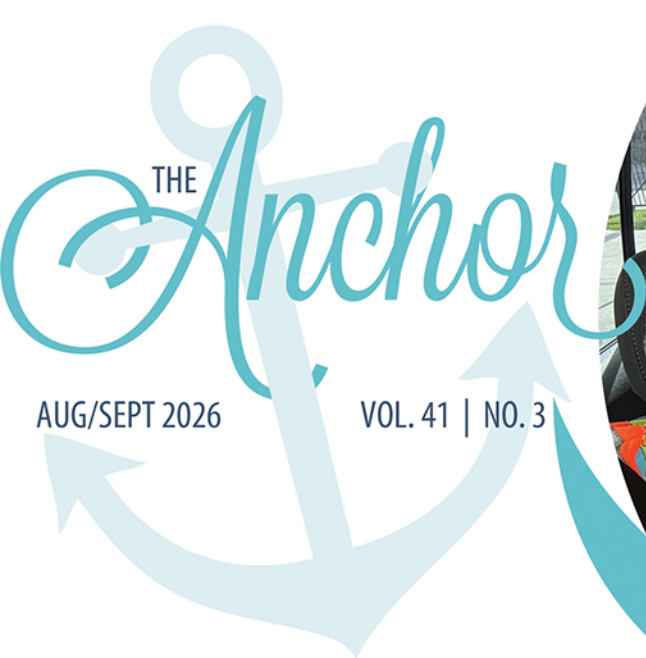




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A POWERFUL REMINDER *by Lee Gallion*

During one of our daily visits to the cargo ships in port, I was accompanied by a former chaplain, Landon, and some volunteers from his church in Tennessee. Once on board, we began explaining the services we offer to the crew. As we talked, the captain came into the lounge to tell us he would not be able to meet with us because he had to attend to some cargo issues. Before leaving, however, he instructed one of the galley crew to prepare some Filipino bread for us to enjoy. The Filipino cook's name was Marvin.

Normally, seafarers from the Philippines are very welcoming and open to sharing stories about their families, their experiences at sea, and their faith. Marvin was no different. As we talked, we asked Marvin about his faith, and he explained that he had been raised in a Catholic family. As the conversation continued, we discovered that he was trusting in his church, his family background, and his own good works to get him to heaven.

Landon recognized this as an opportunity to share several passages from the books of John and Romans that speak about the consequences of sin and God's love for us. As he asked Marvin a few questions about his life, Marvin began to realize that he was a sinner, just like the rest of us, and that no

amount of good works could earn him a place in heaven. Landon explained that Jesus came to earth to live a perfect life and to die on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. He also explained what Jesus meant when He said we must be "born again" and what it truly means to have a personal relationship with Him.

As they continued talking, Marvin began to understand that salvation comes by faith, not by works. Landon then asked him if he wanted to know for certain that he would spend eternity in heaven. Marvin said he did. Landon led Marvin in a prayer of repentance and faith, and Marvin accepted Christ as his Savior right there in the lounge. We all rejoiced with Marvin and celebrated the decision he had made.

The next day, we returned to the ship to encourage Marvin and present him with a new believer's workbook. The workbook will help him grow in his new faith in Jesus. While we were there, Marvin's friend and fellow crew member, Alvin, who was already a believer, came into the lounge. We told him about Marvin's decision and suggested that the two of them study through the workbook together. Both Alvin and Marvin thought it was a great idea. Watching God transform a life aboard that ship was a powerful reminder of why we do what we do.

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Robert Roussel

We often come across seafarers who are unable to leave their ship for one reason or another. In many cases, this is because they do not possess a U.S. visa, usually due to

the cost associated with obtaining one. It is fairly common for our chaplains to meet entire crews without visas, making them unable to leave the ship. I recently had a memorable encounter with one such crew. "Captain Aung" was the captain of the vessel and he contacted me, explaining that his crew was unable to leave the ship for the reason mentioned above. They are from Myanmar, and most of the crew would be going home after completing one more long voyage to China when they depart from our port.

Captain Aung said his crew wanted to buy a few things, including chocolate, nuts, and vitamins. However, since they were unable to leave the ship, there was no way for them to get these items. I offered to go to the store and shop for them. This may not sound like anything special, but for them it is a huge deal. While there are businesses, often called ship chandlers, that provide this service, they charge a hefty fee. When we offer to do it, most seafarers, including Captain Aung, are shocked that we do not charge anything. We simply ask that they cover the cost of the items themselves.

We go to the store, buy a few things, and bring them back to the ship. So far, it sounds simple enough, right? Well, if you have followed our ministry for any length of time, you have probably already realized that shopping for approximately twenty crew members who will be at sea for another six weeks is anything but a typical trip to store. I spent the next two hours in Walmart, communicating constantly with Captain Aung. I sent him photos of different bags of candy, vitamins, and other items so he could choose exactly what the crew wanted. By the time I finished, anyone looking for fish oil or assorted bags of candy



would have been surprised to find the shelves nearly empty. The total for the shopping trip was just over \$1,300.

With a full buggy, I sat at the self-checkout waiting for the captain to confirm they were willing to spend that much on the items they had requested. Once he confirmed everything, I headed toward the ship, first stopping at our ministry center to pick up some Bibles in their native language, Burmese. When I arrived at the terminal where the ship was docked, I tucked the Bibles into my vest pocket and loaded all the bags onto a folding cart. I had to get a little creative, tying some of the bags together so they would not fall off.

There was quite a distance between the parking lot and the ship. I had to cross the street, pull the cart up the levee, cross the bridge to the dock, and then figure out how to get everything aboard. I was very grateful that the captain had two crew members meet me on the secure side of the gate to take the cart from me. As we walked across the dock, we talked. It was obvious how much this meant to them. They explained that many of the items were intended for their children back home. In fact, many of the vitamins they purchased were children's vitamins. When we arrived at the ship's office, the crew immediately began unloading the bags.

Captain Aung greeted me, expressed his gratitude, and reimbursed me for everything we had purchased. I was impressed to see that they had created a spreadsheet showing each crew member's

purchases and the corresponding costs. The captain invited me to sit down and have coffee with him. As we talked, he continued to express how thankful he and his crew were for our ministry's willingness to help them in this way. It gave me a wonderful opportunity to explain how we are able to provide these services through the generous support of churches and individuals. More importantly, it gave me the opportunity to explain why we do what we do.

I was able to share the gospel with him and several other crew members as they continued sorting through their purchases. Captain Aung listened attentively and engaged in the conversation. He explained that he and the rest of the crew were Buddhists. Although he was not ready to place his faith in Christ, I am hopeful the Lord will use this experience in his life and in the lives of his crew as they continue to encounter God's Word. As an added bonus, after things settled down and the crew returned to work, I made my way back to the gangway to retrieve my folding cart. There, a young seafarer noticed the Burmese Bible in my vest pocket and asked me about it. Once again, God had opened the door for me to share about our ministry and the hope found in Christ.

"In the same way,
let your light shine before others,
so that they may see your good works
and give glory to your Father
who is in heaven."
Matthew 5:16



RIVER PARISHES CENTER REBUILD

by Philip Vandercook

It is 6:00 in the morning and I am waiting for a sub-contractor to arrive to continue work on the rebuilding project. As I sit here, I am praying over each room. I know it simply looks like a lot of plywood, studs, and hanging wires. However, I see a place for seafarers to get off the ship, contact their families, and hear the Gospel. I see shelves filled with Bibles available for seafarers in their heart language. I see a conference room where we can pray with people, hear their needs, and talk about a loving God. I see a kitchen where folks can find nourishment for their bodies and souls. I see an apartment where a volunteer chaplain

or staff member can live while investing in others. I see a place that feels like a home away from home. I see a place where we can work with, and minister to, our local maritime community. My prayer is simple: "Please, God, let each person who steps through the door of this building see Jesus."

Will you join me in praying as we start the final phase of the rebuilding project? It has been a long journey, but the end is in sight. Will you please pray specifically for the following needs?

1. Ask God to guide us as we seek funding to pay for the renovations and for the furnishings for this building.
2. Ask God to send someone to live in the apartment and assist

with the ministry.

3. Please pray that every person that walks through the door sees Jesus.

If the timeline holds, we expect to complete renovations in October! Watch for more exciting updates. You can help us reach this goal by providing for a square foot of the building for \$150 or a square yard for \$1,350. Thank you for your prayers and support!



SERVING THOSE THE WORLD RARELY SEES: INTERVIEW

Christian History magazine published an issue on the topic of Christianity on the seas. Along with accessible history that focuses on the seas, written by historians, it features an interview with one of our chaplains!

Maritime ministry continues to be one of the most international, ecumenical, and quietly transformative expressions of Christian care. To explore how this ministry has evolved and why it matters today, Dr. Jason Zuidema, executive director of the North American Maritime Ministry Association (NAMMA), gathered three leaders deeply involved in port chaplaincy: Chaplain Michelle DePooter in Montreal; Reverend Stephen McKinney in New Orleans; and Deacon Paul Rosenblum in Charleston. All three have served on NAMMA's board, shaping national and international collaboration in seafarers' welfare.



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Special Gifts

Memorials

- **Dr. Tessie Behrens** by Kerney Craft
- **Herbert Bovia** by Teresa Bovia
- **Gary & Angela Ewert** by Margie Ewert
- **Betty Fortenberry** by Robert Purvis
- **Evelyn Heineman** by Philip & Sandy Vandercook
- **Robert & Diane Lemay** by Robert & Elaine Lemay
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- **Austin Reviere, Sr.** by Robert Purvis
- **Radie Reviere** by Robert Purvis
- **Benjamin Osborn Sabine** by Phyllis Dunaway
- **Ellis Purvis** by Robert Purvis
- **Peter Purvis** by Robert Purvis
- **Gladys Roos** by Robert Purvis
- **Lin Purvis** by Robert Purvis
- **Mrs. Ruth Adams Stuart** by John & Jennifer Lassetter
- **Sara & Homer Thomason** by Paul Thomason
- **Charles Vandercook** by Patricia Vandercook

Honorariums

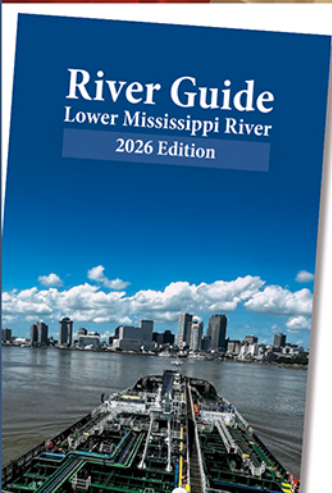
- **Lee Gallion** by Allen and Anna Puckett
- **Debbie McKinney** by Jim and Mary McAnally



We hosted the annual Port Ministries International Conference in New Orleans and focused on deepening our relationships with God, with each other, and with those we serve in the port.



During the annual North American Maritime Ministry Conference, Stephen led a panel session focused on understanding today's maritime challenges while keeping seafarer welfare at the heart of the discussion.



We are excited to announce the printing of the first edition of our River Guide, thanks to a partnership of the Crescent River Port Pilots' Association. This booklet, which will be handed out by river pilots bringing ships into port, is full of helpful information for seafarers.



BUDGET UPDATE

As of July 31

Thank you for giving!

Total Income: **\$240,282.54**

Budget Needs: **\$303,333.31**



PROFESSIONS OF FAITH

6

GOSPEL SHARED

215



SCRIPTURES DISTRIBUTED

459



SEAFARER CONTACTS

7,498

VISITING CENTERS

3,037



SHIPS ASSISTED

495

SHIP VISITS

336



PORT WORKER CONTACTS

247

VISITING CENTERS

139



COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

67

MINISTRY SNAPSHOT As of July 31

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