break. This may be for weekends or other short periods.
- Emergency and short to medium term care, this can be any time from overnight to up to three months.
- Longer term care, generally for several years until the young person can become independent.

Providing stable care and being a good role model for a young person can be both a challenging and rewarding experience. If this sounds like something you would be interested in, please contact Waverley Emergency Adolescent Care on 9563 2275 or admin@weac.org.au

**Red Church, Outer East**

Red Church is starting an Outer East service in 2016. There will be two initial services this year on Sunday 13 September and Sunday 11 October at 4pm, Montrose Church of Christ, 7 Leith Rd, Montrose. www.redchurch.org.au. Join us as we worship God, connect with each other and look forward to what is ahead.

**Yarra Ranges Athletics**

Registration Day Sat 12 Sept, 9-11am, Morrison Reserve, Mount Evelyn, Little Athletics - Senior Athletics. You can try it out with a two week free trial if you are unsure. Season commences Sat 10 Oct.

Enquiries 0432 911 129 www.yarrarangesathletics.org.au

**Apples & Pears**

The next delivery will be on Friday 11 September. 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**

**Receptionist**