

The Master's Mariner



Summer 2023

News from *Mission to Seafarers Sydney*

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Our Impact in Numbers - 2022

Image: Seafarers enjoying our free bus



After the challenges of Covid-19 lockdowns, we are continuing to offer seafarers hope and rejuvenation through restoring our past services and maintaining popular ones started during covid. Our financial and volunteer support levels have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, but we have returned to full staffing. We continue to be grateful for our blessings and present to you this Impact summary:

Welcomed	Over 1600 seafarers	from 67 nations
Vaccinated	1130 Seafarers	from 124 vessels
Visited	237 Seafarers	in hotels hospitals & vessels
Delivered	Goods worth \$75,014	to 171 vessels
Transported	1202 Seafarers	b/w Ports & Mission
Parcels	Over 360	collected by Seafarers

To find out more, join us for our AGM!

Exciting Year Ahead –

Annual General Meeting & Celebratory Lunch - May 9;

Morning tea to celebrate the

Coronation of Our Patron – His

Majesty, King Charles III – May 8

Sydney Mission to Seafarers Annual

Luncheon - June 16;

Seafarers Sunday Service - July 9.



Thank You to All our Volunteers and Supporters in 2022

A special thanks to those who contributed to our **2022 Seafarers Christmas Appeal** and to the over 70 guests who attended our **2022 Thanksgiving afternoon tea**. Thank you to the hosts, our Mission partners St Anne's Ryde Anglican Church, who also kindly gave us a gift of \$4500 in acknowledgement of the tough times for seafarers.

Special guest Ku-ring-gai Council Deputy Mayor Barbara Ward said it was impressive how much support the small team at Mission to Seafarers was able to provide. Rev Tay said this was thanks to the hard work of our dedicated team and all the kind support from our volunteers.

Cllr Ward and our Chair Peter Janssen presented thank you gift bags to the volunteers at the event. Mr Janssen also shared what a privilege it was to show love and compassion to seafarers who usually came from the world's most impoverished nations. He thanked everyone for their support throughout the year.



Mission to Seafarers supporters at our Thank you Afternoon Tea –

(l to r) volunteers Holly Tan and Serena Cheung, MtS Principal Chaplain Rev Un Tay, Deputy Mayor Barbara Ward, MtS Chair Peter Janssen, MtS Chaplain Jack Starmans and Graham Lightfoot.

Thank you to the **Port Authority of NSW** which donated \$5,000 plus the online raffle prize of an adventure on a historic fire fighting tugboat – which raised another \$1000.

Congratulations to **Rebecca M of Sydney** who won the coveted prize!

NSW Ports Donated \$15,000 For Seafarer Services

Thank you NSW Ports - your contribution helped us to restore our pre-lockdown services and also to continue some of those added during lockdown, such as delivering goods and care packs to vessels. NSW Ports Operation Manager Wayne Ashton inspected the gift bags during his visit to present NSW Ports' generous gift.

"NSW Ports is proud to support Sydney Mission to Seafarers and seafarers more broadly...especially those visiting our state each day who ensure goods reach their destinations, to support the people and businesses of NSW."

- NSW Ports Media Release



Diving Into Soul Support for Workers at Sea

Stop for just a moment and think about what it would take to stop our world. One way would be if all the people who work at sea stayed home. Global supply chains are heavily reliant upon seafarers. National economies and the arrival of your latest international parcel require water ways to work.

Reverend Un Tay, Principal Chaplain with Mission to Seafarers in Sydney, recently told Ben McEachen on radio **Hope Mornings** what it takes to support those who work at sea and how community support makes such a significant difference to seafarers wellbeing. Hear the interview at Hope 103.2 website:

[Diving Into Soul Support for Workers at Sea - Hope 103.2 \(hope1032.com.au\)](https://www.hope1032.com.au)



Message from our Principal Chaplain – A New Beginning!

Greetings from MtS team, Sydney! With the government ban lifted in April last year, we have seen the new season of cruising back in Sydney since October. This marks a new beginning of life and activities. The start was slow and uncertain, with many Covid restrictions still in place, thus making crew visiting on board almost impossible. But we managed to visit two vessels from October to December 2022.

From January to February, the change of tides enables us to visit and interact with 4500 crew members on board 30 vessels averaging 150 crew members per vessel. Many of them had not heard of The Mission To Seafarers previously. We have received over 350 parcels delivered to our Mission Centre, a service particularly appreciated by cruise seafarers who also often have a very limited time in Port. There is also an increasing number of crew members coming in to use our facilities such as Wi-Fi and enjoy the relaxing atmosphere. Indeed, we are providing a home away from home and great hospitality for them. What a great outcome! Your support helps to make this possible. Thank you. Shalom, Rev Tay

As together we continue to recover from the troubling times, please continue to remember us and all seafarers in your prayers and financially through your donations, both regular and by creating a bequest through your will which is a special way you can continue to care for seafarers. Thank you, stay well and God bless you all."

Hello Volunteer!

Meet our newest volunteer – and she's also a seafarer! Nataly Vargas from Colombia / Panama visited us from the Noordam, Holland America. She has worked as a Portrait Photographer and videographer on over seven cruise ships in four years. Her time at our Mission Centre and meeting the team inspired her to create a special gift for us: Nataly interviewed staff and seafarers then sent us professionally edited photographs and two videos of our Centre in action. She wanted to help our supporters and other seafarers to better understand our work. Her videos will be on our new website currently under development or email us and we will send you the link.



Reflection: Serving with Compassion and Humility



PIC Bishop Stead and Rev Tay leading the discussion.

The special guest at this years' MtS Sydney Spirit Focus Day was Rev Michael Stead, Bishop of South Sydney, our liaison Bishop and on the MtS Australia Council.

His talk to the gathered group of supporters was also shared by zoom around the world.

Staff, board members and supporters attended the event to start the new year by reflecting on what we do and how we do it. Bishop Stead lead an interactive discussion looking at our compassionate God and how as His people, our story should be reflecting His.

Bishop Stead led a discussion of Bible verses reminding us all that God has a special heart for the vulnerable; for rescuing those lost or in pain. He feels their suffering, feeds, heals, loves, forgives and teaches. And He calls on us all to do the same.

The group gathered at the Mission and on zoom reflected on the true meaning of 'compassion'. The conclusion was that the God who treats us with compassion and blesses us with strength and material goods, is also calling on us to treat others in the same way, sharing what we have. Our compassionate God meets all our needs, and that means our deeper spiritual needs too. He also yearns to show His love to others and does this through His followers lives and work," Bishop Stead said. "That means we need to meet seafarers at their point of need – and to do it with humility".

An interesting historical exploration of the word 'humility' followed. The Greco-Roman world saw no difference between 'humility' and 'humiliation' whilst today, even the latest leadership gurus are advocating Christian servant leadership without even knowing they are following Christ's example. This is leadership that puts others' needs first.

"God has a special heart for seafarers. By the nature of their work, they are cut off for long periods from all the things that provide support and protection for the rest of us," he said. The group discussed how in many ways today's seafarers are the wonderers, roaming the world without a secure home and virtually invisible and powerless especially when things go wrong.

The call was to continue to serve seafarers well, not because we pity them or want to be seen as virtuous, but because through our service, we are recognizing that they are people, valuable to God and worthy of our love.

Contact our office if you would like a copy of the recording of the session.

1 John 3:17 NIV "If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or a sister in need but has no pity/compassion on them, how can the love of God be in that person?"



Seafarer Welfare Update

Although the Seafarers Happiness Index data shows positive progress, there are still persistent issues that need to be addressed, such as workload, mental health impacts and the stresses of a difficult job. There are also concerns about the negative impact on mental health and well-being of too few people aboard ships. To read the latest Seafarers Happiness Index report, see:

<https://www.missiontoseafarers.org/news/2022-a-year-of-recovery-for-seafarer-welfare-with-happiness-rising-across-the-board-says-latest-seafarers-happiness-index>



Bringing Smiles to Seafarers – the MtS Syd team packing gift bags

The Why Behind What They Do

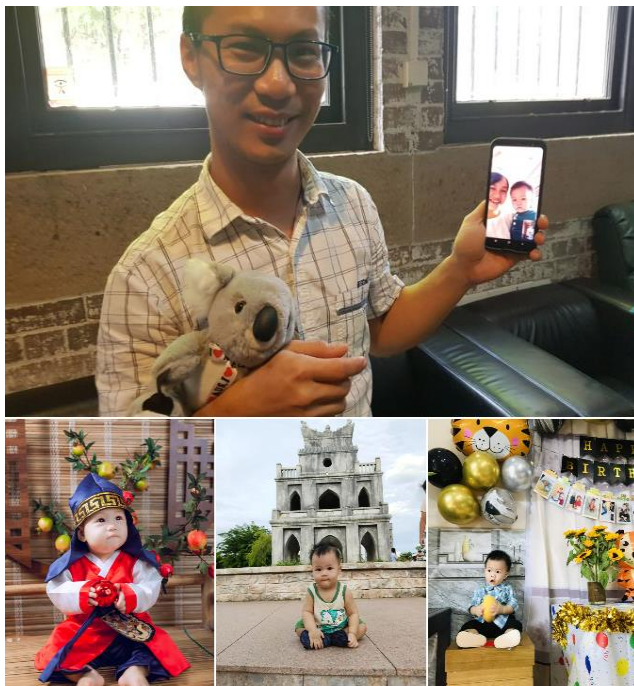
Seafarers make many sacrifices and when they talk of why, there is usually the pitter patter of little feet in the reason; little smiles they don't see for months on end and hugs they do not get at the end of each day. But they persevere.

Seafarer Hieu Pham from Vietnam came to the Mission recently and thanked us for our free Wi-Fi and somewhere welcoming to sit. The Chief Engineer from the container ship MV MATE hadn't seen his young son 'little snail' for five months. He spent about two hours Facetiming his wife and little snail – it was his 1st birthday.

Hieu was delighted with our rendition of Happy Birthday and for the stuffed toy koala for little snail. He shared these gorgeous photos of his son as a thank you to everyone who supports our work here

If any other Seafarers would like to share their photos of why they do what they do, we'd love to share them. Send them to nadja.leffler@missiontoseafarers.org.au

Ships alone don't bring us the goods we need, people do.



Thank you AMWS, the Australian Mariners Welfare Society for their generous grant of \$6000 to upgrade our IT support systems. AMWS, which has provided us with excellent support in the past, promptly came to our rescue when we shared that our computers, all aged 8 – 10 years, had ongoing problems with current software. Consequently, they could not meet the needs of our team or of visiting seafarers trying to use them to connect with their loved ones. Thanks to AMWS, regular frustrations now have been eliminated and efficiency improved.



Volunteers Needed – we are looking for volunteers to partner with us: Drivers who have a Light Rigid vehicle licence to drive our small buses; Researchers to help find companies to sponsor our luncheon AND **we have completely run out of beanies!** The mountain of beanies knitted during covid has all gone to grateful seafarers! To get involved please contact us.
Image: Volunteer bus driver Matthew (centre) with Chaplain Jack and Rev Tay.

Our New Website is Coming! Today's websites are the main public face of an organisations' credentials and purpose, so it's time to make ours more functional and appealing. It needs to serve the people who are so important to our work – both seafarers and our supporters. It will take time and effort to get it right, but soon when you look up www.missiontoseafarerssydney.org.au, it will be much easier to find stories about our work, ways to share what we do with others, our latest news, events and thank yous. We will also have links to other Mission to Seafarers Centres and useful information for Seafarers wellbeing. Stay Tuned!

Help Us Save On Postage – if you received this newsletter in the mail, please consider giving us your email address so we can send you future editions via email. Send a message to us at support@missiontoseafarers.org.au if you agree. If not, we are happy to keep mailing it to you.

Please donate to our work for Seafarers:

- i) select 'donations' on our website – this generates an instant tax-deductible receipt OR
- ii) complete the enclosed giving card. If you prefer, you may telephone us.

Thank you for whatever you are able to do