

Sea Sunday Studio Service July 8th 2018

(Introduction Amazing Grace) 3.05

Good morning to you and a warm welcome to our studio service on this the 2nd Sunday in July, a Sunday which is kept by many different denominations as Sea Sunday, a time when the people of God give thanks for those who go to sea and those who minister to them.

Let us listen to our first hymn.

HYMN: All People that on Earth do Dwell 6.17

OPENING PRAYER.

We come together as the family of God in our Father's presence to offer him praise and thanksgiving for the ministry of the church among seafarers; to hear and receive his holy word; to bring before him the needs of the world, the missionary work of his church and to pray for seafarers and their families of every nation; to ask his forgiveness for our sins and to seek his grace, through his Son, Jesus Christ, Our Lord, **Amen.**

In Hong Kong mission and ministry to seafarers is provided by 4 seafarers missions, working together to serve seafarers who are visiting Hong Kong. The Mission to Seafarers, The Apostleship of the Sea, the Danish Seamen's Church and the German Seamen's Mission.

My Name is Stephen, Senior Chaplain of The Mission to Seafarers. And joining us this morning for this service today are Luca and Justin from the Mission to Seafarers, Valan from the Apostleship of the Sea, Tilde from the Danish Seamen's Church and Martina from the German Seamen's Mission.

We are grateful to the Choir and musicians of HKSKH All Saints Cathedral, Mongkok, who are with us this morning.

So we begin our worship this morning as we call to mind our sins and ask God for his forgiveness:

Confession

Lord of all creation, forgive us for the times we have ignored your teachings and wisdom. Help us to listen to your word and live by it each day. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear Our Prayer.

Lord of all creation, forgive us for the times we have ignored those in need around us. Help us to become more aware of the needs of others. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our Prayer.

Lord of all creation, forgive us for the times we have ignored your will for our lives. Help us to trust you and follow you more each day. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our Prayer.

Lord of all creation, forgive us for the times we have ignored the needs of seafarers and have taken them for granted. Help us to remember the vital work they do in ensuring that we have our daily needs. Lord in your mercy,

All: Hear our Prayer.

God our loving Father, forgive us our sins, keep your word alive in us and help us to know your peace and forgiveness in our lives each day. Help us to be a people who trust and follow you wholeheartedly as we live for you each day.

All: Amen

Hymn: Dear Lord and Father of Mankind 4.26

Collect

Almighty God on this Sea Sunday we pray for all who go down to the sea in ships, that you will protect them as they sail, keep them safe from all the dangers of the sea and give them courage when they face storms of life. May they know your blessing on the

families that they leave behind. We ask this in the name of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

All: Amen

Our First Reading comes from the New Testament from St Paul's letter to the Corinthians Chapter 12. Verses 2-10.

I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. And I know that such a person—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows— was caught up into Paradise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat. On behalf of such a one I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. But if I wish to boast, I will not be a fool, for I will be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think better of me than what is seen in me or heard from me, even considering the exceptional character of the revelations. Therefore, to keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given to me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.' So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

The word of the Lord...

All: Thanks be to God.

We continue our worship as we hear the words of Psalm 41

(Set to music by Thomas Attwood and sung by the Choir of St. John's Elora, Toronto (3.57 mins)).

The Gospel

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. Mark, Chapter 6, verses 1-13.

All: Glory to you Lord Christ.

He left that place and came to his home town, and his disciples followed him. On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, 'Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?' And they took offence at him. Then Jesus said to them, 'Prophets are not without honour, except in their home town, and among their own kin, and in their own house.' And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. And he was amazed at their unbelief.

Then he went about among the villages teaching. He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. He said to them, 'Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.' So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

The Gospel of the Lord

All: Praise to you, Lord Christ

Hymn: Christ has no body now but ours 4.27

Address (Justin Davis)

Good Morning, my name is Justin Davis. I am the assistant chaplain at the sailors' home and mission to seamen here in Hong Kong. It is an honor to be speaking to you all again about this organization that has played such a vital role in my development as a young Christian over the past four years. My main role as an assistant chaplain is simply to visit ships. On a daily basis I drive into the container port in Kwai Chung, go on board the massive container ships, and talk to the crew. In essence my job is all about the relationships I build with the seafarers on these ships. This may range from a five-minute conversation about how long they are in Hong Kong and the next port they are visiting, a thirty-minute conversation about the world cup, or a two-hour conversation about their lives on board the ship and their lives at home. The most important aspect of this role though, regardless of how long the conversation lasts, is to build relationships.

One might ask, why is relationship building so key to this ministry? After all, if someone needs assistance they will tell me regardless of

whether we are friends or not. The problem is that when some one is on board a cargo vessel for nine months friendship is one of the most important aspects of mental and physical well-being. When I ask a seafarer how much more time do you have on board the ship?" A normal response is "three more months in prison." The amount of time may change but the description of their situation is constant. Working on board the same ship seeing the same people for nine or ten months feels like prison. This is one of many reasons why building friendships with seafarers is so crucial. Having a friend from the outside world to remind you that it will be ok, or you will see you family soon is essential to mental health while on board a ship. One seafarer I think of in particular is a Ukrainian named Sasha. I met him in January when his ship started sailing to Hong Kong. At first, we would spend time in the ships office talking about football or where the ship was sailing to next. However eventually the conversation lead to his family. As it turns out his wife became pregnant with their first child a month or so before he joined the ship, and a few weeks ago she gave birth to a healthy son. I

could see how happy he was to have a new child but also how sad he was to not be home. Unfortunately, his family needed him to provide for them, especially with a new baby. I realized that he regularly seemed down when I saw him. I asked Sasha about why he was feeling this way and, obviously, he felt sad about missing the birth of his baby (something all too common for seafarers). However, I constantly reminded him that soon he will see his son, and that he should remind himself that he is doing this so that his son can have a better life. This past week Sasha flew back to Ukraine after finishing a nine-and-a-half-month contract and the last time I saw him all we talked about was his home and what he will do when he gets back. Having a friend to discuss these feelings and memories with played a vital role in his mental well-being and in helping to deal with the regret of not being home for his son's birth.

Although the relationships we build at the mission to seafarers are vital to many seafarers' mental well being there are other aspects

as well. One is just building trust so that we can help these men and women complete tasks that many of us on shore take for granted. For example, I have become close friends with a crew of Filipino seafarers that come to Hong Kong every two weeks. Unfortunately, their ship is only in port for five to six hours. This may seem like a large amount of time, but these men are working. They can not just leave the ship to go shopping or see the sights of Hong Kong. After a few visits one of the crew members came to me because he needed to send money back to his family. His mother had just seen the doctor and needed to pay for her medication, so I offered to send money for him. Imagine trusting someone you had only met a few times to send hundreds of US dollars home for you. This is why relationships are so crucial. I had built a relationship with this man that allowed him to take care of his family, hundreds of miles away, through me. As I built relationships with others on board the ship they started having me send money for them. I send money for birthdays, anniversaries, medication, and many other reasons. Something as simple as sending money to a family

member (an aspect of life we take for granted in Hong Kong) is made possible through friendship with those working on a container ship.

This relationship building with seafarers can also lead to social justice for seafarers. A few years back I was seeing a ship regularly because it was in the dry docks being repaired. I was friends with almost everyone on board but there was a cadet that I got on with particularly well. Whenever I went onto this ship we would have a cup of coffee and chat about life. I knew all about his family, home town favorite basketball team and he knew much the same about me. Eventually he told me he had not been paid in three months. Imagine working every single day for three months and not seeing any reward for it. When I asked him why he had not told anyone about this discrepancy in pay, he told me he was scared of being fired. Although he had friends on board, he could not confide in them because they were working for the same company. He explained to me that if he complained it might get back to the company and he would not be able

to find work after this contract was finished. The relationship we built was crucial in helping to right this wrong. Not only because of the resources the mission to seafarers has to find a solution to this injustice but also because he needed a friend to discuss this problem with in the first place. The relationships we build let us do the best work we can for the men and women on board commercial vessels.

On this sea Sunday I ask that you truly think about the relationships you have in your lives. This could be with your friends and family, pets, or electronic devices. In modern society it is seafarers that let us continue these relationships in real time. They are the ones navigating the ships that bring us computers, phones, Wi-Fi routers, and even the food we share together in a meal. Our modern connections are not possible without the people that strain their own relationships to provide for their families. When you use your phone to talk to a loved one in another country or sit down to yum cha with your family take a second to remember the seafarers of the world. Remind

yourself that with out them, you could not have the relationships you have today.

Finally let us pray for those seafarers of the world.

Heavenly Father: we pray to You for those on the perilous ocean that You will embrace them with your mighty protection and grant them success in all their rightful undertakings. Grant them in all hours of need to see that they have a God who remembers them and grant them grace in the hour of danger to commit their souls into Your hands. O Lord Jesus Christ, who can rebuke the storm and bring it to silence, and lay the roaring waves to rest, show them who call to You out of the deep that You hear their prayer and will save them. And finally bring us all to the only safe port.

Amen.

Hymn: **The King of Love my Shepherd is.** 3.27

Intercessions

Let us thank God who has brought us together to this day, who sustains us by his power, strengthens us by his Spirit and nourishes us with his word. May we worship him in spirit and in truth. Lord hear us.

Lord, graciously hear us.

Today we pray for the work of Seafarers' Missions, their chaplains and ship visitors around the world as they care for and welcome seafarers. We pray that you will help them in their work of caring for and supporting seafarers. Lord hear us

Lord, graciously hear us.

We pray for seafarers as they work on ships, often many miles from home, missing their families and facing dangers and hardships such as piracy, storms, little time in port and loneliness. We ask that you keep them safe in their work, protect them when they face storms and help them to keep in touch with their families.

Lord hear us.

Lord graciously hear us.

We pray for the families of seafarers who are left at home. We pray for wives and husbands as they miss their partners and care for their families, for children as they miss a parent and for others as they miss a boy or girl friend, grandparent or son or daughter. Bless those who remain at home whilst a loved one is away at sea.

Lord hear us.

Lord graciously hear us.

We pray for all ship owners and ship managers that they will take their responsibility seriously to care for those who crew their ships. We pray that all ships may be properly maintained and kept in a seaworthy condition. Lord Hear us.

Lord graciously hear us.

We pray for ourselves that we may have grateful hearts for all the food and other necessities of daily life that we so easily take for granted. Help us to remember the seafarers who work so hard that we can enjoy an easy life. Lord hear us.

Lord graciously hear us.

Let us join together in the words that our Lord Jesus himself taught us:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Creator and Father of all, we pray for those who go down to the sea in ships and on whom we depend. Bless them and those who long for their safe return and bring us all to your kingdom, where there is no sorrow, no tears, but joy and life everlasting, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn: Eternal Father strong to save 5.44 mins

The Blessing.

May the love of the Lord Jesus

Draw us to himself.

May the power of the Lord Jesus

Strengthen us in his service;

May the joy of the Lord Jesus

Fill our souls.

May the blessing of God Almighty,

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

Be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen**

Thank you for joining us for our worship this Sea Sunday, please remember in your prayers all who go down to the sea, all who serve in the merchant marine, all who bring us the commodities we depend upon from around the world. May God bless them and be close to their families and love ones now and always. **Amen**

Finale Sunset 1.42