



## Upcoming Dates

Dec 18: Last day before the break  
 Dec 21 - Jan 3: Christmas Break  
 Jan 4: First day of classes after the break  
 Jan 4 to Jan 15: Remote learning for grades 7 to 12  
 Jan 25 to 29: Exam week (high school)

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## The Christmas Star

I recently read about the reappearance of the “Christmas star”, the closest conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in 800 years. Is this what the Magi saw long ago? Let’s look at the Bible and see what it says.

First, the Magi are coming from the east, that is, east of Israel. We know that the Jews were taken into captivity around 600 years before the coming of Christ, for 70 years in Babylon.

Remember Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego – the young princes of Judah taken as captives and raised as “wise men” in a far land? Bible scholars think that the Magi were perhaps remnants of Jews left in Babylon after the return. They would certainly have had the sacred manuscripts of the Jews including Numbers 24:17 which spoke of the Star of Jacob.

So what is the star? In the New Testament, the Greek word for star is “aster,” from which we get our English words astronaut and asteroid. It can mean anything in the heavens or space. It also can mean an angel. Matthew tells us that the Magi followed a star, which appeared, and reappeared and guided them to the Messiah. It makes sense that the “star” was an angel, one that could easily appear and guide those who were seeking after Jesus. I love the idea that one of God’s holy messengers would have led these seekers to the truth.

Today, we don’t even need an angel to lead us to the Truth. The Bible tells us everything we need to know about the Messiah, the Way, the Truth and the Life. This Christmas, may God lead you through His Word to a closer relationship with His Son, Jesus the Christ.

David Ingels, High School Bible Teacher



## The Light Has Come

Truly, the light of Jesus Christ shines bright throughout the year! We have our good days, bad days, mediocre days, yet He is constantly loving and merciful, shining opportunities to each of us.

You can see in our climate how individual snowflakes can accumulate...and how in nature such small seeds grow into large trees. How many forests are in a seed? God only knows. A barren region can be deeply watered by melting snow and transformed starting with one seed. And the ways to enjoy a forest are countless. Let each moment of Christ’s Word and presence come to blessed fruition in your life.

In the season of Christmas, there are mixed emotions and views. Some are familiar, some are new. That is the same in all seasons, but the cold weather and short daylight hours can intensify the experience of feelings (as if by contrast). Yet, warmth of heart and long-suffering are needed every day. Celebrating Christ’s birth can be any and every day of the year, for He is Lord and Saviour every day of the year.

In light of that truthfulness, the Christmas season is, ironically, *just* a special event. He is more special, more true, forever, and giving beyond our comprehension. His heart is always warmth amidst the cold. He can surely be trusted. “God loved the whole world so much, He gave His only Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life” (Jn 3:16).

Christmas holidays have their origins in hearts moved by holy faith – Jesus is the ultimate originator. Let us remember Him and press on faithfully. When the time is right, “Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” Jesus tells us (Jn 16:33)

We Christians hope and pray and wish a sacred and lovely Christmas season to each of you, and, indeed, that every season brings you countless good reasons to meet up with people, rejoice, be thankful, praise, pray and sing.

Michael Ringham, High School Teacher

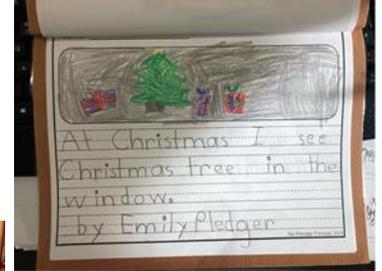




## Ending the Calendar Year with Christmas Cheer!

It's hard to believe that Christmas is right around the corner. To get us in the Christmas spirit, the Elementary planned many fun days that took place throughout the month of December. The students and teachers had fun adding some shine and glitter on 'Tinsel Tuesday', and showed their Christmas colours on 'Red and Green', 'White Out', 'Christmas Socks' and 'Christmas Hat' days. The students also received candy canes, pre-packaged cookies, and a Hershey's Hug (because everyone needs a hug now and then). Each class took time to decorate a Christmas card for Seniors living in Personal Care Homes and to Healthcare Aides. The Grade 4 class even wrote to the Manitoba Government. We ended off the month by participating in a school-wide Christmas Trivia game!

On behalf of the Elementary Staff, we would like to wish our families a joyous Christmas. We know it will look different this year, however we pray that you find Christ's peace, joy and love throughout the Season as you take time to reflect on our Saviour's birth!



## Festive Fridays a Welcome Thing

For the final four weeks of the school calendar leading up to the Christmas break the students and staff of the Middle School are enjoying the opportunity to inject a bit of fun and festivity into things - something which comes as a very welcome thing amidst a year that has involved its fair share of difficulty, stress, and challenges that have not been experienced previously.

Beginning on Nov. 27 and concluding on Dec. 18, everyone will have had the opportunity to join in the fun by wearing their coziest winter clothing, Christmas colours, Christmas sweaters (both ugly and nice), etc. It's all just being done to add a bit of holiday cheer to what has otherwise been a tough year for everyone.

So far, there have been two festive days held with two more to come. The first was held on Fri., Nov. 27 and was designated as "cozy winter clothing day". Students and staff alike came to school dressed in their coziest sweats and sweatshirts, pajamas, bathrobes, slippers, mittens, toques, scarves, etc. It seems to have been enjoyed by all.



The next one was held on Thurs., Dec. 03, and was designated as "Christmas colours day". As much as possible, everyone came dressed in reds, greens, and whites in order to get into and help uphold the festive atmosphere. As for the two festive days still remaining, Fri., Dec. 11 will be for Christmas sweaters—the good, the bad, and the ugly - and the 18th is still TBA at this point.

One thing that we know for certain is that the first couple of festive days were very successful in terms of adding a bit of fun and festivity to the school atmosphere and we expect the same for the final two that are still to come. We weren't able to have our usual Spirit Week at the end of October this year so these days are going a long way to help make up for that loss and otherwise just promote a bit of holiday cheer as we push hard to wrap up our work before the break, knowing that further restrictions are coming in the new year.

~ by B. Mensforth

## The Event That Changed the World

As we wind down the final weeks of 2020 we are constantly aware of the challenges that have been experienced since the middle of March, when life seemed to turn on a dime. Since then, of course, life has been dramatically different for us all - not just here in our part of the world but around the globe.

There is absolutely no denying that COVID-19 has changed the world. The suffering and death associated with this pandemic have been difficult to witness on a global scale. It has been like a dark, heavy blanket that has been pulled over the world, bringing with it so much pain and suffering to so many.



But whereas the message associated with COVID is bleak and deadly, the message that was heralded by the angels on a still, silent night long ago is one that is bright and uplifting and full of life. And while it is our collective hope that COVID will eventually be conquered and silenced once and for all it is with great joy that the angels announced the birth of a Saviour who will never be conquered; never be silenced; never be eradicated or driven from the world.

No, on the contrary - the words of the angels on that One Starry Night forever changed the world in a way, and on a scale, that nothing and no one else ever could. His message is one of unmatched love and mercy and His gift to us, given when He sacrificially gave up His life on a cross to pay for the sins of the world, is one that cannot be adequately described in words. In fact the apostle Paul declared, "**Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.**" (2 Cor. 9:15) because he understood very well that it is just that—a gift more wonderful in nature and in value than any other that has ever been given or received.

So... as much as COVID-19 has undeniably changed the world... Jesus has changed it infinitely more in a way that is positive, and filled with hope, as He has ultimately conquered death and offered us new life... *eternal* life... through His sacrifice on the cross. May this life-changing reality bring you all much hope and joy this Christmas as you thank God for His **indescribable gift**.

~ by B. Mensforth