



Introduction to The Mission to Seafarers



seasunday@missiontoseafarers.org



Help us to celebrate their sacrifices



Sea Sunday

Sea Sunday is the global celebration of the enduring and vital work of the Mission to Seafarers. It has been happening every year for over 160 years and is our biggest fundraising event of the year. On Sea Sunday, your church can become a powerhouse of prayer and fundraising. Each year in July you can join with thousands of other Christians across the world who come together to pray, celebrate and fundraise to support those seafarers who are working so hard for us.

The Mission to Seafarers are there for the men and women who keep the world supplied but we need your help.

Even before the global Covid pandemic led to seafarers having restrictions on access to shore leave, issues such as piracy, shipwreck, abandonment and separation from loved ones were just a few of the problems merchant seafarers could face. In 2020, as nation after nation went into lockdowns of varying severity, many of these unseen keyworkers were required to work beyond their contract lengths with many spending a second Christmas away from home and sometimes not even having stepping on land.

Around the world, The Mission to Seafarers provides help and support to the 1.5 million men and women who face danger every day to keep our global economy afloat. We work in over 200 ports caring for seafarers of all ranks, nationalities and beliefs. Through our global network of chaplains, staff and volunteers we offer practical, emotional and spiritual support to seafarers through ship visits, drop-in centres and a range of welfare and emergency support services.

‘ Around the world, The Mission to Seafarers provides help and support to the 1.5 million men and women...’



Case study

The first time that the Mission to Seafarers team in the UAE became aware of the issues facing the crew of the MT Iba was back in May 2019. We received a WhatsApp message to our office from a seafarer reporting that his company had ceased to send supplies, be in communication or pay any of the remaining crew on-board for a period of five months. A not uncommon experience for us here where regular reports of abandonment or injustice give us a busy caseload month on month. This crew had affectively been abandoned. Our first response is to gather as much information and then we make a short and medium term plan for how best we can help.

In this case there were five crew on board. The Chief Engineer Naywin from Myanmar was the lead spokesperson and he and the 2nd Engineer, Riasat Ali from Pakistan had been under contract on the vessel at the time of first contact for two years, with at least five months of these without support. The remaining three Indian crew had been sent on as relief just

a few months earlier as the trouble began to escalate, only to find themselves stationary at the anchorage eight miles from the coast of Sharjah for the entire time they had been on board.

We quickly realised that the crew needed food, water and fuel supplies urgently which we organised and delivered within 24 hours whilst we made a plan for a visit to meet with them at the anchorage in the days following. The life of a seafarer can be lonely and isolated at the best of times, yet when we visited we were the first face-to-face contact that they had received for more than three months. They were tired and fearful but delighted to see us.

We learnt that the owner was facing a significant financial crisis and that this was not the first time that this company had neglected to support one of their crews having abandoned four vessels back in 2017.

From that first visit began the slow process of advocating on their behalf to seek to find new owners and to lobby the authorities to

‘ The life of a seafarer can be lonely and isolated at the best of times, yet when we visited we were the first face-to-face contact that they had received for more than three months. ’



find a way for them to be paid what they were due and repatriated to their families. The process of seeking recompense can be painstakingly slow and frustrating and with the vessel out of sight the issues facing these seafarers, and others like them can be hidden. Over the subsequent months we had lots of false starts with potential new buyers and attempts to encourage the authorities to arrest the ship and auction her made little headway.

Then the pandemic struck and everything stopped.

Almost a year passed with us still visiting and providing supplies as often as we could, whilst they waited patiently for the storm of the coronavirus to pass. Yet at the beginning of 2021 they were still at the anchorage becoming more and more desperate when a literal storm late one January evening saw their main and secondary anchors fail. After a 12 hour battle with the conditions they found themselves stuck having run aground but no longer at the mercy of the waves.

When dawn broke they realised that they were not just run aground but found themselves 50 yards from a public beach in the Emirate of Umm Al Qwain. This sudden visibility led to a change of gear in the repatriation process. As they were no longer hidden from view, ordinary people began to ask about and support their cause. Within a week a new buyer had been found and after some frantic last-minute negotiations on the beach a deal was reached.

We are now only a matter of weeks away from their return to their homes and their families. Their wages have cleared the bank and been sent home, supplies have been plentiful and they have enjoyed engaging with the public who come to sit and walk and wave from the beach. Over the almost two years that has past since that first communication we have become friends. Oddly we will miss our regular visits and conversations but we will take encouragement that we played a small part in getting them a measure of justice and a chance to rebuild their lives with their families.



‘ We are now only a matter of weeks away from their return to their homes and their families. ’

Please make a donation to the Mission to Seafarers today



Caring for seafarers
around the world

Here is my Sea Sunday donation of:

£5 £25 £100 £500 Other £ _____

My cheque is enclosed and made payable to: The Mission to Seafarers.

Or please debit my credit/debit card: Visa/Mastercard (delete as appropriate)

Card number:

Expiry date: / Security number:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Contact details:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Please let us know if you are a UK taxpayer. The Gift Aid scheme means we can reclaim an extra 25% on your donations at no extra cost to you.

giftaid it

Yes I am a UK tax payer and would like The Mission to Seafarers to treat my past donations (in the last 4 years) and any donations that I make now or in the future as Gift Aid donations. The Mission to Seafarers will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that has been given. I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Keeping in touch

In addition to contacting you with administration information, such as when setting up a gift, making a donation or volunteering, we'd love to keep you posted with our news, activities and how you can help in other ways. We'll never sell or swap your details with anybody else. For more information see our privacy policy. Please indicate how you would like to hear from us by using the tick boxes below:

Via email Via telephone Via SMS Via post

Thank You. Please detach this form and send your donation to:

Freepost THE MISSION TO SEAFARERS

www.missiontoseafarers.org





Thank you!

for supporting Sea Sunday

Your support today will allow us to reach even more seafarers and their families who are in need.

Over 1.5 million men and women work at sea. The work they do is at the heart of supporting our economy and moving the goods we use every day. A seafarer's life is often lonely and can be dangerous. With your vital help it doesn't have to be friendless or without hope. You can be a neighbour to crews everywhere in need.

Send in your Sea Sunday donations using the form attached.



www.missiontoseafarers.org | [f](https://www.facebook.com/missiontoseafarers) [themissiontoseafarers](https://www.facebook.com/missiontoseafarers)

Registered charity no: 1123613 (England and Wales) and SCO41938 (Scotland)