

Message from an Alumnus

Izuru Sugawara (Kenneth)
Takamori 38th Graduating Class



My name is Izuru Sugawara, and I graduated from Takamori. I have so many fond memories from my Kindergarten and Friends Club days. I was pretty confident at the time that out of all my friends I liked Friends Club the most, and I never missed a class. On the day of the Great East Japan Earthquake, I rode my bicycle to Takamori as my bus didn't come, and I remember my teacher being surprised to see me. In 5th grade, Mr. Philip in particular was a big help to me. The Kansai trip and the fun we had in class with my friends are all great memories (although, I am not sure if they were great memories for Mr. Philip as I was very loud.) To this day Mr. Philip is still a big help to me!

I am currently studying at Miyagi University of Education. In 2019, I took a year off to study at Delaware State University.

The state of Delaware is not well known in Japan, but it is actually the sister state to Miyagi prefecture, and people have begun to know it as the state where President Biden is from.

During my study in America, I took various classes, and the American history class particularly left an impression on me. Studying the history of America as well as living there, I felt the kind of diversity that you really don't come into contact with living in Japan. I also experienced teaching Japanese and Japanese culture in their Japanese clubs at their junior high school and high school. American kids love manga and anime, and many of them were more informed than me.

I have always loved English since I was little, and my university major is English. MeySen has played such a big part in it all.

English is a great tool for broadening our perspective, because through it we can experience the joy and fun of communicating with people from different cultures, and enjoy other things that can only be understood with English. This is why I feel English education is very important.

Since coming back from America, I have not had much opportunity to use English in the classroom, and I worry about losing my English. At the same time, I am realizing more and more what a precious opportunity the environment at MeySen provided in being able to use so much English. I hope you can all learn a lot and let English expand your horizon!

Left: Friends Club 5th Grade Bandai Trip
Center: With friends during study abroad
Right: Japanese club at high school

G6 Student Thrives as only Japanese Reporter

for American Children's News Site **SCHOLASTIC KIDS PRESS**

Scholastic Kids Press is a news website for children where children age 10-14 who have been selected from countries around the world report the news. News stories include topics such as politics, entertainment, environmental issues, sports, and events from different countries.

Nanaka Takahashi (Jenny) of Maruyama Premier G6 applied for the position of reporter for 2020-2021 this spring, and was selected as the only reporter from Japan. She is now working with 44 other Kid Reporters from all over the world.



Nanaka's Kid Reporter Intro Page

<https://kpcnotebook.scholastic.com/about-kids-press>



in Higashimatsushima

December 16 news story with Nanaka reporting **Poupelle of Chimney Town, an Illuminated Picture Book Exhibition**

You can watch the two-minute-long news video featuring Nanaka here:
<https://kpcnotebook.scholastic.com/post/poupelle-chimney-town>



Nanaka Takahashi (Jenny)

Bible verse

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.

The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

1 John 3:1-3 (ESV)

聖書

In this series, we have looked at what the Bible teaches about the meaning of life and the relationship between God and mankind. In our last article, "God's Love and Salvation," I wrote about Jesus' death on the cross and his resurrection. In this final article of the series, I would like to tell you about the hope and peace that he has given through this, as well as the meaning and purpose of human life, which is the title of this series.

Part 5

Hope and Peace

For most of us, the time we spend on this earth is about 80 years. Though some live to over 100 when healthy, it is nevertheless a short time. Life contains joy and pleasure, as well as hardship and suffering. How then can we find hope and peace in the midst of this short life? Through the assurance of having our sins forgiven and receiving eternal life.

Before he was crucified, Jesus said:

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. (John 5:24)

Through our faith in Christ, we are forgiven of our sins and made children of God, receiving the wonderful gift of eternal life. In this promise, we find the source of hope and peace for our lives.

The kingdom of heaven and a new body

In his letter to the church in Philippi, the apostle Paul wrote the following about Jesus' return:

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body; by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. (Philippians 3:20-21)

As children of God we are made citizens of heaven. And we have this wonderful promise:

our earthly body, which has experienced years of sickness, pain, and aging, will be transformed into an incorruptible, glorious body like Jesus'.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

(Revelation 21:3-4)

These verses are from the book that Jesus' apostle John wrote in his old age as he received a revelation from God. In it, we can see a glimpse of what heaven is like. Our tears will be wiped away; sickness, suffering, and death will be gone; and we will joyfully inherit the kingdom of God.

The purpose of life

The wonderful relationship that existed between God and man at the time of creation when God first made man was destroyed by sin, and man became hostile to God. However, all of us can be reconciled to God through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. We can have this relationship restored by returning to God.

Those who believe in the good news of Jesus Christ and receive him in their heart become children of God, and a new life begins. We repent of a self-centered life focused on pursuing our own ambitions and desire to please God instead. In the book of Micah in the Old Testament, we find the following words showing us how we should live.

He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)

It is a way of life, not as a religious ritual or an attempt to look good on the outside in order to gain people's approval and praise, but to please

What the Bible Teaches about The **Meaning of Life**

Daniel Fanger
Principal



God who sees the intentions and motives of our hearts. A scholar of the Jewish law asked Jesus, "What is the most important commandment?" Jesus answered him like this:

And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

(Matthew 22:37-40)

As we love God the creator and the people created in the image of him with all of our hearts, we will have fulfilled all the laws. The more we understand how great a sacrifice Jesus made for us, the more we learn to love God. Moreover, it is important that we continually make effort to live our life in a way that is pleasing to God in our actions, words, and heart. As we love our neighbors as we love ourselves, we will stop doing things that cause them harm.

Of course, we still have to contend with our fleshly nature while we are on this earth, so we make mistakes and sin before God. When we do, let's humble ourselves and confess our sins before God, and receive forgiveness with a thankful heart.

You have been born to experience a loving relationship with God. Life's true purpose and joy is found here. Earthly material and wealth will not satisfy the human heart. Only by serving God and helping others can we find true joy and satisfaction.

Friends

MeySen Academy Newsletter フレンズ

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Cover: Takamori's music concert will be held in January!
Whirling, Twirling, sounds fall upon us. The harmony goes on in a winter wonderland.

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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.

What are your favorite things in winter?



Valentine's Day!

Despite the many things you had to patiently endure last year, there were probably many new things you started or experienced as well. Maybe using a smartphone or computer to talk to someone far away, or eating something special at home that you normally would only eat at a restaurant. Unfortunately, it seems like the effects of Covid-19 will be around for a while longer. But even in the midst of this we can make fun and exciting memories at MeySen this year, with our attention directed to new technology and culture.



Sledding!

Bean throwing!

First Place at the Prefectural Speech Contest

Tremendous Achievement by one of MeySen's Alumni Students

Miyu Itaya (Lori, Takamori 41st Graduating Class) was awarded first prize in the second division at the 73rd Miyagi High School Speech Contest. Miyu studied in America for a year with the MeySen study abroad program in 2018. With all that she has experienced so far, we look forward to seeing what else she will accomplish.



Premier High School English Cafe

On December 10 and 11 of last year, Premier High School held an event called "English Cafe." This is a new project where a mix of junior high and high school students (grades 7~11) divide into small groups to have conversation and discussion with various MeySen teachers. Some of the head teachers who the students don't usually get to interact with joined in too, and the tables were filled with the sounds of fun and laughter.



Friends Club / Premier Elementary 2020 Music Concert

Wind Quintet

MeySen invited five musicians from the Sendai Philharmonic Orchestra to play in the annual music concert. This year was a wind quintet. Kiyohiro Nishizawa, the oboist, explained the uniqueness of each instrument, letting students hear the different sounds. Mr. Nishizawa compared the sounds to mixing paint saying, "A beautiful harmony is created through mixing the five sounds of the instruments." With that, they let the student body enjoy the unique sounds of each of the wind instruments, starting with the piece written for the wind quintet by Franz Danzi over 200 years ago, and following with "Ich bin ein Musikante" concerto, played in order by each instrument.

♪ Doe, a deer, a female deer...



The students were told that they could sing along if they heard a familiar tune, so they began singing along when the quintet played the theme song from a very popular anime. Being MeySen students, they knew the English words to Do-Re-Mi, Joy to the World, Jingle Bells, and Silent Night, as they played the song from The Sound of Music and a Christmas medley.

First concert ever held in the new Friends Square hall!



Flute Akio Ashizawa

Oboe Kiyohiro Nishizawa

French Horn Kazuyuki Suda

Bassoon Kazuhide Mizuno

Clarinet Utako Shimoi

-The Secret of Beautiful Music-

Mr. Jonathan, the vice principal, encouraged the students with the following words:
"The musicians practice hard every day to make beautiful music. What are you all learning at MeySen? Yes—English! When you study hard every day, you will be excellent at it!"



English Grammar Class Gives Students Confidence in Their School Classes and Conversations

130 hardworking junior high and high school students take part in MeySen's Grammar Class. For language, grammar is like the skeleton is to the body. In Japanese and English alike, learning the fundamentals of grammar will strengthen one's ability to construct sentences and accurately convey meaning in both written and verbal communication.



Junior High 7th Grade Grammar Class Student Comments

We learned things in class before we studied them at school, so I was able to remember them at school and think to myself, "I've done this before!"

Joining the grammar class, I was able to make sure that I really understood the things we had studied in my school classes. The teacher thoroughly explained what I didn't understand, and I am confident I will remember what we have studied so far.

University Entrance Exam Grammar Class Student Comments

I attended the MeySen Grammar Class from my first year of junior high through my last year of high school. The class to prepare for university entrance exams was particularly meaningful. Each class had so much to teach me that I didn't have any open space left on the page in my notebook, and I felt I really understood what was being covered.

I studied in America for a year in the MeySen Long-Term Study Abroad Program, but even those of us who experienced studying in America still had a lot to learn from this class. Actually, I would say we benefited even more because of our experience abroad.

In class, questions are constantly flying around. The teachers thoroughly answer any minor question we ask until we understand. I asked them for advice when I felt like I did not know how to study any more, and they gave me a lot of helpful input. And because this is a MeySen class, we learned a lot of things that aren't covered in textbooks, such as conversational expressions and things about the Bible. I confidently recommend this grammar class, not just for those who want to take entrance exams, but anyone who wants to continue to study English, and who likes studying at MeySen Academy.

Mr. Makoto Sano
Head Grammar Class Teacher

Chiune Habu (Matthew) Takamori 40th Graduating Class

Behind the Stage of the Christmas Pageant

-Creating the Backdrops-

At MeySen's annual Christmas Pageant, Kindergarten students perform songs and skits in front of a large audience. It always warms the hearts of the parents to see their children perform in this big event.

In preparation for the day, costumes, props, and the sound system all need to be made ready, but since this year was the first time to hold the pageant in the new ceremony hall, the teachers created all new backdrops for each performance. Here is a glimpse of the process of creating these giant backdrops.

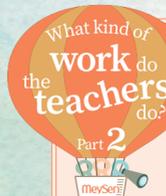


Printing
A large 147.5cm x 60cm paper is printed in the big printing machine, which requires special large-sized paper and a lot of ink.

Pasting
A total of thirty-two sheets of printed paper, two lengthwise and sixteen side by side, are then pasted together, creating one large sheet (295cm x 960cm). It is finished off by reinforcing the back.



Setting
The finished backdrop is hung on a long pole on the stage.



Introducing MeySen's

Grounds and Facilities Department

People visiting MeySen for the first time are often amazed at all of the colorful playground equipment. The seasonal flowers that decorate the paths from the grounds to the classrooms are another cherished feature of the campus. In this article, we will introduce to you the teachers responsible for them.

Grounds and Facilities Department Work

Playground equipment installation and maintenance

Most of MeySen's playground equipment is imported from America. New equipment is going to be installed between the Maruyama hall and the Spring Building. Checking and repairing these daily is an important part of the job.



Facility maintenance and seasonal decorations

The Grounds and Facilities staff are responsible for maintaining and repairing the buildings and campus facilities, decorating the Christmas trees and other seasonal items, as well as managing the lighting and sounds at the Christmas Pageant.

Plant and flower maintenance

The job of maintaining our plants and flowers originally started with volunteer help from the parents. Now staff rotate in groups of three, to do the weeding and planting. The beautiful, colorful flowers make the campus look bright even in the winter months.



All of us in the maintenance department are thinking every day of the smiles of children filling this place.

Mr. Hiroshi Tanaka
Facilities Department Head