Choose Life!

Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live!

(Deuteronomy 30:19)

A lot of game shows on television give the contestants choices that they have to make. On the millionaire ‘hot seat’ program a question is asked with four possible answers to choose from. I remember the show ‘the price is right’ where the contestant had to order the list of prizes from the least expensive to the most expensive in order to win the lot.

On these shows your choices determined whether you won or lost. Answer the question wrong and you go home empty-handed and disappointed. Answer correctly and you are in for a windfall.

God does not force us to follow him and his ways. We are not robots, programmed to obey his every command without fail. God doesn’t want slaves. He wants sons and daughters who belong to him and freely enjoy his presence and life. And so, God allows us the freedom to make choices.

There are all sorts of decisions and choices that we make each day – and many of them God does not direct us specifically in his word (for example, you won’t find in Leviticus a directive about what colour shoes you should wear today).

But in all our decisions, God wants us to make choices that promote life, not death, and that bring about blessings rather than curses. That sounds like a reasonable expectation for God to have. It makes sense.

In order to do this we need to seek God in our lives. The Deuteronomy text above continues this way: ‘You can make this choice by loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and committing yourself firmly to him. He is the key to your life’ (30:20).

In knowing God and growing closer in our relationship with him we understand a little better each day the kind of choices that will promote his quality of life in our own lives. God has always chosen to give us life and he always will. Let us choose to follow him and enjoy the blessings he has to give.

Pastor Stephen

Dear Parents,

Last Sunday Pastor Stephen blessed the entire staff of St. Michael’s, reminding us of the responsibilities and roles we have in this community to teach and to share the Gospel message. It is a responsibility that is not taken lightly as we aim to model Christ in all our dealings with you and each other and to live our motto: ‘Christ centred, Quality education’. I would encourage you to pray for the staff – both teaching and non-teaching over the next twelve months so that we can, through the help of the Holy Spirit, do the best we can for you and your family. It is a privilege to be in such a position as this.

May you have a blessed week,

Shane

Prayer suggestions:

- We call on God to bless the staff of this community – to grant them guidance, wisdom and patience in their roles.
- We thank God for the wonderful start we have had to the new school year. May He continue to walk beside us all this year.
- May God grant comfort and strength to those affected by natural disasters throughout our land. May their hurt and pain be healed quickly.

Also pray for the following families:

Ackland, Adcock, Angus, Atkinson, Badger, Baker & Barham
Grievance Procedure

The school has a well defined process for those who have concerns or grievances with any aspect of the school (‘Grievance Policy’ - school website). One of the strengths of the school is the ease at which you can approach staff members on any issue. I encourage you to do this and to not discuss your concerns amongst each other - this only inflames issues that perhaps could have been dealt with quickly. Scripturally we are encouraged to go to our neighbour with concerns and to always speak well of each other. The staff and I look forward to your support over the coming year in this matter.

Mr. Paterson

School Assembly

Every fortnight a whole school Assembly is held in Bukatila on a Monday afternoon prior to the end of school. During this time school / student achievements are celebrated, birthdays recognised, classes share highlights from their rooms and announcements made. At our first Assembly this week many reminders were given to the students. These reminders included: play areas, punctuality, road crossing procedures, uniform, eating areas....One major focus was also the use of the words please and thankyou. I would encourage you to discuss with your children some of the different things that were discussed at Assembly and the reasons for rules. Thankyou

Mr. Paterson

LLL

School banking is on Wednesdays with bank books placed in the class tray in the morning. Parents are encouraged to use this great facility which also supports St. Michael’s and the loans which we have. If you require further information on this please speak to Robyn. Students in Reception have received account opening forms etc. in their bag, which was distributed last night.

Uniform

Whilst I commended the students at Assembly, on the way the uniform is being worn at the moment, a reminder was given to the girls on the expectations with hair. From our uniform policy (found in the Directory – if you have one!), ‘students with hair shoulder length or longer are expected to always have it all tied back (just a headband is not acceptable). No hair may fall in front of the face when a student is working’. Hair clips, ribbons etc. are to be navy, white, red, black or school material. I expect that all girls will be able to follow these guidelines.

Mr. Paterson

Parent Information Nights

Our annual parent information nights have been held this week. I trust that you had the opportunity to attend these. Prior to the class meetings an information session was led in the church. Whilst the main item on the agenda for this was mandatory reporting, information was shared on homework and behaviour management - two areas which are being reviewed this term. If you missed these sessions in the church and wish to know about the two issues mentioned please see myself or Mr. Dow. Thankyou.

Mr. Paterson

Police Checks

It is important that you finalise police checks asap. Google – SAPOL and follow the prompts to the National Police Check. Print off completed form and then take to local police station with necessary paper work. Then bring form to Robyn at the front office and we will sign it and send off for you. You will not need to pay for this. If you are unsure if your check needs updating please contact the office.

Forms

Thankyou to all families who have returned the mountain of forms that were distributed last week. As a matter of urgency could all families who are still to return forms do so asap. Thankyou.

Canteen Helpers 2011

Term 1 Week 3

Monday: 14th February
   Alison Edwards & Liz Klose

Wednesday: 16th February
   Ros Morgan & Tania Jeffries
Scholastic Book Club
Due to the beginning of term, the time frame to order from Scholastic Book Club is very short. Orders were due TODAY, Wednesday but we will accept orders if they are passed into the office on THURSDAY morning. Because the orders will be processed on Thursday, no further orders can be received beyond this time. We are sorry for the inconvenience but this is out of our control. Future orders will have a longer time frame for returning to school. Thanks for your help.
Mrs Jayne Zadow

P & F Business Directory
Don’t forget the closing date for the Business directory advertising in by Friday the 11th. For further information on costs etc., please call Robyn at the Front Office.

Playgroup
St Michael’s playgroup is on again this week. We meet in Bukatila each Friday morning from 9 - 10.30am. Our theme this term is the body. Each week and are looking at a different part of the body. This week we are doing the face. Lots of fun to be had by all. Just bring yourselves, $2 to cover costs and a piece of fruit to share. Hope to see you there.

Curriculum Matters
Over the past two weeks, our students have settled back into school life, re-establishing the routines and events of which it is comprised. Some routines are mundane, such as remembering to get the school diary signed each week, while others, like our regular worship together on Fridays, are more significant. Sometimes, however, the very tasks that we might overlook hold significance in ways we wouldn’t first imagine.

Our newest students have a steep learning curve ahead of them. They come from the relaxed world of kindy or home into a structured environment. Reception teacher, Megan Norman, shared with me the achievement of her class in being able to get ready to go home at the end of the school day. Their success could be measured by the empty bag rack outside the classroom. Not one school hat, water bottle, reading bag or other piece of school gear was left behind. Not a bad effort after only six days at school and a significant step forward in their learning journey.

At the other end of the spectrum, there are events we anticipate because of their importance. The middle and upper primary students have been at school for many years and fit back into the school mould quickly. These students are well versed in school life, to the point of being able to give back to the school through being a school or house captain or an SRC rep. Our school leaders were inducted at chapel last Friday, and you could see the pride they felt at being chosen for these positions of responsibility.

Across the school there has been a purposeful and happy start to the school year. Teachers and students have been reacquainting themselves with the many necessary routines and special experiences that create a functional learning community.

John Dow
PYP Coordinator
Up and Coming Events
Below are a few important dates to keep in mind for Term 1.

Family Service (3KM) 27th February
School Photos: 17th March
Sports Day: 25th March (twilight)
Family Service (4R) 10th April
Parent/Teacher Interviews: 12th & 13th April
End of Term: 15th April

Cornerstone College in Mount Barker is interested in your opinion and we hope that you will be able to help!
The College is testing some brand ideas and would love the opportunity to seek your thoughts and opinions in a small group setting.
There are no right or wrong responses that you can give, it is your view that we want to understand.
We invite you to join us for morning tea and a chat, immediately after dropping your children.
We will be holding two sessions – Wednesday 23 February and Friday 25 February – so please choose the one that suits you best.
Both sessions will be held in the meeting room (library) at 9.00am and it will be finished by 9.45am.
If you can spare 45 minutes of your time, to have a coffee and give us your opinions, we would be most grateful.
Please RSVP to Robyn to book your place.

Late arrivals / absences
- Any students who are not in class at the second bell will be marked as late (this is recorded on the report card).
- If your child is going to be absent for the day could you please ring the office and leave a message on voicemail. Parents will be contacted via SMS if children are absent and the school has not been notified.

Reading and Writing - getting it right from the start – the role parents can play

Parents of Reception and Yr 1 students will find this information session invaluable in setting up their children for success. The school has booked an educational psychologist and literacy specialist – Angela Weeks, to speak to all interested parents on **Tuesday March 1 at 7:00pm**. There is **no cost for this presentation** so please take advantage of this presentation. Please complete the tear-off strip below so that we have an idea for seating arrangements. Mrs Julie Clark

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Yes, I/we ____________________________ will be attending the literacy workshop on March 1.