



The wise men in the Nativity play (second from the left)

Message from an Alumnus

Fumihiko Kawamura (Owen)
Maruyama 19th Graduating Class

Hello everyone. My name is Owen, and I graduated in the 19th class of Maruyama Friends Club (1991). In kindergarten, I played the role of one of the wise men in the Nativity play, taking some medicine to Jesus. Now I am a medical researcher, developing medicine for COVID-19. Since so many people all over the world are in need, I want to get the medicine out to people as soon as possible.

So how do we make medicine? When a person infected with the novel coronavirus is hospitalized, recovers, and then is discharged from the hospital, that person will have antibodies in their blood. The antibody is a cell that is very powerful in fighting off the virus. It is medicine that is made inside the person's body!

I receive blood samples of patients who have recovered from COVID-19, and I search the samples for the strongest antibody. Once I find it, we research making copies of the antibody so people all over the world can be cured.

English is the common language of the world of research. All of the latest findings from all over the world are written in English, so research is impossible without understanding English. But having English ability gives you access to more information, and therefore more opportunities. I studied at Stanford University in America where I made many

friends, and we exchange information on COVID-19 treatments. I pray that many of the students at MeySen will go on to become people who research and develop what the world needs—not only cures to disease, but also solutions to environmental issues, refugee problems, food shortages and so on.

Keep on enjoying your English study at MeySen, and soar high into the world!

At Stanford University

In their May 28, 2020 edition, a Kobe newspaper featured the company where Mr. Kawamura works in an article titled, PCR, Antibody Research, Supporting Hospitals... Kobe's Medical Industry Prepares for the Second Wave of Infection. (Mr. Kawamura can be seen working in the back of the photo at the top of the article.)

Mr. Kawamura is also involved in research on restorative treatment of the gustatory system (sense of taste), a process that involves creating gustatory cells that are found on the surface of the tongue using iPS cells.

You can find the article (Japanese only) by using the QR code here, but the link may expire according to the access period set by Kobe Shimbun.

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Bible verse
If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I John 1:8-9 (ESV)

What the Bible Teaches about The Meaning of Life

Daniel Fanger Principal

In this series we are looking at what the Bible teaches about the meaning of life. The first article was titled "The Origin of Life," and we talked about how God created the universe, how he designed and put together the human being in such an amazing way, and the special relationship between God and mankind. The second article talked about the destruction of that wonderful relationship with the creator God, and how evil and sadness entered this world. This article will look at the result of mankind's sin and the mercy and love of God.

Part 3

The Consequence of Sin

Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and sin entered the human race. As the consequence of sin, things such as sadness, suffering, conflict, hatred, jealousy, war, and sickness entered and spread throughout the world. Not only that, it also brought death to the human race. God told Adam:

"Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:17, 19)

But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. (Matthew 15:18-19)

Jesus spoke these words to the most religious people of his time. These religious leaders, called pharisees, studied the Old Testament and acted impressively before people, praying magnificent prayers. But Jesus pointed out that they were hypocrites. They made themselves look good on the outside, but their hearts were ugly.

"I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds." (Jeremiah 17:10)

This is what God spoke to the prophet Jeremiah in the Old Testament.

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MeySen Friends Club Student Becomes Youngest Ever to Pass Level 10 Mental Arithmetic Test

Ota Nakazawa (Jay), of Maruyama Friends Club 1st Grade, recently became the youngest person to ever pass level 10, the highest level, of the Mental Arithmetic Exam, conducted by the Soroban Foundation of Japan. The test consists of three categories: Deduction (addition/subtraction), Multiplication (Example: 5,092x0.0815), and Division (Example: 26,873,054 ÷ 3,067). To pass, participants must solve 40 problems in each category within three minutes and with fewer than two mistakes, a significant achievement even for adults.

Just like Jay, many students at MeySen are putting forth tremendous effort in music, sports, and studies while they attend elementary school and Friends Club, and the teachers at MeySen are cheering for each one.

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Virus Prevention in Various Parts of Campus

In an effort to combat and remove viruses, MeySen school buses, classrooms, and buildings undergo cleaning several times per day. Handles, backs, and arms of chairs on the buses are wiped down, toys and doorknobs in the class rooms are sanitized, and other areas the children frequently touch are disinfected with professional strength disinfectant alcohol.

These practices will continue in order to prevent the spread of viruses and other infectious diseases at MeySen Academy.

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Cover: What does summer mean to you? Is it blue skies, thunderhead clouds, green rice fields and trees, playing in the water, rhinoceros beetles, watermelon, or cold ramen? Be sure and take precautions against heat stroke, and have an amazing summer with your family and friends.

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Friends is the MeySen Academy newsletter and publishes the latest news and event announcements for all members of our community, including students, alumni, teachers, and interested friends of MeySen.

It's Good to be Back!

"Good morning!"
"Lunch tastes so good!"
"Let's go play!"

The long-awaited start of the school year finally came in June, with all grades, kindergarten through high school, returning to classes together.

It was a semester that reminded everyone that MeySen's greatest treasure is its energetic students being at the campus. As we continue to follow the best precautions against the spread of COVID-19, all of the faculty will endeavor to work hard so the students can enjoy a rich learning experience in a safe environment.



Look!
A horse!



Good morning!

Announcing Retirement of Mr. Yoshimura and Introducing Mr. Tsuji

Next March I will be retiring from my role as vice principal of the Japanese department. Taking over for me, I am happy to introduce Mr. Jun Tsuji, whom we welcomed to MeySen on July 1 of this year.

Mr. Tsuji graduated from Tokyo University and worked as a pastor and a translator. In 2006, he became vice principal of Seiko Gakuin High School in Fukushima prefecture, and served there for 14 years. We will be making preparations over the next six months so he can officially assume the role from April next year. He also plays the guitar and enjoys softball, so I am sure he will have lots of fun with the kindergarteners and students.



Mr. Yoshimura Mr. Tsuji

Greetings from Mr. Tsuji

My name is Jun Tsuji. I just moved from Fukushima in June and joined the staff at MeySen Academy in July.

16 years ago, there was a camp for homeschoolers at the Maruyama campus, and I remember joining the camp with my son who was in first grade at the time and feeling impressed with this wonderful kindergarten.

I learned that all the children are loved at MeySen, and I feel they are each growing to have an enjoyable, honorable, and meaningful life. I am thankful for this opportunity to work in a place that gives children the foundation they need for a blessed life.

With God's guidance and help I will do my best to serve here, working alongside the families and wonderful staff of MeySen Academy.

Students Work Hard During "Stay-at-Home" Period!

The staff of MeySen Academy are deeply grateful to all of the parents who showed understanding for online learning and encouraged their children in their studies at home from March to May.

When MeySen reopened in June, students in both Kindergarten and Premier Kindergarten were already familiar with their teachers from watching them on the videos.

They had learned the songs too, and it was apparent that the videos helped to bridge the gap during the time they could not attend classes.

Now that the Teams app has been set up for students of Friends Club, High School, and Premier School, new videos can more easily be produced in the future if needed.

We would like to introduce a few of the students who used the videos during the stay-at-home period and worked hard in their English studies.



From **Hiroto Iizuka (Greg)'s Mother**
Maruyama Premier Elementary G1

Hiroto had been looking forward to the entrance ceremony at the public elementary school but it was postponed and classes were canceled. So when Premier Elementary classes were also canceled, it was particularly disappointing for him. However, the teachers created and sent out videos so he could sing together, do crafts with origami, and exercise with the teachers' instructions. He had a lot of fun on the days these were sent to us. As soon as he saw this waffle turtle on the video, he wanted to "make it right now!" He watched the video as he made it, and then said to his older sister, "I will make one for you too!"



Takato Kawata (Lance)
Maruyama High School G10

I was a little worried about joining the online program, since I could not communicate with the teachers directly. I imagined it would just be listening to the teachers talk on the screen. However, the teachers were fun and full of energy like they usually are, and it felt like being in class with them.

The videos had lots of content too. Not only did we use worksheets, but there were interviews with the teachers in the teachers' office, and there was even a fun short movie. It was enjoyable in a different way from our usual classes.

I would like to thank the teachers for making such a good program despite the circumstances, and also my parents for letting me participate as I continue to improve in my English studies.

Yu Karibe (Christine)
Takamori Premier High School G11

I was able to stay motivated in studying English even during the time we were not able to go to MeySen. There are two things I particularly focused on.

First was to write a journal every day to overcome my difficulty in writing in English. I was able to use different grammar and expressions, and my teacher checked it for me, and I was able to improve my overall English ability. Secondly, I maximized the use of the class videos from MeySen. In addition to working on the curriculum, I tried out the methods that the teachers introduced, made comments each time, and tried to be creative.

I want to continue to work hard at my English study so that I can make the most of the effort I have put in during this time.



Ice cream day!



Knowing a Foreign Language is Fun!

"English is hard."

"It is difficult to communicate my thoughts in English..."

If you have ever felt like this,

read these encouraging messages from your teachers

who are learning other languages.



Japanese



Mr. Peter
Learning Abroad Program Director

When I first arrived in Japan in 2004, I hardly knew any Japanese.

I was sent to Fukushima prefecture as an ALT, and not only were there no other foreigners in the town but the only people who understood English were the junior high English teachers. It was truly a Japanese immersion environment, so everyone I met became my "teacher."

At the junior high schools where I taught, I practiced conversation with the teachers and students around me, and I also worked on my reading and writing using textbooks in order to achieve my goal of passing the Japanese Language Proficiency Test. In retrospect, I could not have studied that hard had it not been for the high goal I set for myself. I passed the JLPT N1 after living in Japan for 3 years, but I was still not satisfied, and took on the challenge of the Japan Kanji Aptitude Test. Even now I am working hard to achieve my final goal, which is to be able to read novels in Japanese without a problem. I have read novels in Japanese by Haruki Murakami, whom I have been a fan of since I was a young boy.

The best thing to do is to immerse yourself in the speaking environment, namely studying abroad, and if you are not able to do so, set a clear goal and work towards it with all you have.



Spanish



Mr. Justin
Maruyama Friends Club

When I was just 10 years old, my parents decided to serve the Lord as missionaries overseas.

I moved to Costa Rica where the primary language is Spanish. I went to a school where in most of my classes, I could not understand what was being said. I began taking a course to learn the language with my family. The courses at first were difficult, but I realized after some time, I was finally able to communicate, and I could speak to my friends in their language for the first time.

I believe learning a different language in life is one of the best things a person can do. I encourage everyone to learn a different language, learn about a new culture, and to travel to somewhere new. I promise you will not regret it.



Ms. Janele
Takamori Premier School

I took French in high school for four years and I took French in college for another four years.

I wanted to learn French because of the many places I heard about and I wanted to visit the Eiffel Tower. Learning French enabled me to visit Paris, Versailles, Strasbourg, and Quebec and it allowed me to experience different cultures and understand the difference between my life and others.

I wish I could have stayed in France longer—then I would have become really good at French. But I still use my phone app to keep practicing.



Chinese



Mr. James
Takamori Premier School

I studied Mandarin because I found Chinese food, mythology and culture to be very interesting and I saw learning the language as a better way to understand these aspects of China. I found that the way to study and be successful was to constantly practice using vocabulary and talking with people who were fluent in Mandarin. Studying Chinese was difficult and I wouldn't consider myself bilingual. I constantly made mistakes speaking to Chinese people, but my failures helped me to learn what not to do and eventually led me to improving. Overall it was exhilarating and fun.

I think it is great to be bilingual because you will have a whole new area of opportunities that most people won't. You may be able to make friends with people you never would have been able to if you hadn't learned another language.



Korean



Ms. Bethany
Maruyama Premier School

I first learned Korean when I studied abroad in South Korea. I was taught how to read the Korean alphabet in three days.

The reason I kept studying is because I moved back to South Korea after I graduated university. Korean is a hard language to learn, especially for a native English speaker. I learned it not only because I was living in a country that spoke it, but because it is fun to learn a new language. I had to work hard at learning a whole new alphabet and completely different grammar. I wanted to expand my world view and to learn as much about another culture as possible. The Korean language reflects the Korean culture and people, just as the English language reflects the area it is spoken. Although it was hard to learn a new language, alphabet, and grammar, in the end it was worth all the studying. I learned most through my mistakes! Never give up, and keep trying when you are learning.