



The Lighthouse

December 2021

Christ + Mas = More of Christ

Pastor Shannon Philio

Mas in Spanish means more. “Would you like more to eat?” “No, no mas, gracias.” “No, no more, thank you.” Christ + mas. More of Christ. More of Christ in my desires. More of Christ in my thoughts. More of Christ in my speech. More of Christ in my actions. Christmas is about receiving and displaying more of Christ in your life!

Christmas is a celebration of Christ's birthday, not ours. Is it wrong to give and receive presents to each other this Christmastime? Absolutely not. Our gift giving is but a reproduction and reflection of God's gift giving to us. All I am saying is Christmas is Christ's birthday, not ours. As you make your lists of those to whom you will give gifts and cards this year, I want you to put at the top of the list the name Christ. What will you give to Jesus to celebrate His birthday this year? The Little Drummer Boy gave the very best gift he could give, his drum. The wise men gave their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Perhaps you could give a financial gift to the church, a charity, or person in need. John Wesley once wrote, “When I have any money, I get rid of it as quickly as possible lest it find a way into my heart.” The wise men gave their gold.

Perhaps you could give your time to ringing the bells for the Salvation Army, serving at the Soup Kitchen, or visiting your local nursing home. Benjamin Franklin once wrote, “Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that's the stuff life is made of.”

Perhaps your gift will be giving old clothing and shoes to the homeless and poor. After all, didn't Jesus say in Matthew 25:40, “When you've done it unto the least of these, you've done it unto Me.”

Christ + Mas. More of Christ. As we sing in “Joy to the World,” “Let every heart prepare Him room.” Is there room for Christ in your heart this upcoming Christmas season? Some of us miss the reason for the season for all the hustle and bustle. For such people, there is no room in the inn, so to speak, for Christ. Perhaps your gift to Christ this year will be giving Him more time in your week for prayer, worship, and reading the Bible. Open the doors of your inns and let Christ in.

As you see the lights on the trees and houses this year, may they remind you that Christ says in John 8:12, “I am the Light of the world. Whoever follows Me will



never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” Each colored bulb is a reminder that Jesus loves all the children of the world, red or yellow, black or white, all are precious in His sight.

Perhaps your gift will be a time of reconciliation with a family member or old friend. “I heard the bells on Christmas day, their old familiar carols play, and wild and sweet, the words repeat, of peace on earth, good will to men.” A baby born in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger, is about peace, first and foremost, peace between you and God by accepting Christ as both Lord and Savior, but secondly, peace between you and another person.

Of course, the best gift you can give to Jesus is your life. Isaac Watts in his hymn, “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross,” wrote, “Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small, love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.” The best gift you can gift to Christ is more of you, all of you, your life.



What birthday gift will you give to Christ this year to say, “Thank You Lord for saving my soul. Thank You Lord for making me whole. Thank You Lord for giving to me, Thy great salvation so rich and free! Thank You Jesus! I love you Jesus! Happy Birthday Jesus”?

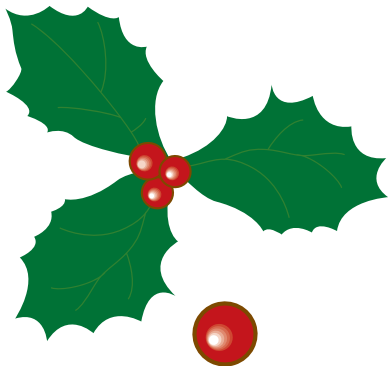
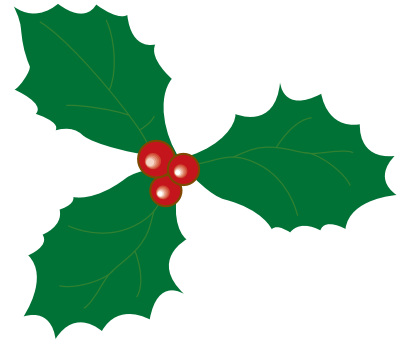
Let me close with one of my favorite poems by Edward Bos entitled, “My Christmas Wish.” May this poem be Pastor Tim's and my prayer for you and yours this Christmas 2021.

I've wished a very special wish
For you this Christmas-tide;
It reaches far beyond today,
'Tis high and deep and wide.

I wish for you the angels' song
That tells of hope and love:
I wish the radiance of the Star
To guide your thoughts above.

I wish for you the sturdy faith
That led the Wise Men three
Through cold of night, oe'r desert drear,
The Holy Child to see.

I wish for you a humble heart,
With purpose strong and true.
The blessing the of the Christ, our Lord,
This is my wish for you.



A most blessed Christ + mas (more of Christ) season unto you and yours!
Pastor Shannon



Here's a newsletter from Grace Academy in Dehradun, India and a letter from the student we support there...

From: GRACE ACADEMY

Sent: Sunday, October 31, 2021 10:36 PM

Dear Co-workers in Christ,
Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Please open the attached files to view the following two documents:

1. A newsletter from us
2. A letter from Saireen Paul Masih

When the children are on school campus, we would help them to write the letter but since the residential children are at their native place with their parents, we requested the guardians to help their child/children to write the letter and leave the space as 'Dear _____', and send us the scan copy of the letter.

Thanking you for your kind understanding.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Newton
Principal
Grace Academy

21-C New Cantt. Road
Dehradun-248 001
Uttarakhand
Ph. 0135-2740820
Ph. 0135-2743056
Website: www.graceacademyindia.com

Dear Co-Partners,

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ from Grace Academy, India!

The New Academic Session (2021-22) after summer vacations started smoothly in July 2021 and all our students & staff are doing well.

Some of the residential students who came in April 2021, to appear for the Board Practical Exams (Public Exams) of Class X & XII suffered from Covid-19 virus. We isolated the entire residential block along with the Dorm Mother, a Care Taker and a Cook. The other students who were tested negative were sent back home. The Practical Exam of Class XII was postponed. The students were constantly under the supervision of a doctor during their recovery from Covid-19 virus. The local authorities were informed and they came for the inspection and sealed the affected area. By the grace of God, all the students recovered soon from their sickness and returned home safely. One of our school parent came forward to pay for the expenses incurred in the treatment of these students. We marvel at the provisions our Lord provided from His bounty during this time.

This year some of our colleagues and students lost their loved ones in their family due to Covid-19 virus. A Parent of our School student extended a helping hand and provided financially for few students who lost the bread winner of the family, to pay for their fees. The school has given full scholarship to all such students whose earning member in their family died due to this pandemic.

This year too we are struggling to receive monthly Tuition fees from the school parents, still Lord is providing the needs of the school in amazing ways.

As mentioned in our previous letter, regarding the postponement of the CBSE Board Exams (Public Exams) of Classes X & XII, it was later cancelled for this year and the result was declared based on the Internal Assessments Conducted by the School.

In August, we welcomed our school students in school from Classes VI-XII, after the State Government allowed the schools to be opened for physical Classes, only upon the consent of the parents. Once again we felt like the school is alive and breathing when the students started to attend physical classes. In the beginning the attendance of the students was very low but gradually the attendance of the students coming to school increased. We were happy to see our students after more than a year. Some were difficult to recognise as they grew tall.

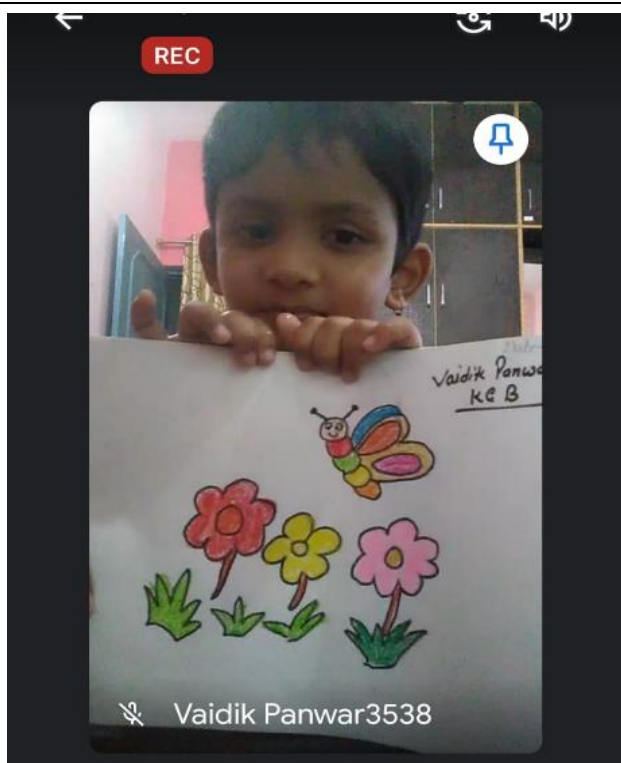
We conduct the school activities also online/virtually. It was a new effort for all of us at the same time interesting to learn more about technology. Following are the Inter-School & Inter-House Activities that our School Students participated in:



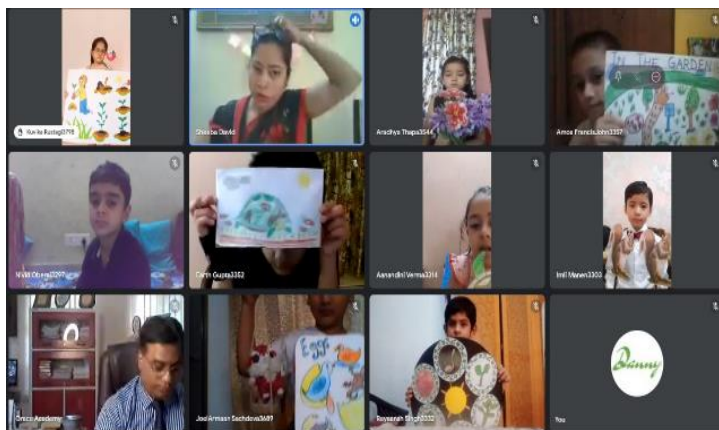
Orientation for new parents



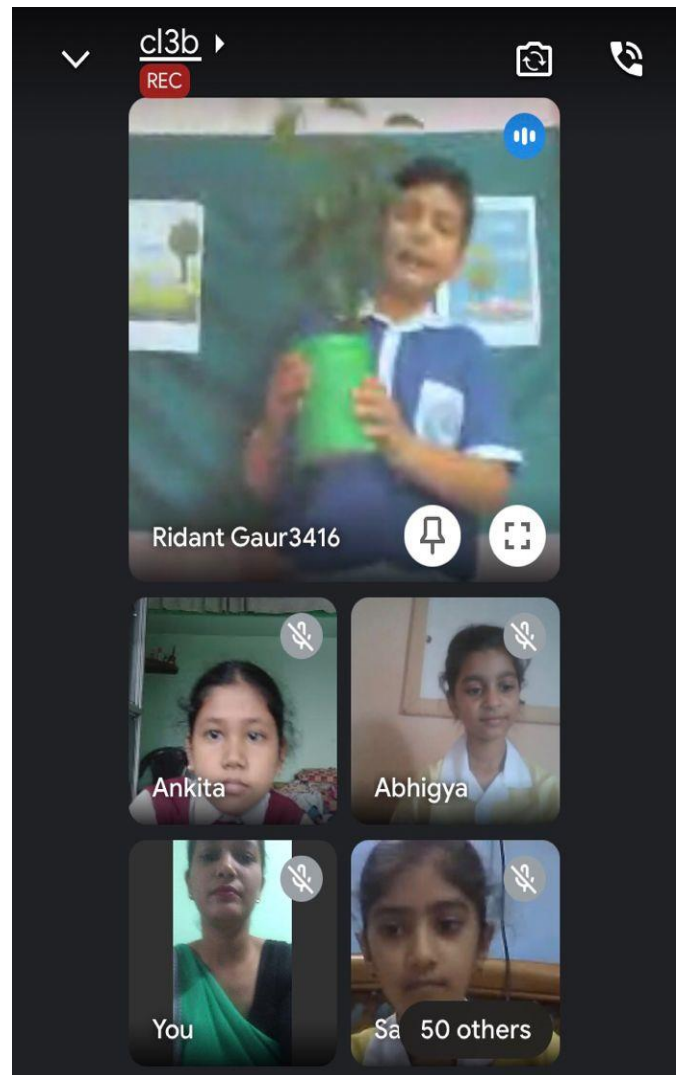
**English Recitation Presentation
(Nursery-II)**



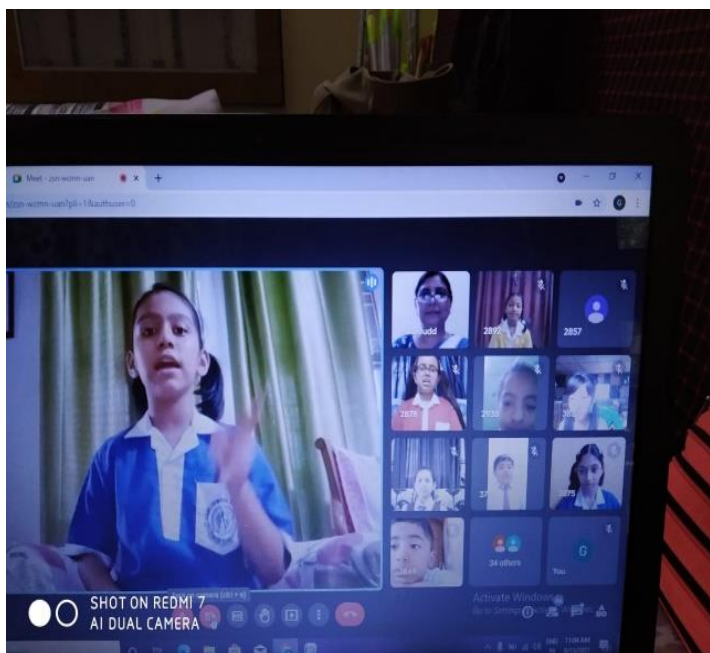
Art Competition (Nursery-II)



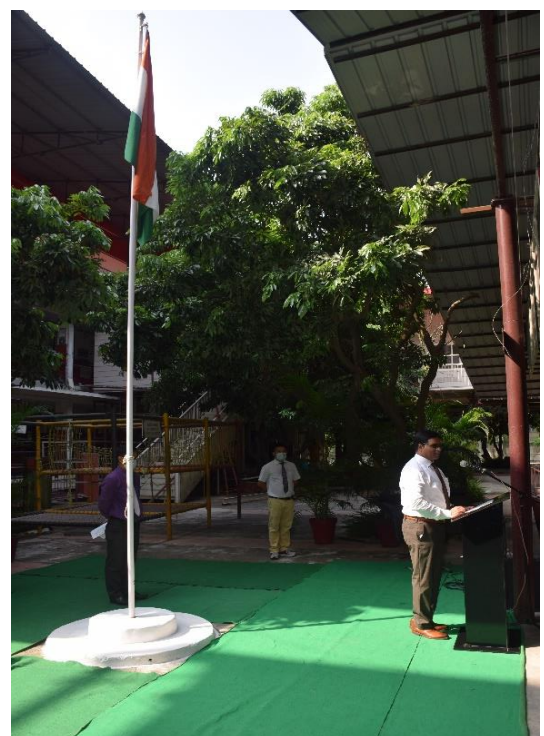
Art Competition (III-V)



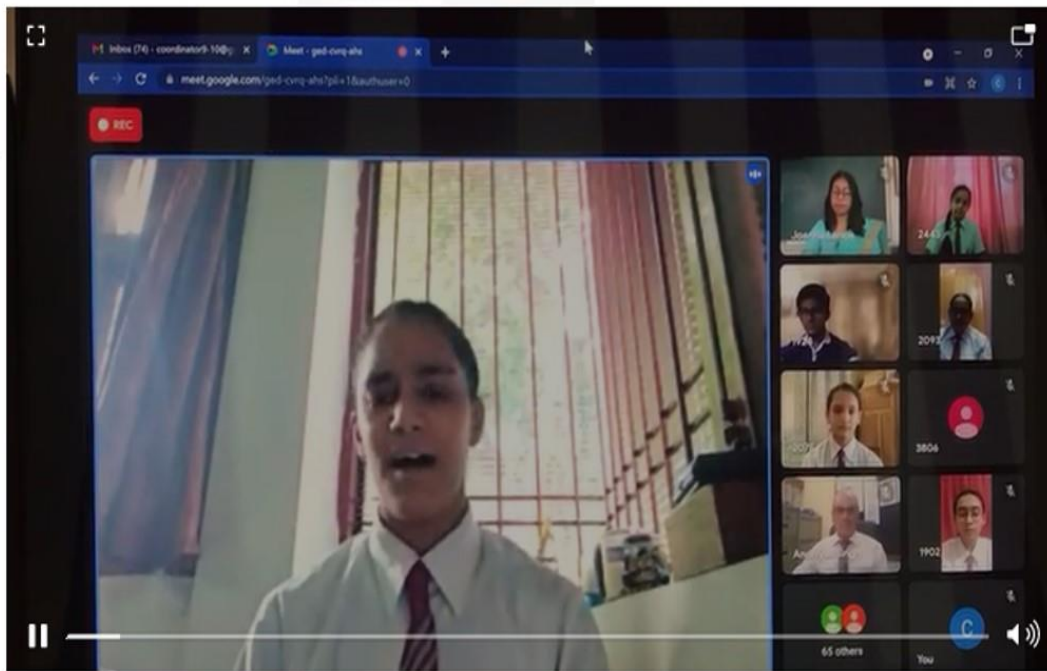
Hindi Elocution (III-V)



English Elocution (III-V)



Independence Day (Flag Hoisting)



Inter-House English Speech Competition

Presently, our school teachers are preparing for the Virtual Children's day program & Christmas program.

We thank and praise God for all that we were able to achieve despite of all the challenges and struggles we faced. All this was possible because of your love and prayer support. We give all glory and honour to God for his provisions, good health and grace upon Grace family.

In Christ,

Benjamin Newton
Principal

TOPIC _____

DATE _____

Dear _____

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I Hope you are doing well by the grace of our Lord. I am

also fine over here. The weather ~~is~~ is getting cold nowadays. I like

reading books and ~~also~~ studying a lot. I like taking part in competitions

Once I took part in Math's quiz and stood 2nd in position. During Covid-19

we all have got some time to spend with our ~~own~~ family members and

meet our relatives. But we also need to attend online classes regularly.

I really miss the fun I had with ~~my~~ my friends ~~due~~ of Covid I couldn't

meet my friends till now as hostel is closed. Please pray for my studies and

Health. ~~can~~ ~~waiting~~ ~~for~~ ~~your~~ ~~reply~~.

Thank You

Saireen Paul Masih

Class - 8



HAPPY BIRTHDAYS for DECEMBER



Melba Sírriano 3rd

Phil Harding 5th

Ron Handel 16th

Julia Bowden 26th

Aaron VanderKoooy 28th



Dates to Remember for December



- December 4 Men's Breakfast at 8:00am will meet at the restaurant, Burger Burger
- December 4 Ladies Christmas Luncheon at 11:00am in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring a salad to share, dessert will be provided.
- December 5 Communion
- December 19 Special Evening Service with singing Christmas Carols at 5:00pm. Communion will not be served.
- December 24 Christmas Eve Service; Church Office will be closed
- December 25 **MERRY CHRISTMAS**
- December 31 Church Office will be closed

Ladies Circle and monthly luncheon will not meet. We will Resume in January.

