

# 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, and Ron Tan. Scott Johnson is the director of the missions in Seward and Whittier.

## Seward Seaman’s Mission

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## **“But you must continue!”** by Scott Johnson

*You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them..... 2 Timothy 3:14*

In 2 Timothy the apostle Paul writes from jail his final words. He declares to young Timothy that, “perilous times will come...evil men will wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.” Yet with the warning Paul guides Timothy with an imperative statement, “but you must continue in the things that you have learned and been assured of.” He tells Timothy that when the world around you gets worse, don’t follow them, but stay in God’s word and will. Indeed, all of God’s people have experienced hardships with trials, disappointments, persecution, testing, temptations, and even abandonment. Some of the Old Testament successful believers who held close to their God by faith received commendation in Hebrews 11. Then Hebrews 12:1 promotes them as “a cloud of witnesses” for us to follow by faith. With the chaos from this

present pandemic continuing, ACMS seeks to not derail ministry or distract our attention from God's will. As with the Apostle Paul, we see transition, disappointment, trials in the present ministry, but we also see God's providential hand opening doors to seafarer ministry. So what then should we do? Well, as the mission director, I find great comfort in Paul's simple imperative, "But you must continue!" Scott and the mission leadership, you must continue to walk closely with your Savior by faith, walk in the Spirit, pray for wisdom, go and make disciples, preach the word, love one another, endure hardship as a good soldier of Christ, put on the whole armor of God, be strong in the Lord and His grace, wait on the Lord, give thanks for all things, look for His soon return, and rejoice in the Lord always, to name just a few. Isn't our tendency to react to the world chaos, rather than to lean harder on the Lord and His will? Our great Savior knew of the pandemic and has prepared a perfect plan to follow. ACMS plans to follow His perfect will through His Word, watching for the ministry details to fall into place as He opens and closes future doors.

### Mr. Omar Silingardi, Recognition for a Job Well Done *by Jeannette and Joe Seale*

*Wisdom abides in the mind of a man of understanding. Proverbs 14:33*

The Director of Restaurant Operations, who retired on June 1 of this year, without being on our board or a formal volunteer for the Mission, has played an extremely important role in the ministry to Princess ships.

We met Omar Silingardi in 1982 in Juneau when he was the maitre d' on the original Sun Princess. From the very beginning of our friendship, Omar's love and concern for the crew was always very evident. He was one of the personnel who asked us to open a mission in Whittier when Joe's job moved us to

Anchorage! He often helped us organize events for the crew, he sent us Christian literature from his hometown in Italy where American missionaries were based, he always notified us of crew in the hospital in Anchorage, he arranged for passes for us in several ports of the world, and he asked us to counsel his crew. Many dining room staff knew about the mission because their boss, Mr. Silingardi, told them to go there if they had any problems. For many years he played Santa Claus, passing Christmas cards to hundreds and hundreds of crew via the Princess mail room in Santa Clarita. He would drop in at the mission unannounced in Seward or Whittier when he was visiting ships in our ports. He has been the greatest friend we and the crew have ever had.

And besides all of those love gifts for the crew, he always remembered my birthday and our anniversary on June 12 and had a ship recognize that day by serving us lunch or providing a cake! All this and he was busy keeping track of 4,084 crew at one time which worked on 18 different ships and had about 30,000 at home on leave at any one time.

He retired on June 1, quietly, without any fanfare or notice, after 47 years of working for Princess cruises. He was the longest employee Princess has ever had. The first thing he did was put down the three phones he carried 24 hours a day on which ships and crew called him incessantly. Because of the covid problems, his retirement was not acknowledged, and crew are still calling him about future jobs!



## Quotes from Omar

2002: I would like to thank you for your generosity on behalf of Gregorio's family and from the other "family" he has on all the ships. He was indeed a friend for many onboard and he will dearly be missed. Thanks for assisting our staff during the Alaska season and I'm sure that all of them look forward to see you next summer at the mission.

2007: I only deal with carrots and peas and have nothing to do with donations....but I am pretty good in Public Relations!!!! I just like to personally thank you and your incredible team of volunteers for the moral support given to the thousands of crew members that used your home as their home away from home. I know that it does make a difference for the staff to be able to enjoy a little sunshine....in Whittier!

2007: If I had the opportunity to write a logo on the Seaman's Mission van it would read: "The cookies are fresh, the coffee is free and we smile in every language. Come and visit!".

2011: Indeed a special day, birthday and wedding anniversary!!! I should have thought of something like this....one present....two celebrations!!! Take care

1985: I was very happy to receive your postcard and to know that you still remember me. I was in Italy in November, and I also went to order those books and pamphlets in Formigine and paid for everything then. I am happy to know that you received them.

A short note to keep you updated about my life!!! I am still here pushing paper and flying around the world. I hope you like this magazine from Manila.

1993: Thanks for your help with the crew!!! And for being their family away from home!!!

2002: This is a special day for both of you and I like to take this opportunity to tell you an old Italian proverb that says : "Dio li fa' poi gli accompagna." The translation is : God makes them and then matches them....and there is no better way to confirm that this is really the truth in your case. Happy Anniversary and many many more days together and Happy Birthday for Jeanette.

1989: I was very lucky to be able to go home for one week. Now on my way back to L.A. and then to Mexico.

We want to take this time and space to tell Omar thank you for a job very well done, not only for your crew but for all of us who have been blessed with your interest in being part of our goal in taking love, counsel, encouragement and the message of Jesus Christ to literally thousands!

## Global Prayer Time

*Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Hebrews 13:15*

During all of these past months Chaplain Ray Hanna of the Lighthouse Mission in Vancouver, BC, has sponsored a world wide Zoom prayer meeting for port chaplains. There have been participants from many countries including Indonesia, Ghana, Guiana, Brazil, South Africa, UK, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, Italy, Holland, US, and Canada. It has been very encouraging to have a devotional time together and many combined hours of prayer for seafarers and their families. The added benefit is that it has brought all of us who are ship visitors much closer together. Even though every continent of the world is represented except Antarctica, we now experience a very strong camaraderie that did not exist before Covid!

## A Season of Change by Jim Chamberlain, President, Alaska Christian Ministry to Seafarers

I am not aware of any time since the Alaska Christian Ministry to Seafarers was started that the Mission Board of Directors ever encountered a summer season with as many challenges as this year. The COVID-19 pandemic effectively forced the State of Alaska to close its ports to cruise ships, and impose quarantine on many activities of residents and visitors.

Without regular Mission volunteers or cruise ship workers present this year, we missed the regular sounds of our piano, drums and guitars being played. The basketball court in the backyard was largely silent, except for pick-up games among local high school kids. There were fewer groceries to buy and we especially missed wonderful conversations with crew members.

Things were very different in many respects. This is a (hopefully short) season of change. For many persons, change is disconcerting. A lot of us like routine. But, we are not dismayed with how things went. Why? Because we serve an eternal God, who comforts us when things don't go as we would like or we have planned. He's the one who draws persons to Himself.

He always has a longer and bigger vision and plan. "For I know the plans that I have for you. . . to give you a future and a hope"

Jer. 29:11. "For I, the Lord, do not change" Mal. 8:6. "I will teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you" Ps. 32:8. We are not to be anxious about anything, but instead to pray; and we are promised, while we wait for answers, that Jesus will guard our hearts and minds. Such comfort and grace has carried us through this summer and, we believe, into the new year.

Meanwhile, Director Scott Johnson hosted Bible studies for residents of Seward who work on fishing boats, etc., sent encouraging messages to crew members as they sought temporary employment in their respective countries around the world; and began preparation for next season. We trust God that a vaccine will be found soon.

Through it all, God has been very good indeed. On to 2021.

### COVID Visiting *by Jeannette Seale*

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*I was in prison and you came to me. Matthew 25:36*

Even though there have been no cruise ships in Alaska, the tankers and bulk carriers still tied up in Anchorage. The airport suddenly found itself very busy with 747s flying supplies from China to the rest of the world and Anchorage was a good stop-over for crew rest and refueling. Therefore we have received about one tanker a week at our port unloading jet fuel. The building industry has slowed but we still have a need for cement, so those ships have kept coming also.

Even though some of the ships wanted us to board, we chose not to. We were not afraid of getting sick from the crew, they had been at sea for months without being ashore or having any visitors. We were concerned we might bring a stray germ on board if we visited! But the majority of ships did not allow their crew any leave, so the ships became prisons tied to the dock.

We were still able to meet crew as we stood on the dock; we brought sacks of materials with us and the sailor on watch would lower a bucket on a rope. We could put all the materials in the bucket and he would hoist it up to the deck. Since we already had many sacks of cookie dough in preparation for the summer season, I started adding cookies to the bucket full of books. We even sent up frozen fish heads for the Filipino crew to make fish head soup! We have been able to share Christ with crew even as they stood on the deck of their ship and we were on the dock often praying for them for safety and good health.

Our greatest concern is the crew who have been stuck on board for many months already as their own countries shut the borders for them to return home. So few planes have been flying, that crew members repatriation home has been very complicated. More than 300,00 seafarers are still sailing on tankers and bulk carriers with little hope of relief in sight

### Thank You for Your Support *by Scott Johnson*

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*In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. 1 Thessalonians 5:18*

We are rejoicing in the Lord's provision! Through all of your prayers and financial support, we have continued ministry in Alaska to seafarers coming on cargo and processing ships throughout 2020. We have had a tough year at the ACMS without cruise ships. However, God has been abundantly faithful to open doors in Anchorage and Seward to minister to seafarers and local Alaskans. Please continue to pray for us as we prepare for the winter and the 2021 cruise ship season.