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Celebrate Sea Sunday Remembering Seafarers – Our Supply Chain Heroes September 20, 2020

Almost everything we use in our daily life arrives by ship. And it is seafarers, an invisible society of workers that bring those ships to our shores. As we drive our imported cars, eat fresh fruit and wear clothing that is manufactured overseas we give little thought as to how these items made it into our stores.

At the Seamen's Center of Wilmington we see firsthand the sacrifices these workers make in order to earn a living for their families. This year, more than ever, we have witnessed that dedication as seafarers were not able to set foot on shore for months on end due to COVID-19. We have seen crew after crew unable to go home when their contract ended, again due to the pandemic. Remembering them on Sea Sunday has never been more important.

We are writing to ask you and members of your congregation to include Sea Sunday on your calendar. This is a special day of prayer and remembrance for seafarers and an opportunity for all to reflect on the isolation they endure and the often-dangerous conditions in which they work. Should another date be more convenient for your calendar and congregation, please feel free to select a different Sunday.

I have enclosed a suggested list of hymns, prayers and readings and information about life at sea and appropriate prayers that are suitable for use in your Sunday bulletin.

Should you like more information about Sea Sunday or the Seamen's Center of Wilmington, Inc. please feel free to contact me at 302-575-1300 or visit the SCW website at www.scwde.org.

Thank you for joining us in remembering seafarers!

Sincerely,


Joan Lyons
Executive Director

We all depend on seafarers to bring us many of our daily necessities such as food, fuel, and clothing. In addition, they carry goods we export. In fact, over ninety per cent of world trade travels by sea. Because ships are constantly on the move and make news only when they are launched, wrecked on our coastline, or sunk with massive loss of life, seafarers are easily forgotten. Sea Sunday is the special day when we are asked to remember and pray for these people who are so vital to our well-being.

Seafarers work in a ruthlessly competitive international industry. To cut costs, crews are constantly being reduced in size which means longer hours and greater stress for those remaining. The search for cheaper seafarers has resulted in more mixed-nationality, mixed-language crews, bringing with them problems of communication and fewer opportunities for social contact.

Under the best of circumstances seafarers spend long periods isolated at sea – away from homes and families. In a world where time is money, periods in port are reduced to a minimum. There is little time for rest and recreation. At worst, they endure poor living and working conditions. Some ships are put to sea in an unsafe state. Sometimes crews have no proper contract of employment and, on occasion, they are not paid at all.

For 190 years, the ministry of Seamen's Centers has been to care for seafarers of all races and creeds. Chaplains, staff, and volunteers work in some 300 ports throughout the world – showing God's love for seafarers by visiting them on their ships, listening to their stories, and offering them practical and spiritual support. Since 1990, the Seamen's Center of Wilmington has been giving crews an opportunity to relax away from their ships, meet people other than fellow crew members, make a telephone call, send an e-mail, post a letter to loved ones at home, or go shopping.

With the help of your prayers and support on Sea Sunday, this caring work will be carried out in Christ's name throughout the year.



Prayers for Sea Sunday

A Prayer for All Seafarers

O Lord of the great oceans, we praise and magnify Your Holy name. You have given us a highway on which we may travel to many nations and come to know many peoples. We give You thanks for all seafarers who navigate our ships and carry cargoes all over the world, for our lives are enriched through their labors. Forgive us when we forget how much we owe them and may we rejoice in the skills and courage they bring to their calling. Never leave or forsake them but go with them as they sail the lonely seas and bring them safely home to those who love them. Through Jesus Christ our lord. AMEN.

A Prayer for Those Who Work at Sea

O God, as we remember that Your Son called His disciple, Peter, to come to Him upon the waters, we pray now for all those whose labor is upon the seas. In times of loneliness, show them that You are never far away; in times of peril be their protection; in times of temptation be their strength, and when they stumble and fall give them penitence and pardon, peace and hope. Through Jesus Christ our lord. AMEN.

A Prayer for Seafarers in Hospital

Look in compassion, O God, upon all seafarers who by reason of sickness or accident are at this time in hospitals, many in places far from their home, their families and their friends. Give Your wisdom to doctors and nurses and to all who minister to the sick, and by Your blessing on their service grant healing and restoration to those who suffer. We ask these things for the sake of Him who is the Good physician, our Lord Jesus Christ. AMEN.

A Prayer for Those at Sea

Almighty and Eternal God, Maker of Heaven and Earth, Creator of the oceans, hear our prayer for all those who serve in the Naval, Merchant and Fishing Fleets. Preserve them from the dangers of rock and tempest, fire and foe; we pray that they may reach in safety the harbor to which they voyage. We pray too for those who service in lighthouses and for the man of the coastguard, lifeboat and other rescue services. We thank You for the many lives they have saved through their faithful and courageous service. Finally, we would pray for seamen's Chaplains, may they encourage seafarers to know that, whatever the storms of life, Jesus is always with them, even as He was with His disciples in the storm of the Sea of Galilee. AMEN.



**Seamen's Center of Wilmington
Suggested Hymns and Prayers
Sea Sunday**

Suggested Hymns

All People That on Earth Do Swell (Psalm 100)
Eternal Father, Strong to Save (Navy Hymn)
Let All the World In Every Corner Sing
There's a Wideness in God's Mercy
Thou, Whose Almighty Word
Christ Who Choosing for Thy Service
I The Lord of Sea and Sky
Amazing Grace
Let the Lower Lights Be Burning

Suggested Readings

Psalm 107 v. 23-32
Matthew 8 v. 23-27
Mark 4 v. 35-41
Luke 8 v. 22-25

Suggested Prayers

Hold in your everlasting arms, O Lord, those who go down to the sea in ships. Give them patience to endure the hardships of their work and keep hope alive that they may return to their families and communities, knowing that they have served you and your human family by their strivings. Amen.

We rejoice, O God that seafarers of many backgrounds can work in harmony on the great ships at sea. May tensions between them decrease. Continue to breathe your Spirit into them that they may, in their daily work, manifest the unity of your entire human family. Amen.

Almighty God, you who calm the restless waves, bring your children who sail the seas safely into port, protecting them from all the dangers of the deep. And comfort their families who wait for their safe return. Amen.

Gracious God, we give thanks for merchant seafarers and for port chaplains and people in port communities who welcome strangers in their midst, providing a home away from home. May they continue to open their arms to welcome their brothers and sisters of the sea. Amen.

Heavenly Father, as your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, called seafarers to be his first disciples, we pray for all who go down to the sea in ships. Guard them from every peril, whether of spirit or mind or body, and bring them in safety to the end of their voyage. Hold them safely in your arms and let them feel your love. Give them patience to endure hardships, they are not forgotten by you or by those of us whose lives are enriched through their work. We also ask you to remember the families of those who work on the sea. Grant them strength, wisdom and peace of mind and spirit while they wait for the safe return of their loved ones. Comfort them and give them hope in times of fear, uncertainty and loneliness and let them always feel your presence in their lives and in the lives of those they love. Amen.