

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, Bruce Laughlin, George Reichman, Burt Speath, and Ron Tan. Scott Johnson is the director of the missions in Seward and Whittier.

Seward Seaman's Mission

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Exhausted But Still in Pursuit *by Scott Johnson*

I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls. 2 Cor. 12:15

Summer 2022 was overwhelming with the flood of seafarers visiting the Whittier and Seward missions. A volunteer coined a phrase from Judges 8:4 where Gideon and his 300 men chased the Midianites all night and declared "exhausted but still in pursuit." Summer 2022 was exhausting, but by the grace of God seafarers were served in the love of Jesus Christ. Southcentral Alaska welcomed more cruise ship visits this summer than any previous season. The ships were not at full guest capacity because Canadian authorities would not allow docking cruise ships to be at full capacity. However, our missions became popular destinations again for the crew members on shore leave. With continued tight Covid restrictions onboard, chaplain visits were limited. Yet, our drivers transported thousands of seafarers to the mission in Seward and around the city. Hundreds heard the Word of God or a gospel presentation both in church services and personal discussions. Many crew members were working their first contract.

Before the season, groups of volunteers mixed over 700 pounds of chocolate chip cookie dough in one gallon freezer bags and every cookie was baked and eaten. Seward experienced a record return of fish, resulting in the mission receiving more than 300 donated sockeye salmon to barbeque for crew members. Most ship days 15-30 pounds of salmon were grilled with rice and vegetables. We started encouraging crew to come to the "best little restaurant in Alaska!" God's measure of success does not measure salmon barbequed or cookies baked, but on His glory and lives spiritually impacted for eternity. By His grace and power, 2022 cruise season was an eternal success!

"I had no idea where we were going!"

by Scott Johnson

A man's mind plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps. Pvbs. 16:9

Morne, from South Africa, works on cruise ships as a physical trainer and health coach. God brought him to the Seward mission in August off a small expedition ship visiting only once all summer. He walked into the

Quotes

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

I sense love and peace in this place.
Goa

In my deep heart I'm not adventist.
Indonesia

I really have been so blessed getting to share time with you. NZ

If it were not for the missionaries, my country would not have progressed this far. I am so happy you are here to help us. Manapuri (Nagaland) India

I want to come back and learn about this place. Serbia

Your prayers are truly felt and received. USA

Your prayers are what I need. Goa

Sir/ma'am thank you soo much I really appreciate your efforts going here. God bless always. Philippines

Due to God's favor I got a different schedule and I could come to the mission. Goa

You never forget us. Philippines

Thank you for all the services you render towards seafarers. Especially in these trying times with COVID 19. Your work does not go unnoticed, and we pray for your wellbeing. Captain USA

You trust us like family. India

My family is open religion, I'm muslim, my sister in law is Christian, my brother in law is Buddhist. Borneo

You really helped me in my time of need and I'll never forget the short hours we spent together and how good people truly can be. USA

Thanks for sharing your love for the world. God bless you. India

mission with a shirt displaying Philippians 4:13. Wearing that tee shirt gave me immediate permission to ask him spiritual questions! From one inquiry, "Are you a spiritual man?" we talked for two straight hours at the kitchen table. We sipped coffee, explored verses, laughed, and shed tears. Salvation, Christian life, biblical marriage, life's trials, body/soul/spirit exercise, and God's creation all became topics of our deep discussion. Like many from South Africa, he was raised with a respect for God and the Bible. Only a few years ago, he became a born-again believer in Jesus after a life tragedy shook his world. Morne gave me permission to share these things and below is his complete Facebook post from the day of our visit. All praise to God for two hours of heavenly fellowship!



"Wow, the most amazing thing happened today... Walked off the ship this morning wanting to get a shuttle to town for a coffee before I start to work later today. Next moment I heard a few crew members from another ship shouting 'the shuttle is here, do I want to join?'... Jumping in and listening to the driver, I heard something about 'the mission'... In my mind I thought, 'well at least it's going to town and I will find my way to a coffee shop as I always do in Alaska.' I had no idea where we were going...

Then we stopped at Seward Seaman's Mission, and I was invited in... Only to realize where I am... I've met Pastor Scott and the most amazing conversation followed. The message he shared was priceless and life changing. All Glory to God. Needless to say, I had the most amazing cup of coffee. I left with joy! My cup is full!"

So We Are Ambassadors for Christ, Even Babies

by Scott Johnson

What is missed most by all seafarers? Family! Oh, how they miss their family. By accident or by God's leading, we found a way to minister to their homesickness when they come to the mission - let them hold a baby! Walter's dad, Terry, who operates a charter fishing business, is a



supporter of the mission. One day his wife, Caroline, visited while the place was full of seafarers. Within a few short minutes, her six month old son, Walter, was surrounded by homesick seafarers asking for a chance to hold the bright-eyed baby. Without his knowledge, Walter became an international minister of Christ to a building full of homesick crew. Two weeks later when the ship returned, the only question we heard was "Where's Walter today?!" We called Caroline, so Walter could visit and minister to his international family.



—**Note:** There may be some confusion when you read these different articles. We visit ships in three different ports. Scott's articles come from the big mission in Seward where many more seafarers visit. The small two room mission in Whittier, which is 90 miles away from Seward, has fewer visitors. The article about the tanker and family reunion below is from ship visiting in Anchorage, 130 miles away from Seward.

Room Without Eyes *by Jeannette Seale*

I was a stranger and you welcomed me. Mt. 25:35

Before the season began in Whittier, we had no idea how many crew would come to the mission. We were not allowed onboard so it was harder to invite crew. Therefore, word of mouth among the crew played the most important role in alerting people about their home away from home.

The crew who came to the mission felt very much at ease, even to sitting in the exact same place and using the same coffee cup on repeated visits! As the cups are all different, we heard statements like, "where is my Christmas cup? I was born on Christmas and my name is Noel!"

Once the crew picked up their coffee and sat down, their eyes fell immediately to their smart phones ("eye-phones"). It was very difficult to break them out of that trance. Before COVID, the crew used their phones to talk to their families, and the rooms hummed with voices. Post-COVID, the trend is to play games on the devices. The rooms could be filled wall to wall and there was not a sound, all eyes were down.

It was very challenging to bring up any topic when eyes were glued to the glass screens. As they left, we asked questions like, "is there something I can pray about for you?" or "did you get some reading material yet?" About half-way through the summer, crew began to ask to talk to us in the hallway, explaining that they needed prayer. We prayed and shared Christ in the hallway while waiting for the van!

One dark rainy day under the bright lights the coffee pot, heater, and wifi were on. I tried to heat water in the microwave. Suddenly all went dark, and it being Whittier, I thought it was the entire building. Without electricity there was no internet, and surprised eyes quickly looked up. Amazingly in the semi-darkness, the crew started talking to each other! Laughter and phrases like "when I was a kid in the province, it was like this." "Yeah, when it got dark, we had to go to bed because we couldn't play outside anymore!" This chatter went on for about 20 minutes until Joe discovered I had blown a fuse in that old building!

Once the lights were on, the laughter stopped, all eyes fell back down to the glass faces of the phones, and the room went quiet again. However, in successive weeks these crew members were prone to talk and laugh together more than other crew members. I wondered when other ships arrived, "should I blow a fuse on purpose?"

The Example I Didn't Miss *by Jeannette Seale*

For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Jn 3:16

Satellite phone calls and emails had been a continuous daily challenge between an Indian captain and my husband Joe. He had given Joe a list of 28 items the crew wanted and needed: electronics and related gadgets, 70 bars of bath soap, 12 gallons of dish soap, 2400 table napkins, and cashews, 15 pounds of cashews! Joe had spent hours on the computer ordering items, frustrated with so many items not available online and in local stores. Finally he laughed and said, "we now have everything from soap to nuts for the ship!"

The ship arrived five days late because of bad weather and government paperwork. Once they arrived, our first possible time to visit was after dark. The fog was rolling in, the temperature was hovering around freezing. I can't say I was happy about visiting a ship in the dark and freezing cold. Even so, Joe and I prayed that God would use us with this ship, any way He saw fit.

We trudged along the long dock to the ship as the fog curled around the ship. The heavy red dolly loaded with goods rattled ahead of us. We waited in the cold for the captain to come to the rail. He needed all of the receipts to be able to pay us \$3800 in cash. With no shore passes, the crew were not allowed off and we were not allowed on. A few crew lined up along the railing to watch. All conversations had to be conducted from the ship across to the dock.

Suddenly I heard the muffled voice of the agent say something about the second engineer's daughter was there talking to her father over the railing! His daughter? We knew the second engineer was the only crew from Myanmar. That country never allows their crew to have a shore pass in the US! The young stranger, dressed in California winter clothing, stood shivering in the dark several feet away from us.

The agent had already told us she had not seen her father for three years and she had flown up from Los Angeles and waited for 5 days for the ship to arrive. Through the thick fog, we saw a man climb into the basket and then hoisted from the ship to the dock with the job of "checking the draft." As the basket touched the dock, the man dressed in huge black coveralls, a ski mask, hard hat and life vest opened the metal gate. He stepped out and enclosed the tiny woman in his arms! They stood for at least a minute that way, arms around each other, whispering and laughing, with all of us bystanders frozen in the scene with them. We all fought back tears!

All of the frustration from the electronics problems and freezing cold melted away, as I saw this most beautiful scene. A father, who has been at sea 40 years and had not seen his child during the pandemic, held his 23-year-old daughter in his arms and wouldn't let her go. My tears flowed freely, seeing this sacrificial demonstration of this man's love for his child. My thoughts raced to praising my Heavenly Father's love for me. What He gave up, his Son to provide salvation for us, even for the ones who have not yet heard. God didn't use us as I had supposed, He used this example to teach us about love and sacrifice that He made for us.

