

THE ANCHOR

“We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.” Hebrews 6:19

Mission Statement

The mission of the Alaska Christian Ministry to Seafarers is to establish and maintain a ministry of service to the seafarers calling on Alaska ports. This includes ministry to their physical, emotional and spiritual needs consistent with the Word of God as taught in the Bible and revealed in Jesus Christ through His life and the Holy Spirit. ACMS is a non-profit corporation run by a board of volunteer directors. All directors and volunteers of the organization shall be eligible to serve if they know the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and are active in a local church body. Volunteers come from churches world-wide. Members of the board are Richard Cederberg, Joe Seale, Karl Bengtson, Jim Chamberlain, Dean Diller, Ron Tan and George Reichman. Scott Johnson is the director of the missions in Seward and Whittier.

Seward Seaman’s Mission

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Grace and Peace *by Israel Martinez*

“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God---not because of works, lest any man should boast.” Eph. 2:8-9



My name is Israel Martinez. I am from Mexico City and this is my story. I was born into a catholic family and at 15 years old I heard the good news of salvation by an evangelical Christian, so I prayed the sinner's prayer and got baptized. Until recently, I tried to keep my salvation by my own effort, seeking to live a holy Christian life. I realized I could not do it so I moved

to a Baptist Christian denomination trying to find the power of the Holy Spirit to live the holy Christian life. Still discouraged, I joined two more Christian denominations - Pentecostals and Charismatics. After failing all the time in a lot of activities to be holy, I decided to forget it and join a cruise ship.

My life at sea began in 2004 when I joined Princess Cruises to work in this new adventure. For nine years I worked for cruise ship companies as a stateroom steward and waiter until 2014. On board the cruise ships, I was part of the Christian fellowship, a non-denominational group of crew members from different departments and different countries. These Christian fellowships on board do not have a pastor as a leader. The leader could be any one of the Christian crew members. It was not helping me to live a holy life on the ships. I believed I lost my salvation after I committed a sin. In order to not lose my salvation, I again and again said the sinner’s prayer. I had been told in all the Christian denominations that in one way or another, Jesus went out of my heart and I lost my salvation again if I sinned. It was terrible! I have met many on the ships and land who are desperately trying to maintain their salvation in a holy life. It is pure law and always discouraging. I believe most crew members in the Christian Fellowships agree.

Many verses confused me. I am saved because I turned from my sins to God and I invited Jesus in my heart, but without holiness no one can see the Lord. Therefore I must remain in a holy life or else lose my salvation because ... not everybody who calls me Lord will enter in heaven and Jesus said, “If you love me - keep my commandments.”

Quotes

Oh to be known as a mission that lifts up and magnifies the name of Jesus!!

We want to give a very big thank you from the Star Princess fellowship and all the crew for your support from the team at the Mission.

Pls do pray for that soul be saved and realise that the real God is the one who has all things in his control. Indian Captain

I am Orthodox but not a believer. Russian Captain

I can't believe somebody I don't know will call me in the hospital to pray with me and talk to be about God. Philippines

Only Jesus can help me and I will trust in Him. Goa

When I saw we were going to Alaska I was happy because I could come by the Mission. Philippines

I cannot compare my days now to my past because now I have Jesus. I have come to know him so real. Nepal

We are in the hand of God as you know. Italian Captain

Thank you so much for your hospitality and sharing with us about life with God. Philippines

What sin will not be forgiven? Philippines

God bless you for what you are doing. I am really thankful. Nicaragua

I am a Hindu but I am looking for a better way. India

At 43 I am very thankful that I know Jesus and trust Him and I focus on him. Philippines

I just joined three days ago. Praise God! To see you here is like seeing my family! Peru

Our country is poor in belief and full of temptation. Philippines

I would rather be alone than be with people who despise the Lord. Philippines

Does God see all sins the same size? UK

You are our parents of faith. Philippines

We all pray and hope that you will continue for a long time bringing God's love to people like us. Philippines

Thank you very much for giving time for us and thanks to God also because he extend my life and save me in the time when we meet the bad weather. Philippines

All these mixed up verses brought me and every Christian I met the same feeling of guilt and hopelessness.

I did not get anything new to help me to understand the true Gospel, until I was in Miami in 2014 at the International Seafarer's Ministry working for another cruise line. At that ministry, I read a booklet called "The Gospel." I met Pastor Dan Bailey and sister Kathy Martin. My surprise is that this booklet said that I did not need to try to live a holy life to keep my salvation because salvation is a gift of God, not of my works! What? This must be wrong I thought. I also told sister Kathy that I wanted to be a volunteer in 2015, so she called Pastor Scott Johnson in Alaska. He sent me a study book for Romans. He said: "Israel, read this book BEFORE you come to Alaska!"

Praise the Lord!!! After I read this book, I understood the real Gospel of GRACE and I became saved through faith in Jesus Christ ALONE. Alleluia!!! I called Pastor Scott to let him know what I just realized about salvation by GRACE. Thanks to God for his purposes for all who look for Him, He will be found.

I arrived in April and since then I have been reading a lot of books, being mentored by Pastor Scott, helping at the mission, and going on the ships to share the Word of God. During this summer, many volunteers have shared Christ with crew members and around 200 crew members were saved just by faith alone in Jesus Christ alone after hearing the message of the gospel of grace. I thank God for all that HE has done by grace in me and in all my brothers and sisters in Christ and all the crew members that He brought to salvation by faith in his Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus.

Only God Gives the Growth *by Scott Johnson*

'Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.' 2 Corinthians 6:2b

God is not willing that any should perish! And in His sovereignty, He uses a multitude of sowers and waterers before the fruit becomes ripe for His harvest!!! Such was the case this summer with a young woman from China.

As soon as I entered the crew mess, I could tell Leah was Chinese and a new crew member. Immediately I approached her in the nearly empty eating area and introduced myself with a handshake. We talked for several minutes with my normal inquiring questions. She said she had been introduced to Christianity by her American English teacher in China. She was still working, so we ended our talk after explaining the benefits of visiting the seaman's mission. That same day she came to the mission. She used the WiFi, became comfortable with the place and people, but no one spoke to her about spiritual things. After learning of her visit, I brought her a Chinese translation of the book from GoodSeed International called "The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus". It is a chronological account of the Bible from Genesis through the Resurrection focusing on God's promise of a Redeemer. When her ship returned to Seward, she told me she had read the entire

book through twice. When she arrived at the mission my wife, Beth, approached Leah. They talked spiritual truths for nearly two hours. Beth explained God's simple grace salvation plan through Jesus Christ using our John 3:16 diagram. She believed in Jesus Christ as her Savior and was born again, leaving with a huge smile and overflowing joy!! Praise God!!! She immediately emailed her English teacher in China with the good news of her salvation and he in turn called the mission to share with us his labors in China and his church's continual prayers for Leah over the last several years. It is truly amazing how God uses a multitude of people to bring one lost soul to the knowledge of the truth.

Summer Statistics for 2015 *by Joe Seale*

The summer of 2015 was a busy one for the Seaman's Missions in Alaska. We had 36 passenger ship days in Whittier, 57 in Seward, and 9 in Anchorage, plus tankers and cargo ships. There were 890 visits by seafarers in Whittier and 2487 seafarer visits in Seward, for a total of 3877 (in Anchorage, almost all ministry was done on board). The average attendance was 24.7 visitors per day in Whittier, and 43.6 visitors per day in Seward. Also, there were over 200 professions of faith this summer!

The seafarers and all of the volunteers have been blessed by the tireless work that George and Cheryl Reichman have given for many years. We honored them with a retirement dinner in Seward and they will retire from their mission organization, Send International in the summer of 2016. We will miss their unselfish service, and wish them God's blessing with their retirement in Minnesota.

'We Call Him Master" *by Jeannette Seale*

"Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hands of their master....so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till He have mercy upon us." Psalm 123:2

God has a way of catching the teachable moments in my life to show me so much about his love, but also the fear and reverence He deserves. Recently I happened to be in the captain's office when a "hearing" was to be held. An offending staff member was ushered in, plus the staff captain, hotel manager, the passenger services director, and the human resources manager. It was a very impressive display of top brass authority that was called to be at this meeting. This staff member did not understand how much trouble he was really in! The staff member was an American, and although he seemed embarrassed to be there, there was also an air of arrogance in his actions and demeanor. The Captain asked everyone to be seated, and the room was full of tension. He excused himself and went with me out into the corridor to tell me good-bye as he was leaving at the end of the cruise for vacation. Since we had already prayed together in his office, we said good-bye and "God bless you" to each other, and then he went back into his office where I knew someone's future was at stake and he quietly shut the door.

As I turned around to leave, there stood an Indian room steward looking at me with a very shocked expression. He said he did not know who I was, and the question he did not ask was what kind of trouble was I in to be in the captain's office! I told him I was from the mission and had come to tell the captain good-bye. His quick reply was "Oh, we don't call him captain, we call him master." He replied with such respect and admiration and awe, I was ashamed I treated my friendship with the master so lightly! He said the captain always signed his letters that way, "Master" and this crew member said he certainly was the master! The master displayed such love and understanding for this shy crew member that he always called him by name as he walked by his work place. He commented "I am nobody here, only a steward, but the master always calls me by name and greets me." Here was a Hindu from India who understood authority and respect and love in a way the offending staff member would never understand.

I have contemplated how our Master, the all powerful, all knowing, all loving God of the universe responds to our arrogance as to who He is. I also thought about how this "master" would display justice in this situation, would there be forgiveness but also disciplinary action? I could see how this master was showing God's love to this crew member who said he was "nobody," and how this could be the opener for me to talk to him about Jesus Christ on his next visit.

The Best Thing in my Life is to be United with Christ *by Katie Morrison*

"You will seek me and find me; when you seek me with all your heart." Jeremiah 29:13

I met Boni, a young Indonesian clerk when I saw him taking a picture of a verse that had been cross-stitched and put into a frame. The verses quoted Psalm 107:23 and started with "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters..." Since he was taking a picture of a Bible verse, it was easy to segue into spiritual things and the gospel. He came from a Catholic background, so was caught in works plus faith for salvation. He was God-fearing, like Cornelius in Acts 10, and listened intently as I went through the John 3:16 diagram with him, showing him that eternal life was completely provided through Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross. He only needed to receive the free gift of salvation through faith in Him. Boni was thrilled with the message of grace, breaking out into a huge grin, crossing his arms on the table, and then burying his head in his arms with joy. He trusted Jesus Christ ALONE as his Savior! Later, he posted the picture of the cross-stitched verse on his Facebook page with the caption "I found Him!" So now when I sing the song "Satisfied", I'll always think of Boni - "Hallelujah, I have found Him whom my soul so long has craved!" We were able to encourage him with truths about the walk of faith and we also gave him some materials to help him in his spiritual growth as a new believer. Before he left, he told me, "The best thing in my life is to be united with Christ. I feel so free now." We pray for this dear brother that he would continue to grow in grace.

The Lesson I Forgot *by Jeannette Seale*

"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness lowliness, meekness, and patience." Colossians 3:12

The passenger ship looked enormous as the dock's flood lights lit up people standing on the outside deck watching. The stevedores were ready to cast the lines. High up on deck stood a tiny girl and her mother in the spotlights. The little girl was wearing a sequined top that sparkled as she jumped up and down waving good bye. Her mother stood beside her also waving, just not quite as enthusiastically. They both were calling "good bye, we will miss you!" As I thought about this little girl sailing with her parents to so many parts and ports of the world, I realized she does not have anyone standing on the dock to wave good bye to very often! No wonder she was so enthusiastic! For a five year old girl, this is pretty important stuff. Suddenly I remembered what I had learned years ago from a Greek carpenter. He had asked us to stay until his ship sailed so that as he stood on the bow and we stood on the dock he could wave to us. I had thought this as a rather odd request until he explained that this was the only port in the world where he knew someone and he could wave good bye! He was not five years old, he was a grown man. Many times I forget it is the small compassionate gestures that the seafarers remember, not the big issues that I think are important. Lord help me to remember this lesson that you already taught me once before!

Thank You to All the Volunteers!

"Whatever you do, do it enthusiastically, as something done for the Lord and not for men, knowing that you will receive the reward of an inheritance from the Lord. You serve the Lord Christ." Colossians 3:23-24

There are many "behind the scenes" volunteers who are so important to the operation of all three mission locations. People mix up cookie dough, cut the grass, wash the vans, make Bible verse key chains clean the missions, translate for nurses, make hospital visits, shuttle to the airport for arriving and departing volunteers, house and feed volunteers, and maintain the cars and mission buildings. We also want to thank all the financial donors. We thank you all so much! There are many more believers now because of the volunteers' selfless efforts.