



PORT CALL Summer 2013

SEAFARERS & INTERNATIONAL HOUSE
Serving Seafarers, Sojourners and Community

Christmas-at-Sea Gift Satchels

Each satchel contains

- 1 sweatshirt
- 3 pairs of socks
- 1 casual pullover shirt
- 1 knit winter cap
- 1 can of nuts or 1 large chocolate bar, and
- 1 signed Christmas card

25 satchels filled by your congregation, your office or your neighbors would bring joy to the entire crew of a merchant ship

Contact Noreen Fleming for satchels and further information at 212-677-4800 (ext. 1218) or nfleming@sihnyc.org

No Section 811 Shore Access Rules

Wonder what happened to those rules requiring port security plans to include a system of shore access for seafarers, pilots, labor unions and port chaplains through the terminals in a timely manner at no cost to the individual?

Well, to the credit of one Coast Guard officer asked this question during the Shipping 2013 Conference in Stamford CT last March, he answered that no such rules were planned. Instead, Coast Guard COTPs¹ would encourage the terminals to provide this access on a case-by-case basis, and when necessary, the COPTs would convene meetings between the pertinent parties to resolve any disputes.

Section 811 of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 states that each facility security plan approved under section 70103(c) of title 46, United States Code, shall provide a system for seamen assigned to a vessel at that facility, pilots, and representatives of seamen's welfare and labor organizations to board and depart the vessel through the facility in a timely manner at no cost to the individual.

Initially, the Coast Guard had expressed concern about the meaning of "system", "timeliness" and "no cost to the individual", and tasked the National Maritime Security Advisory Committee to provide appropriate definitions and

clarifications. NMSAC accomplished this assignment in May 2011, and the Coast Guard expressed its gratitude to the NMSAC and stated that "it was anxious to get rule making underway."¹

That was pretty much the last

arriving in U.S. ports do not, as a rule, enjoy timely, free access between the ship gangway and the terminal gate. Given the short period of time available to the seafarers to get off the ship, the opportunity for them to meet with the COPT or other



One of the best services our port chaplains offer to seafarers is getting them off the ship for an hour or two. It's so important to their well-being.

word heard from the Coast Guard on Section 811 until March 2013: "No rules are planned."

The tacit understanding shared around table in Stamford was that the Coast Guard, terminal operators and ship agents and ship operators all knew how important shore access was for the seafarers, but nobody could afford to go on record recommending any limitation on port security, perceived or imagined, without incurring the wrath of the Department of Homeland Security.

Yet, seafarers aboard ships

pertinent parties is virtually non-existent.

Port chaplains already have to wait an hour or more after the ship's arrival for the Coast Guard and the Customs and Border Patrol to "clear" the ship, its cargo and its crew, before they can board the ship. That doesn't mean, however, that they are "cleared" to travel off their ship. Frequently, the port chaplains are not allowed to park their vans, loaded with cell phones, newspapers and other supplies, near the ship. Either they have to wait for a

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SEAFARERS & INTERNATIONAL HOUSE
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A Lutheran mission for seafarers and sojourners, seeking to nurture the human spirit and foster human dignity. This mission is accomplished through pastoral care, hospitality, social assistance, advocacy and prayer, offered in ports in Baltimore, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island, and in an 84-room guesthouse in Manhattan.

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Preparing for Pirates in the Gulf of Aden

A seafarer offered an account of what it's like to sail through the pirate-infested waters of the Gulf of Aden:

Two days before we enter the GOA, all traps and barricades were set up, barb wire all over

the ship's railings, fire hoses spraying hot sea water 24 hours non-stop; doors were all welded, stairs were closed, 50 gallon drums obstructing passageways, pipes greased so pirates would have difficulty

climbing, all portholes covered with metal shields and sandbags surrounding the bridge. The ship was like full of thorns around its whole body.

Crew members are assigned to different watch schedules and wear helmets with night vision binoculars. The first night of navigating the GOA was very scary.

One day before we reached the Suez Canal, considered a safe zone, we received news from the radio that a ship behind us in the convoy was hijacked. We were blessed that nothing happened to our ship, but we were saddened to hear the news of the other ship.

There are no easy answers to piracy, but the emotional toll on seafarers is manifest. They need to be in our prayers.



Armed pirates in fast skiffs – a fearful sight

No Section 811 Rules (continued from page 1)

port security officer to lead their van to the ship or they have to park their van at the gate and wait for a port security van to drive them. Keep in mind that the chaplain's van has already been registered with the terminal facility.

Moreover, at quite a number of port terminals, the port chaplain cannot enter unless the ship

agent has placed his or her name on the terminal's daily list of approved visitors. Never mind that the port chaplain has a TWIC and has seen the gate security guard countless times, if the chaplain's name is not on the daily visitor list, he or she will not be given access to the seafarers.

No, the ad hoc system of shore

access is not working well. And apparently an Act of Congress won't remedy the problem.

1. COPT = Captain of the Port

2. John C.W. Bennett, "NMSAV Makes Recommendations on Seafarer Shore Access", *MARITIME PROFESSIONAL*, May 20, 2011, www.maritimeprofessional.com.

Christopher V. Roehrer, Director
Development and Communications

Financial Implications of Port Security

The reality is that port security means more time and greater expense needed to reach out to seafarers with pastoral care, hospitality, social assistance, advocacy and prayer. It can be very frustrating for our port chaplains.

If it frustrates you as well, the QR code reader at the right is your opportunity to help us

with these port security-related costs. Scan this image with your smart phone, and it will connect you to the donation page of our website, if you wish to make a gift.

Government and business invest heavily to safeguard the arrival of imported cargo, but not much to safeguard the humanity of foreign seafarers. But you can.



Everything Old is New Again



*Rev. Marsh Luther Drege
Pastor and Executive Director*

That “everything old is new again” is certainly true here at Seafarers & International House.

Identified in our 1873 charter as an immigrant house, Seafarers & International House is again engaged in the ministry to immigrants through a recent Post

Release Empowerment Program” (PREP) grant from Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS).

This grant will allow us to add a full-time certified social worker to our staff, enabling us to assist those asylum seekers who are recently released from detention: helping them with employment and long-term housing, accompanying them through the immigration legal process and connecting them with community resources to strengthen their language skills and tend to their medical needs.

Actually, we have been serving asylum seekers through our MSW interns for the past three years.

This mission has taken on new urgency with the introduction of

a pilot program initiated by LIRS and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) beginning this June. This pilot program will expedite the ICE’s release of vulnerable detainees from detention centers, and in some cases, avoid detention altogether.

This early release initiative is driven largely by federal budget pressures and will, of course, place greater demands on our mission funding resources.

It’s a challenge we accept with great enthusiasm. After all, the Lutheran Church’s commitment to care for refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants has never wavered. Our Presiding Bishop, the Rev. Mark Hanson, has reminded us that St. Paul calls on us to “welcome one

another, just as Jesus Christ has welcomed you, to the glory of God.” (Romans 15:7).

Our Lutheran tradition calls on all of us to uphold the Biblical mandate: “When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt’.(Leviticus 19: 33-34) And in Matthew 25, Jesus himself identifies with aliens: “I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

So please join me rejoicing in this opportunity to make that which was old, new again.

Peace,

Marsh Luther Drege

Even the Guesthouse Becomes New Again

Last May, final touches were made to the mezzanine of the guesthouse. The improvements include three new administrative offices, a small conference room, a new library and Internet cafe with comfortable chairs and a large screen TV, and two fully rebuilt restroom facilities.

The re-opening of the mezzanine follows the renovation of the guesthouse lobby a year earlier and the renovation of the second floor conference center two years earlier.

The new lobby features a new reservation desk to speed up check-ins and check-outs, a new lounge and coffee bar and a distinctive new entrance to the Nordgren Chapel, which serves as home to Christ Lutheran Church and a convenient place

of worship for the folks staying in the guesthouse.

The new conference center on the second floor features a wireless overhead projector, room dividers and a newly renovated kitchen.



The refurbished mezzanine with an Internet cafe and large screen television looks down on a refurbished lobby with comfortable lounge

The renovation of these public areas completes the renovation of the guesthouse which began almost fifteen years ago with the refurbishment of each one of the 84 guestrooms and the installation of a comprehensive

fire and life-safety system, sprinklers and water tower.

True to its Lutheran heritage, Seafarers & International House did not spend tens of millions of dollars on these renovation projects. Instead, the total cost was \$1.5 million, and it was funded by a \$800,000 capital campaign in 1998-2001 and surplus funds generated by the guesthouse operation.

For seafarers who take a break between crew contacts and use the guesthouse as their *home away from home*, for asylum seekers finally released from detention warehouses, and for all our guests, the guesthouse is now very inviting.

And not one mission program was curtailed to accomplish these improvements!

U.S. Merchant Ships At Risk By Senate Inaction

On August 20, 2013, the MLC¹ 2006 will be effective, having been ratified by thirty member nations of the International Labor Organization, representing (as flag states) 33% of the world's shipping tonnage.

MLC 2006 requires a flag state to certify a ship's compliance with a full array of seafarer employment standards (i.e. minimum age; training, health, wages; hours, manning levels, recruitment, accommodation, food and catering, medical care; safety and on-board complaint procedures).

Moreover, MLC 2006 requires port states to inspect and detain ships registered by nations that haven't ratified MLC 2006. This is a key component of the convention, in that it precludes port states from offering "more favorable treatment" to ships of a non-party flag state that may

not have properly certified ships registered by them.

The United States is one of those non-ratifying countries.

Virtually all of the MLC 2006 standards have been in effect under U.S. law and collective bargaining agreements for years, and ratification of the Convention by the Senate ought to be routine.

The problem stems from an overriding concern by some Senators that ratification of any treaty will in some way weaken and derogate our Constitution. Similarly, the Senate has not ratified the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, the 1982 Convention on the Law of the Sea, and, rather shockingly, the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In the meantime, the U.S. Coast Guard has published a draft

Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular ("NVIC") setting forth policies and procedures for the inspection of U.S. vessels in voluntary compliance with MLC 2006.² Owners and operators of U.S. flagged ships may volunteer to have them inspected under this Coast Guard initiative in order to receive a voluntary MLC certificate. Foreign port states aren't re-

quired to accept this voluntary certificate, and starting this August 20th, U.S.-flag ships and their crews, may be subject to detention. The risk may be small, but given the impact, it is so unnecessary.

1. *Maritime Labor Convention*

2. *Jonathan K. Waldron and Patricia M. O'Neill, "US Implementation of MLC" BLANK & ROME LLP, May 22, 2013*

Ship Hits Tower



M/V Jolly Nero (ex. Maersk Alaska), a ro-ro container ship in port with the control tower in the background

Nine persons perished when the control tower in the Port of Genoa toppled after being struck by an Italian merchant ship maneuvering to leave port.

The M/V Jolly Nero, a 32,800 dwt container/ro-ro ship was leaving the Port of Genoa, assisted by two tugs with a port pilot at the helm when, inexplicably, the ship's engines failed, causing the ship to smash into the port's control tower. The 160-foot high tower collapsed and nine port workers were killed. Four more port workers were injured.

It is not clear how or why the

engines failed. Both the ship's captain and the pilot are being questioned.

Even with the apparent malfunction of the ship engines, the ship operator, Ignazio Messina & Co., questioned why the two tugs were not able to hold the medium-size ship given the calm weather conditions and the adequate water surface area for maneuvering.

It is not clear whether the tug captains had been questioned by the authorities.

There has also been speculation that the control tower may have been improperly constructed.

Bridge Hits Ship

Generally when ships and bridges come into contact, it's the ship that strikes. Last May 12th, it was the bridge that came down on top of the ship. The 690 ft. M/V HERBERT C. JACKSON suffered minor hull damage and was able to continue to

Dearborn with her cargo of iron pellets. The Jefferson Street bridge suffered heavy damage and is closed to traffic.

There were no injuries, but the bridge operator failed the alcohol breathalyzer test and was fired.



Day in the Life of a Port Chaplain

It started almost twenty years ago when Trinity Lutheran Church member Ruth Setaro volunteered to help a former port chaplain of Seafarers & International House: “There’s a ship in New Haven, go down and visit it and see what you can do.” So she did. Today, the seafarers who enter the ports in Connecticut recognize her as “Mom”. She coordinates the entire port mission program for Seafarers & International House in New York, New Jersey, Philadelphia, Baltimore and New England.

“The early days were different,” she recalls, “no Department of Homeland Security and no strict security at the port. I could

drive down to greet it. Her smile and words of welcome usually break any barriers with the seafarers entering the port for the first time. She asks them what they need.

The requests can be unique. She recalls one time a ship came in and the captain had a pet collie. He had finished his contract with the shipping company and was flying home. “He asked me to take him to Hartford to get special papers so he could take his dog home on the plane.” Setaro also took him to buy a gigantic crate for the dog’s passage. Other times, the seafarers ask for a worship service, and Ruth asks her pastor, Rev. Ryan Mills of Trinity



“Mom Ruth” and a group of seafarers to whom she ministers and for whom she deeply cares.

drive right down to the ship.” Today, she has to be cleared to greet ships, and just hopes the authorities will allow the crew off the ship.

Her days can vary greatly, sometimes visiting five ships a day, sometimes none. If a ship arrives in the middle of the night, Ruth Setaro gets up and

Lutheran to preside over the communion service.

“One of the most important things we do,” Setaro says, “is just to listen. When I can help them out and make them happy, it’s very rewarding work.”

Wendy Healy
Mission Advocate

Not Just Pirates in GOA

It must be a terrifying, to hear and feel the steel hull of a huge merchant ship ripping apart, even more frightening possibly than a pirate attack.

On June 17, 2013, the MV MOL COMFORT, a huge Mitsui OSK Lines containership cracked and broke in half in the Gulf of Aden, 200 miles from the Yemeni coast in heavy seas with 36 foot waves and strong winds. The vessel was enroute

Navy in Bahrain, at least one section was on fire and sinking, and cannot be towed.

The possible causes of the hull fracture are numerous. The MV COMFORT was just built in 2008, and ships are designed to handle long period of large waves that crest on the bow and stern, leaving a trough amidships. This creates “sagging” that puts extreme tension on the keel and compression at deck level. The



The MV MOL Comfort about to break into two sections

from Singapore to Jeddah with a load of 4,500 containers.

The entire crew, 11 Russians, one Ukrainian and 14 Filipinos, escaped on two life rafts and a lifeboat and were rescued by Hapag-Lloyd’s MV YANTIAN EXPRESS, apparently without serious injury. They are being taken to Colombo, Sri Lanka.¹ Beyond the crew’s rescue, there are conflicting reports about the condition of the ship and the cause of the casualty.

Early reports indicated that both sections of the ship had sunk, but later reports indicate that they were afloat about 19 miles apart and will be towed to safety. According to the U.S.

opposite “hogging” occurs when the crest of the wave moves to the center of the ship and the trough of the waves are at bow and stern, putting extreme tension on the deck.

Aside from possible defects in ship design or construction, the only other explanation for the casualty is that the containers were improperly loaded or were weighed falsely. If the heavier containers had been loaded on the bow and stern, and the lighter ones in the center, the vessel would be hogging even in still water.

1. “Sections of MOL Comfort Still Afloat”, SEA NEWS TURKEY, June 18, 2013, www.seanews.com.tr

13th Annual Awards Banquet

For their service to the maritime industry and support of seafarer welfare, Robert Bugbee and Michael Jewell were honored last April 18th by Seafarers & International House at its 13th Annual *Setting the Course* Awards Banquet. The event took place in Manhattan at the New York Athletic Club with 250 guests attending to honor these two recipients of the 2013 Outstanding Friend of Seafarers Award.

Each year in April, Seafarers & International House gathers the maritime community together to honor two of its leaders, one from management and one from labor. "This joint support of our port mission is very important and greatly appreciated," commented Rev. Marsh

Drege, executive director. "We are very proud to have Robert Bugbee and Mike Jewell in our corner."

Robert Bugbee joined Scorpio Tankers in 2009 as its president and director with over 26 years of experience in the shipping industry. Prior to that he was a partner at Ospraie Management LLP, OMI Corp. and Gotaas-Larsen Shipping Corp.

Michael Jewell, a graduate of Calhoun MEBA Engineering School, was elected President of Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association, having sailed with them since 1982. He retired from the United States Naval Reserves in 2012 with the rank of Captain.

The invocation was given by



Robert Bugbee, Marsh Drege, Mike Jewell and Chris Roehrer share a moment of celebration.

Rev. Robert A. Rimbo, Bishop of the Metropolitan New York Synod, ELCA. The United States Coast Guard Academy Glee Club, performing under

the direction Dr. Robert G. Newton, offered a wonderful musical tribute to the honorees and guests.

Sharing God's Love with Seafarers at Christmas

Christmas-at-Sea - a maritime tradition, but a little special at Seafarers & International House, where seafarers receive satchels, filled with sweat shirts, casual shirts, watch caps, socks, nuts, chocolate and a Christmas card.

Nearly all the gifts come from the generosity of congregations whose members fill these satchels, sometimes a half dozen, sometimes 25 or more for the entire crew of one or more merchant ships and for the last two years, over 400 satchels

from the congregations of the Upper Susquehanna Synod of the ELCA in central Pennsylvania!

One group participating in this unique Christmas-at-Sea program is WELCA (Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), St. Timothy Lutheran Church in Wayne NJ. Over many years, nearly two dozen women meet in mid-October to pack over 50 Christmas-at-Sea satchels. After all presents were inserted in the satchels, the most important piece is inserted - a hand-signed Christmas card.

Debbie Anderson and Kathy Gormley, co-presidents of the group, said their knitters make hats and scarves all year long, and members of the group keep an eye out for holiday and back-to-school sales to purchase clothing and other items for the

satchels. "The seafarers exist in such limited conditions on the ships all year long, that at Christmas this is just a small token of what we can do to express God's love," said Eileen Smith, a St. Timothy's member. Rick Westerberg, son of one of the WELCA group members braves the traffic to deliver cartons of Christmas-at-Sea satchels from Wayne NJ to New York City.

St. Timothy Lutheran is one of the more than 100 churches that send filled satchels for Christmas-at-Sea. It's an example of how all of us can be the hands that do God's work.

And it's not too early to start. Keep an eye out for merchandise sales. Seafarers & International House supplies the satchels. Just call them.



For countless years, the kind ladies of WELCA St. Timothy Lutheran have lovingly gathered and packaged Christmas gifts for seafarers

International Trade at What Price?



Rescuing a victim from the collapsed Bangladesh garment factory, a young girl, maybe eleven years old, earning less than \$1.35 per 10⁺-hour day

The April 24th collapse of the garment factory in a suburb of Bangladesh’s capital, Dhaka, has captured media attention. The death toll exceeds 1,100 persons, mostly women, and follows on the heels of a fire at a nearby garment factory that killed over 100 workers.

The stability of the five-story building was compromised when the owner added three floors without the necessary construction permits. The factory owner blamed the government, the government blamed the owner and the giant retail brands, whose clothing is Bangladeshi made, continued to pontificate about how committed they are to safety in the workplace.

The author of *OVERDRESSED: THE SHOCKINGLY HIGH COST OF CHEAP FASHION*², blames us, the American consumer, men and women. We have closets stuffed with clothes worn once or twice at most. On average we buy 164 articles per year. Most are poorly made. If we wear them more

than once, they’re likely to fray and fall apart. These fashionista items are too cheap to repair and they’re thrown out.

In the process, however, the garment industry in this Country is virtually extinct – less than 3% of our clothing is made here. Also in the process, the global environment suffers from the frenetic manufacture of clothing in countries with little or no regard for pollution.

Working conditions in the \$20 billion industry overseas are grim, a result of government corruption, desperate need for jobs and industry indifference. Minimum wages for garment workers are among the lowest in the world at \$38 a month.³ Even entry level wages for foreign seafarers, hardly touted as generous, begin at \$400 a month.

The point, however, is that we drive these exploitive practices. After a few weeks, the garment factory collapse will no longer be front-page news. The major retailers in this Country will assuage us into believing that

they’re instituting new safety standards, and the disaster soon will be forgotten here.

How do we reconcile our drive for bargain-priced clothes, toys, food products and household goods with our humanity and our stewardship?

It has been 14 years since the ELCA Churchwide Assembly overwhelmingly adopted the social statement on economic justice,⁴ calling on us to assess our economic institutions and activities in light of the moral imperative to seek a sufficient, sustainable livelihood for all.

The application of this moral imperative may not be crystal clear in today’s complex global economy. International trade between developed and undeveloped countries, mutually beneficial in the long term, will produce some dislocation and imbalance in the short term.

But can we be comfortable in that fourth pair of shoes or that fifteenth dress shirt, knowing that it we got it for a song, because it was made by child laborers? One person’s great bargain may be another person’s great burden.

1. Emran Hossain, “Bangladesh Building Collapse Leaves Hundreds Missing as Search Ends,” *HUFFINGTON POST*, May 15, 2013

2. Elizabeth L. Cline, *OVERDRESSED: THE SHOCKINGLY HIGH COST OF CHEAP FASHION*, Penguin Group USA, New York 2012

3. Ruma Paul, “Bangladesh Factories Shut by Worker Protest to Re-Open,” *REUTERS US EDITION*, May 13, 2013

4. *ECONOMIC LIFE: SUFFICIENT SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD FOR ALL*, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, August 20, 1999

Christopher V. Roehrer, Director
Development and Communications

Mission Rationale

Within the shipping industry there is often little concern for seafarer welfare beyond recruitment and productivity, and within the government there is little concern for their welfare beyond homeland security.

Within the private prison industry there is little concern for the welfare of refugees and asylum seekers beyond lucrative contracts to warehouse innocent people, and within the government there is little concern for their welfare beyond homeland security.

Welcoming and offering hospitality to a seafarer who ultimately will return home, remembering his or her experience in a United States maritime port is a small, but powerful foreign policy.

Welcoming and offering hospitality to a refugee or asylum seeker is a small, but powerful affirmation of the values upon which this nation is based.

Welcoming and offering hospitality to the stranger is basic to virtually all faith traditions.

Mission Highlights

Over 19,000 seafarers were visited last year and nearly 1,200 nights of guestroom accommodations were given to refugees last year.

More than 83% of total expenditures were spent on mission programs and services and less than 17% of total expenditures on administration and fundraising.

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For 140 Years



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