

THE Anchor

NEWSLETTER

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THE HEART OF A CHAPLAIN

by Lee Gallion

When we step onto the gangway of a ship, we never really know what to expect. We pray for a good reception and for God to give us the words to encourage the crew and share the services we offer, but we can never be certain how we will be received.

On one visit to a cargo ship that comes to our port regularly, I was greeted at the top of the gangway by a cadet who must have been new. When I introduced myself and explained that I was from Global Maritime Ministries in New Orleans, offering free services to crew members, he looked doubtful, almost as if he did not believe me. He even asked me to repeat myself.

After checking with his officer, I was escorted to the bridge. To my surprise, the captain greeted me with a firm handshake and a smile. He remembered me from the previous year, when I had taken his crew ashore. Though I could not recall him, since we meet with hundreds of seafarers each year, he spoke warmly of his appreciation for our ministry. He kept shaking my hand as he talked, and I began to wonder if he would ever let go.

Later, I had the opportunity to take some of his crew to Walmart for provisions and personal items and then show them a few sights around the city. It turned out to be one of the best visits I have had since becoming a chaplain.

That day reminded me of an important truth: whether we are welcomed with open arms or met with hesitation, our mission does not change. We represent Christ, and He has called us to "go and make disciples." Our faithfulness cannot depend on how we are received.

Jesus himself showed grace and respect to those he met, offering mercy to all who would receive it. That same spirit is what we seek to carry into every ship visit.

I believe this is the true heart of a chaplain: never knowing exactly what to expect, yet always offering mercy and grace; sharing with gentleness, yet trusting God to use our witness. As 1 Peter 3:15 reminds us, "But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect."



Matthew Stegen is a river pilot with the Crescent River Port Pilots Association. In his free time, he volunteers with Global Maritime Ministries. Matthew enjoys visiting ships and loves connecting with seafarers.

I was raised by parents who can be described as having achieved the "American Dream." I was blessed to have two loving parents, a younger sister, a dog, and a nice suburban house. All we were missing was a white-picket fence! However, growing up I knew that there had to be more to life. My parents did everything they could to ensure my sister and I had an amazing childhood. We competed in nearly every sport, worked hard to have good grades, and traveled the country as a family on some amazing vacations. Our family's relationship with God could best be described as "cultural Christianity." We went to church monthly; however, developing a relationship with God was not a top priority. I began to be serious about my relationship with God in the seventh Grade. One of my best friends on the swim team began asking me serious questions about my faith, and I decided to surrender my life to Jesus!

Growing up, I was always fascinated with transportation. Whether it be planes, trains, or ships, I wanted to be able to drive them all! In 2016, I graduated high school and decided to study at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. During my senior year at the academy, there was true revival on campus, and I continue to be amazed by God's impact over the campus today. After graduating, I sailed for three years as Third Mate on the M/T Empire State. I was truly blessed with the job and thankful for the support of my crew. In late 2023, I was given the opportunity to train as an apprentice with the Crescent River Port Pilots Association. While the apprenticeship was rigorous, it was extremely valuable and necessary for success as a pilot. Following the year-long apprenticeship, I was promoted to an independent deputy pilot.

As a Louisiana state pilot, I primarily work with crews ranging from a multitude of nationalities. Most



PILOTING WITH A PURPOSE

by Matthew Stegen

common are Filipinos, Indians, Chinese, and Eastern Europeans. Through my work as a pilot, God put it on my heart to better serve the seafarers. I have experienced the challenges they face being overseas away from their home communities for months at a time. The Bible is consistent; we are to show God's love to aliens, orphans, and widows. Exodus 22:21 commands, "Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner, for you were foreigners in Egypt." Hebrews 13:1-2 states, "Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers." In New Orleans, we are blessed to have Global Maritime Ministries, a Christ-focused seafarer center that is committed to providing crews physical, mental, and spiritual support. Seafarers are in a tremendous position to minister to other seafarers! If you feel called, I would certainly encourage you to consider volunteering with a local Christ-focused port ministry. For a worldwide seafarer center directory along with great resources, download the Tied2Shore app on the App Store or visit tied2shore.com!

I believe there are four reactions people have when presented the gospel: cynical, civil, curious, or

committed. On my first ship as a cadet, the captain and other officers were cynical and even hostile towards the gospel. After that voyage, I was discouraged and questioned whether I was going into the right career field. Thankfully, most of the other ships I worked on were not that way and fell in the civil category. They respected Jesus and his work but didn't want to have a meaningful relationship with him. The scary thing is that Christians, too, can easily fall into this category when being led by the world instead of the Holy Spirit. One of the moments I am most thankful for in port ministry is finding a seafarer that is curious about Christ. When they ask questions or ask for prayers or a Bible, you can see God softening their hearts. While it doesn't always result in a gospel acceptance in the moment, you can see God is planting seeds in their hearts. Finally, when you run across committed seafarers, it is refreshing and ignites your spirit. Hearing stories of ways God is moving in their ship, family, or community is extremely encouraging and ignites your faith!



Pray for James from Samoa who heard the gospel and put his faith in Christ! He had been wrestling with sin and rejoiced to hear what Christ has done for him. He understood the message clearly and responded with humility, recognizing his need for salvation and trusting that Christ offers it. We gave him new believer materials and his own Bible. Pray that he would grow in his faith and have boldness to share with others on his ship. Praise God for moving in his life!

Christmas at the Port



Help us share Christmas and the gospel hope
to the nations coming through our ports!



We are giving **1,000 Christmas presents**
to seafarers and port workers.
Each present will include a
New Testament, devotional, and more!

*A gift of \$10 provides
one present for a seafarer.*

*You can provide presents for an
entire crew with a **gift of \$200.***

*Would you consider making a donation to help
us share Christmas at the Port this year?*

*Send signed cards to add a personal touch that
means so much to those at sea for Christmas!*

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- Gordon Logue by Sharon Simmons
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IN HONOR

- Mary McAnally by Deborah McKinney
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