Principal Matters

One of our Year 5 students recently asked me what our Bible verse is for the year. His question prompted me to think about an annual theme that we can adopt for our school community. As we kicked off the year with many references to the power of prayer, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 came to mind: “…Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you…” [ESV].

Our theme for Emmaus this year will be: “Emmaus…a praying community, thankfully and joyfully serving one another…for Jesus’ sake”.

Because an annual school theme is designed to saturate our daily walk and talk, and also because it is so rich in context and meaning, you will see it used by staff in class devotions and lessons, in the newsletter, in banners and posters across the school, and so on. If possible, please also use this at home during conversations and devotions as well. I have quoted him before, but pastor, author and conference speaker Paul Tripp puts it quite well:

At some point in our life, we had to memorize The Lord’s Prayer, but just in case you need a refresher, here’s the first half again: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6:9-10) As historic as these words have been, I’m afraid that they have simultaneously become some of the most clichéd words in the Christian faith. In this case, I think we have memorized one of God’s most important commands without actually understanding what he’s telling us to do.

Remember, Jesus says to his disciples, “Pray then like this” before delivering these lines. So what is Jesus telling us to do? Change the way we pray, and pray for God to glorify himself, Jesus frees us from our self-destructive addiction to self-glory and the endless catalogue of false glories that comes with it. God’s unshakable commitment to his own glory is the most loving thing he could ever do for us. It’s what redeems us from us and breaks our bondage to all the things in life that we wrongly think will give us life but lead only to emptiness and ultimately death. I hope this helps to change the way we pray!

We welcome back our Year sixes from their school camp of last week and thank the Lord for their safety and protection. We give him praise for the celebration of learning, friendships and fellowship. I would like to extend a big thank you to teachers Mr Behrendorff and Mrs Harper for their management of this excursion.

Please don’t forget Thursday Night’s Parent Meeting starting at 6.30pm. As we embark on a relatively new journey together, I consider this meeting essential for staff and parents in affirming the unity that we have in Christian education and providing clarity around the need for strong and engaging partnerships. Our direction and understandings of who we are, what we do and where we are heading is fundamental. See you there!

Finally, I have recently received a letter of commendation from the CEO of ACARA for our outstanding gains across all areas in the 2015 NAPLAN results. Whilst NAPLAN remains only one measure of success in a Christian school, we are delighted with the outcomes and even the positive publicity the school has received in today’s Canberra Times. You may have seen it but in case you didn’t, here it is: http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/naplan-results-on-the-up-for-those-schools-adding-value-20160308-gnnd6q.html. Congratulations and credit to all our staff and students for their diligent work and application of learning amidst all the changes in 2015. A special commendation to Rachel McClure and the Board who provided the stability in leadership and in governance to allow for an uninterrupted learning environment. Above all we thank God for his abundance of provision to us.

Erik Hofsink
Principal

From our Primary Coordinator

Wow! What a full term we have had, with the Swimming Carnival, a Parent Picnic, Year 6 camp and a Crazy Hair Day. In some ways it feels like the term should be close to finished, but in other ways there is still so much to come! We still look forward to a Cross Country Carnival, trips to the National Museum of Australia (K-2), Photo Day and three public holidays!

Uniform seems to be something that I quite constantly
Term 1, Week 3 & 4
15 - 28 Feb 2016

Make a joyful noise!
Reeds for band instruments are available in the front office. The prices are: $4 for Clarinet reeds $5 for Alto Sax reeds $6 for Tenor Sax reeds.

Icy Poles!
The SRC is doing some fundraising, and will be selling ice blocks at lunch on Tuesdays and Thursdays for $1.

WWVP
We love to have parents help out in the classroom and on school excursions! Please be aware that legislation in the ACT requires parent helpers to have a Working With Vulnerable People card. Applications are available from Canberra Connect, and it can take several weeks to complete the process. If you are planning to be involved in the classroom, excursions or school camps this year, we encourage you to apply early.

SHOES: Shoes should be entirely black, enclosed leather shoes. Black leather joggers are a good choice. Canvas shoes are not acceptable, and shoes should have a heel of more than 5mm and less than 4 cm. On Thursdays, students may wear coloured joggers with their sports uniform.

HAIR: Hair should be clean and tidy and not falling in students’ eyes. If hair is longer than the top of the collar, it needs to be tied back. Any hair clips, bands or ribbons must be navy, green or white, and House colours may be worn on Thursdays.

JEWELLERY: Students with pierced ears may wear small, plain gold or silver sleepers or studs. Students may not wear more than one earring in each ear, or any other visible jewelry, such as bracelets or necklaces. Students with severe allergies or medical conditions are, of course, encouraged to wear their alert bracelets.

MAKEUP and NAIL POLISH: Primary students are not allowed to wear makeup or nail polish to school.

What happens if a child is out of uniform? The first time students are given an ‘Out of Uniform’ note. This is taken home to be signed and needs to be returned to school the following school day. When a student continues to wear incorrect uniform, they may be required to sit outside the staffroom, walk with the teacher on duty, or do a chore during a recess or lunch break. The length of the consequence increases with the number of infractions.

I appreciate your assistance in creating an atmosphere where students wear their uniform with pride.

Caroline Orr
Primary Coordinator

PRIMARY NEWS
Rubbish and Recycling at Emmaus

Last Thursday, the Primary school participated in Clean Up Australia Day for our school. We cleaned up around 7kg of rubbish and recycling from the school grounds and surrounding streets. Well done to all the students who searched out every little scrap of rubbish and put it in the correct bin. I know I had lots of work to do picking up loads of glass that the students found! This year was the 25th Anniversary of Schools Clean Up Day and more than 564,000 students from over 2,220 schools Australia wide took part in the event - what an amazing effort!

In other news, we have changed our system for recycling this year and I’m very excited. We now have brand new ‘hopper’ bins located in the staff carpark out behind high school that are picked up by big trucks every week.

In Term 1, each Tuesday and Thursday at the end of lunch, the Year 4 students collect the ‘Visy’ (paper and cardboard recycling) from each classroom and other locations around the primary school, as well as the ‘Spongebob’ (mixed recycling, e.g. hard plastic bottles and empty yoghurt containers, foil like poppers and tin cans like tuna) from around the courtyard. The students then empty these containers into the appropriate big ‘hopper’, clean the containers (if needed) and return them to their location.

I’m very excited to be able to educate and encourage every child in the primary school to recycle and help out our environment. This way, they are learning to respect and care for God’s beautiful creation but also begin thinking about sustainable living.

God Bless,
Mr Andrew Miller
Year 4/5 Class Teacher

SECONDARY NEWS
Video Game Creation

Years 7 and 8 are making their own video games in Digital Technologies with a new product called Bloxels. They bring their creativity and ideas to the screen through a combination of physical blocks in a 13 x 13 grid which is captured using the iPad’s camera. Once opened in the App, the students’ designs can be animated, customised and shared with others both in their classroom and around the world. The depth of the students understanding of each element that goes into making a video game is growing as they design their own rooms to include hazards and collectables, confront enemies and ensure that their games are challenging but achievable for the player. Years 4 and 5 are working through a similar activity and once all games are completed, I hope to share some of them with our parent community in Term Two. The Bloxels website http://www.bloxelsbuilder.com/howitworks/ has ‘how to’ videos and a more detailed explanation of the product.

It is interesting to note that it was funded through the Kickstarter projects and is a fabulous example of how an idea can become a reality. I have had a number of students ask me where they can buy the kit. Unfortunately, at this stage it isn’t in stores in Australia.
but the ones I ordered from the US arrived within two weeks. You do not have to have the physical product to make the games but it does get students off their screen and interacting with each other as they make each element and then add it to their devices. If you have any questions or would like to attempt to make your own game for your children to play, let me know I can assist you to get started.

Toni Falusi
ICT Teacher

FURTHER NEWS

Daily classrooms

This year Emmaus is thinking about creating daily classrooms. If you are interested in this development and how it will impact your child, please contact Mr Hofsinck.

FEES

Families should be well underway with their payment options. Term 1 fees should have been paid or a payment authority form lodged with the accounts team. Please note when a family goes a Direct Debit plan it remains in place while your child in enrolled at Emmaus, unless we are notified otherwise. Please contact accounts@emmaus.act.edu.au if you have any queries regarding your account.

Absences

If your child is absent from school either send an email to the School Office at absences@emmaus.act.edu.au or call 6247 7151. If you choose to let the school office know verbally, then a written note is required to meet Government requirements. An SMS is sent out for any unexplained absences, please contact us on the methods above if you receive an SMS incorrectly, as we need to adjust our records accordingly.

Alumni News

We are excited to announce the establishment this year of Emmaus Alumni. If you know of any former students, parents or staff who would like to take a renewed interest in the school and receive alumni updates, please email Rachel McClure on rachel@emmaus.act.edu.au.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The school website is up-to-date with after school activities for 2016.

SPORTS NEWS

We would love to congratulate students representing our school and those that are celebrating success in their chosen sport. Please send Mrs Harper your news at nicole@emmaus.act.edu.au.

ADMIN CORNER

Parent Involvement Program

At Emmaus we encourage and welcome parent involvement. If you are needing ideas how to help, here are some suggestions - contact your child’s teacher (they always love volunteers), check out the PIP Current Opportunities on our website, look out on permission notes (teachers are sometimes asking for helpers) or keep a look out on the newsletter for any urgent jobs. The PIP register is located at the front counter of the School Office and needs to be updated so that PIP hours are not charged at the end of the year. Please see the PIP policy for more information.