

NEWSLETTER NO. 12—11th May

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THIS WEEK:

Friday 12th May: Principal Pete’s Birthday!

Friday 12th May: Football Kids taster

NEXT WEEK:

Monday 15th May: Board of Trustees meeting

Tues. 16th: Specialist subjects at Hebron

Thurs. 18th: Year 7 & 8 Problem Challenge

Thurs. 18th: Musical Theatre

MEMORY & MEDITATION VERSE:

I John 4:9

“This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him.”

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

We mistakenly look for tokens of God’s love in happiness. We should instead look for them in His faithful and persistent work to conform us to Christ.

Jerry Bridges.

Dear parents,

Some say schools need to teach children digital citizenship. I say that is nonsense. They are born into a digital world and by the time they are 5 they are as accustomed to swiping screens as their parents were to turning pages. The digital world is their world. However, that does not mean they know how to be responsible digital citizens. Digital citizenship seems to be a product of era, not education, but education is most certainly needed to move to the next step – digital discernment.

Society has changed so much. The way we interact socially, how we spend our time, the number of stimuli that we engage with at once, the number of messages and information sources that we process. Boundaries have changed, or disappeared in some cases. Boundaries between work and leisure, boundaries between school work and home work, boundaries between ‘family time’ and ‘friends time.’ Try having a ‘family night’ without setting rules around technology and you soon find that the kids are more engaged with somebody’s latest Instagram than they are with the family. With boundaries blurring it is also harder to rest, to escape, to disconnect and detach. We are always contactable, always available and therefore never able to fully relax and push it all to one side. Technology does not let us do that anymore. For all of its tangible benefits, the risk of technology flattening our lives into 7 days of sameness is real. On our Fiji mission trip last year we had a meeting on about Day 5 and I asked all the teens how many of them were missing the internet. Nobody was missing the internet. The change was refreshing for everybody. (Actually, I was missing the internet because I promised to update parents through Facebook, but Facebook wouldn’t work for me in Fiji for some reason). Do we teach young people to have planned, allocated time without technology? Can they see the need for it? Can they understand the benefits? Do they realise how distracted their lives are from reality? They don’t, but we do, because we see it. We need to train our young people to harness the benefits of technology without letting it flatten our lives.

There are now such vast amounts of information sent our way and many of us receive most of it over tiny little screens that we can only just read (well, the kids can read them OK but I struggle). We read this information as we go about doing what we do. Very convenient. But there is a downside. Young people (below 18 I would guess) struggle to categorise all the various bits of information that come their way in a logical and responsible way. Important messages from significant people can be dismissed with a glance because that glance is all the focus that can be afforded, in between Facebook notifications, trivial conversations, photos of friends as well as emails. Young people need to be taught to give priority to messages of importance and to read them and respond to them properly – giving them due time and head-space. We risk allowing them to be ruled by the ever-increasing magnetism of online entertainment (and I am not even talking about the ‘bad stuff’). I see a problem when teenagers can spend a whole day just surfing youtube clips for laughs, but will forget to respond to a person who messaged them about something meaningful. Opportunities and responsibilities pass us by while we are being idly entertained. Life passes us by. Young people need to be taught how to manage their time in the face of all these distractions, to put priority on what is important. This is not easy. Many of us adults can come unglued also. When we try to respond to a complex message by tapping a reply on our phone whilst eating a sandwich, in between an errand and a meeting, we are bound to miscommunicate. This is one reason why I do not do emails on my phone. I need to sit at a desk where I can focus, consider and respond properly. The other reason is because, sorry parents, but I don’t want work emails following me around in the weekends and on holidays. I try to have some boundaries. I don’t think we adults have adjusted particularly well to the screen revolution. Sometimes I wonder whether technology really serves us or if it has actually enslaved us?

To summarise, we need to make sure we put teaching programmes in place to ensure our young are becoming digitally discerning, not just digitally capable. This will involve parents as well as teachers and it will require intentionality and creativity from all of us.

Pete Slaney

NOTEWORTHY NOTICES

ENTERTAINMENT BOOK FUNDRAISER:

The Entertainment Book is coming to a home near you – actually, it is coming to your home! On Wednesday 17th May, your eldest/only child will come home with a hard copy of the Entertainment Book. Please take time to peruse the book – and note the amazing value in it. If you want to purchase the book, just follow the instructions that will come with it. If you want the actual book, please keep it and return the form advising how payment has been made. If you wish to purchase the **digital** book, please return the hard copy and the form advising how payment has been made, too. There will be a box in the school foyer for unwanted books to be returned.

Linda Cowan, 60 Saintly Lane is moving house this weekend and has household items to go—single bed, desk, draws, clothes, lots of bits and pieces that need to be out by tomorrow (Friday). Call around or phone 022 639 0297.



Dates to note for Term 2:

Friday 12th May	-	Principal Pete's Birthday!
Friday 12th May	-	Football Kids taster
Monday 15th May	-	Board of Trustees meeting
Tuesday 16th May	-	Specialist subjects at Hebron
Thursday 18th May	-	Year 7 & 8 Problem Challenge
Thursday 18th May	-	Musical Theatre
Tuesday 23rd May	-	ACS Netball competition
Tuesday 23rd May	-	ICAS Digital Technologies Exam
Tuesday 23rd May	-	Specialist subjects at Hebron
Thursday 25th May	-	Room 5 Selwyn Village outreach
Tuesday 30th May	-	ICAS Science Exam
Tuesday 30th May	-	Specialist subjects at Hebron
Thursday 1st June	-	Musical Theatre
Friday 2nd June	-	Mufti
Monday 5th June	-	Queen's Birthday holiday
Tuesday 6th June—Fri 9th June	-	Middle School Exams
Tuesday 6th June	-	Specialist subjects at Hebron
Wednesday 7th June	-	Vodafone Warriors' visit
Thursday 8th June	-	Room 12 People Savers' course
Thursday 8th June	-	Musical Theatre
Saturday 10th June	-	Working Bee
Monday 12th June	-	Room 5 People Savers' course
Monday 12th June	-	Board of Trustees meeting
Tuesday 13th June	-	Specialist subjects at Hebron
Wednesday 14th June	-	ICAS Spelling & Writing Exam
Thursday 15th June	-	Musical Theatre
Tuesday 20th June	-	ACS Soccer competition at Keith Hay Park
Tuesday 20th June	-	Specialist subjects at Hebron (final one for Term 2)
Thursday 22nd June	-	ACS Soccer save day
Thursday 22nd June	-	Year 7 & 8 Problem Challenge
Thursday 22nd June	-	Musical Theatre
Thursday 29th June	-	Year 1—8 Stardome Observatory trip
Thursday 29th June	-	Musical Theatre
Monday 3rd July	-	Reports sent home
Wednesday 5th July	-	Parent / teacher Interviews 1:30—7:00pm
Thursday 6th July	-	Speech Finals Assembly 9am
Thursday 6th July	-	Musical Theatre
Thursday 6th July	-	Term 2 Final day for students
Friday 7th July	-	Teacher Only Day

Immanuel Christian School

P: (09) 828 4545

E: admin@immanuel.school.nz

Immanuel website— www.immanuel.school.nz

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