

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 Karl Bengtson, Jim Chamberlain, Dean Diller, Bruce Laughlin, George Reichman, Joe Seale, and Ron Tan. Scott Johnson is the director of the missions in Seward and Whittier.

Seward Seaman's Mission

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The Winter Months *by Scott Johnson*

When the ports of Seward, Whittier, and Anchorage are covered with a three-foot blanket of snow and ice like this year, I am often asked, "What do you do all winter?" Good question! Generally speaking, the winter is slower paced than the months when cruise ships are in Alaska. I look to the Lord by faith and keep busy serving our local community, upgrading the mission's facilities and eagerly preparing for the upcoming season. Bibles, tracts, and other materials must be ordered from suppliers and ministries. I maintain correspondence with seafarers around the world. I have been involved in purchasing a new van this winter, which involves many details.

I shoveled more than two feet of snow this past weekend! And more is expected! Local residents stop by the mission asking for help and assistance. I try to share the gospel with everyone who comes in the door.



When a cargo ship unloading pipe last week in Anchorage asked for a visit from the seaman's mission, I drove the 130 miles on very snowy roads to meet the need. One Filipino volunteer, Lito Sison and I brought the gospel

First time to Alaska for this seafarer and it is minus 12 degrees!

Quotes

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

Thank you for the Holiday card that you've just sent. Fellowship onboard the Royal Princess is really blessed with the diversity of people attending. Apart from the usual Filipinos, we also have an Indian, a Grenadian, an American and a Portuguese attending regular services. *Philippines*

You helped me a lot when my dad passed away and sometimes its the sympathetic ear which really helps. *UK*

I'm joining my next ship Star Princess in Losangeles, I can't wait to be in Alaska to fellowship with you again. *South Africa*

Thank you so much for your Christmas card, the Our Daily Bread devotion booklet and the pocket calendars which we received onboard the Pacific Jewel. *UK*

Please Pray for us, for our family and the difficulties we are facing including our financial situation. *Brazil*

Thank you for all that you do to support the seafarers from around the world! *USA*

I'm very happy he got a good support from you .You are very special person, and i'm sure God look your shoulder all the times where ever you going. *Italy*

Oh boy! Thank you thank you for the glasses. I can read better! *Philippines*

The words you say are very beautiful. *Roatan Honduras*

If I could just hear some valid reason to believe God is real I would give up athiesism in a heartbeat. *Sweden*

I am pretty sure He spoke to me through you and his message is always clear. I know God is preparing me for my personal and very important mision and everything that happens in my life has a reason of being. *Peru*

Before I knew Jesus I wanted to go to the gym but my burdens were heavier than the dumbbells. Now my burden are light!!!*Philippines*

I have no mother or father here to give me advice, you give me advice and guidance like my mother. Thank you. *Indonesia*

message along with Bibles and other Christian materials and were able to visit several days in a row.

The winters can be long, and even dark, but as we live by faith, the hand of the Lord directs our steps giving us confidence that our labor is not in vain in the Lord, even in the long winter months!

“George Told Me!” by *George Reichman*

It was a beautiful day in Seward and I was driving the mission van. I had asked the Lord early in the morning for an opportunity to share the Gospel that day, but so far I hadn't had any opportunity.

I picked up a fellow from Asia who was a chef on the ship. He was the only crew member in the van, so as we headed back to the Mission we began to talk. He told me he was a Christian so I asked him, “Then you're 100% sure that if you died tonight you would go to Heaven?” There was a long pause and then he replied in the negative! For the rest of the way to the mission—just a few minutes' drive—I had the chance to explain how we can know that we have eternal life.

I asked him if he was believing in Jesus Christ alone for his salvation. He said he was, so we talked about 1 John 5:13, how he can KNOW for sure that he has eternal life. I also shared with him John 10 where Jesus said that no one can snatch us out of His hand and no one can snatch us out of the Father's hand. That is real assurance!

Later, my wife had a chance to talk to this young man too, and he confidently said he was assured of his salvation. She asked him why and he said, “Because of what George told me! He read me from the Bible and now I know that when I die, I'm for sure going to Heaven. George told me!”

DVD on the Ships by *Jeannette Seale*

The unfolding of thy words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple. Ps. 119:130

The technology of the internet and cell phones is rapidly changing. It is almost an impossible task to even try to keep up with the new ideas that come out every few months. On some of the ships there are still DVDs in the crew cabins that work and many of the crew like to watch Christian themed movies in their own cabins. On the ships that I regularly visit, I take DVDs with me as many of the crew cannot come to the mission on a turnaround day. I bring the movies to the crew mess and they pick out the ones they want to watch. I am thrilled to have counted the numbers at the end of the summer to know there were a total of 124 check outs on the ships. This may not sound like much, but to the crew who have had a movie to watch by themselves or share with someone who is asking questions about Jesus, this represents unknown witnessing opportunities that don't involve us.

Outreach to Wives and Children *by Jeannette Seale*

On some of the ships wives and children are able to travel along for several weeks or months with the fathers who are senior officers. We have children's books and DVDs in several languages that we can either give away or loan to the wives to pass the time for them and their children. For the wives, the time on board can be a real eye opener if they have never sailed with their husbands before!

When the men are at home on vacation, they spend every minute with their families, but when the families are on board, the job takes up most of the men's waking hours. The wives and children are left to feed on the crumbs that are left. This can pose a real problem if a wife has quite small children on board with her. Even though her husband promised to take his family onshore for a walk, it is very common for something to crop up to delay him from keeping his promise. Even uncooperative weather can keep the children onboard other days. In a 7-day cruise, there are 5 port days, but most senior officers do not get off on a regular basis even once during a week! Needless to say, families on board are a blessing in forcing the father to take 30 minutes to go ashore if he can, but also the family onboard causes other stress for him that he does not experience when he is at home with larger quarters and more for the children to do.

This is a wide open field for us to be able to talk about marriage, parenting, spiritual leadership in the home, and many other related topics. I was able to loan or give out quite a number of New Testaments and copies of books in foreign languages, The Five Love Languages, Sacred Marriage, and parenting books are very popular, I have been able to share in prayer with families before they left for home. Please pray for these men and their families who struggle with time management and priorities both on the ships and at home.

Please tell My Friend *by Cheryl Reichman*

Jorge from India approached me at the mission and said he knew 100% that he was going to Heaven when he died. Earlier in the summer another volunteer had shown Jorge from the scriptures how Jesus Christ came to live and die that he might receive eternal life and he was saved by God's grace. Now with urgency, he wanted his friend to hear the same message. He pointed to the seafarer next to me. "Tell him! He needs to know too!"

I looked at his friend who sat there expectantly waiting for me to speak. Together we asked God to speak to him as we read the scriptures. He heard, believed and trusted Christ to be his personal Savior! God suddenly jogged his memory and he told me that seven years earlier his grandmother had shared this message with him! He had forgotten all about that conversation until just this very minute. Now the seeds she had sown sprang to life! God is Faithful!

Is This the Same Man? *by Jeannette Seale*

"A cheerful heart is a good medicine but a downcast spirit dries up the bones." Proverbs. 17:22

I went to the ship looking for the third engineer who had recently trusted Christ, but he had already gone to town. I had my Bible with me so I mentioned that we might be able to have a question and answer session in the officer's day room after dinner. Five men came. The unfamiliar man sitting next to me seemed very troubled and hesitant, but he picked up the guitar and listlessly strummed a few chords. Some song sheets laid on the table untouched.

When I innocently asked what they would like to talk about, the troubled man beside me whispered, "How to save my soul." The conversation started off with why we are separated from God and are aware of it, and how will the problem get fixed? They took turns reading verses in Tagalog and English in Genesis and then in the NT. When I asked what might keep them from trusting Christ, the two answers were pride and anger, which we then discussed.

When I asked again what would keep them from trusting Christ, one said he already had trusted Christ, but the other four said they wanted to trust Christ and they wanted to tell Him that. So we prayed, some aloud and some silently. Then we had a time to just sit and reflect on our decisions. Quietly the reticent man picked up the guitar and started playing and singing in such a strong beautiful voice that we all sat in amazement. When he finished, I asked the others if they knew this man could sing and play the guitar and they all said he sang karaoke sometimes but didn't sing like this! He played and we sang together song after song. Who was this man anyway that I had not met during the many days the ship had already been in port? Oh my goodness! the Chief Officer?

His eyes sparkled and his voice was joyous. It was hard to believe it was the same man who had whispered that desperate request just an hour earlier! I laughingly asked the crew "what happened to this guy anyway?" I opened my Bible and we all read together, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come." 2 Cor. 5:17

Several days later Joe and I saw him again and he was just as shiny as a new penny, even though his eyes were bloodshot from the long hours he had been working. I asked him if he could explain to me what had happened to him. He said he could not find the words in English, but his face just beamed out the light of Christ.

The Fish Story *by Jeannette Seale*

A captain asked me if I could find a source of fresh fish for him. It is not an unusual request, but is extremely hard to fill in Anchorage! God was way ahead of me and I easily found a supply of fresh salmon for a reasonable price!

I arranged for the captain to save me two salmon and I happily said I would pay him. He just smiled.

When the fish arrived, I went down to get the fish, which were already frozen and in a cooler. He would not take any money for the fish! I knew I could not insist, as he said they were a gift.

Just the next day I was sharing Christ with a young man from South Africa. He told me he had gone to church all his life but was absolutely certain he would not go to heaven because he had not done all that was required of him to go to heaven. He gave me a long list, including being a missionary! Although he knew very well that Jesus had come to die on the cross for our sins, he had not made that fact personal, so I told him the story about the captain and the fish. I asked how the captain would have felt if I had insisted on paying for the gift? He blurted out, "He would be so offended!" Then I asked him if he thinks Jesus feels offended when people think they need to earn salvation when Jesus gave it as a gift? His eyes clouded over in confusion, then the light broke forth and he smiled and said, "Ah now I understand!"



Winter ship visiting is challenging!

Important announcement!

During the month of December and part of January we had unbelievable trouble with our Anchorage Post Office Box 143316. In spite of all of our efforts, it could not be resolved until we appeared in person the first week of January. If you sent us mail and it was returned to sender, please know that the box is open again. We are so embarrassed by this trouble, but we trust God's grace will prevail!