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Even in this period we were able to make sailors happy with the Gospel together with some practical help. It all went somehow different than we are used to because of the safety measures taken by the government. But all the sailors that we met were thankful. Some even shouted for joy when they saw us coming to visit them, some even shed tears. We hope that you'll enjoy reading the great stories. Should you want to write to us or wish to know more about the work that we do, then contact us. We are happy to come to your Church or Fellowship to tell and show more about the Portmission work. You may notice that the bulletin contains fewer reports than usual but now the space can be used for more photos. On our website you'll find more information.

IJmuiden Region

The Amsterdam ports, including the IJmuiden ports are closed for the Cruise ships because of the Covid 19 crisis.



Almost all the Cruise ships worldwide are without employ. They are anchored at sea somewhere, free and without harbour charges and have only a skeleton crew on-board. The ships can't be left unguarded and all these events cost the Ship-owners heaps of money. The Asian crewmembers have all been sent home and therefore are without income. Only God knows how this will develop in the future. But it is obvious that the situation is very serious.

Cargo ships still sail the seas be it that in this branch the crisis is also being

felt. Here for instance some examples. We meet the crew of a Bulk carrier at the dock site in IJmuiden. Boarding the ship is no longer allowed. There, at the ship's side, we



talk to some Philipinos. Most of them have been aboard for twelve months. Exchanging crews rarely occurs for there are hardly any intercontinental flights. We pray for the men but at an appropriate distance. After this prayer a sailor watches me with tears in his eyes. When asked why he is so moved, he answers that his wife is ill with a grave stomach ailment. Anneke then prays especially for this sick woman. Yes, emotional moments. We hand over some bags with Bibles and biblical literature, woollen hats and clothing. Everything is accepted in a grateful manner. Another Bulk carrier has a crew of 22 Chinese. They say there are no Christians on-board. But the Bibles in their mother-language are eagerly accepted.



With friendly greetings,
Jan en Anneke Best.

When we go to the next ship, we notice these Chinese at different places on deck reading in their opened Bibles. As far as we know there are, at the moment, a hundred million Christians in China. When the Chinese Peoples Republic was founded in 1948 this number was assessed at one million. That means a hundredfold increase! Every Chinese knows at least one or more Christians. Is that the reason for their interest in God's Word?

Our way of working has been a bit adjusted because of the danger of infection but our goals are being achieved anyway: sailors receive the Word of God and we pray for them. Would you please join us, also remembering Anneke in your prayers?

Amsterdam and Scheveningen

Seeing that air-traffic has greatly been reduced, we notice however that the shipping trade just continues on during this Corona crisis. Fact is, that it is the sailors that keep providing us with 85% of our daily needs. It is difficult to exchange crews and it implies that they have to work longer on the ships. Contracts for the duration of 10 months are common and it is hard on the sailors to have to work two or three months longer, worrying in the meanwhile about their families and future. Especially now the sailors need the Gospel (i.e. good tidings) and someone listening to them. To our regret our port mission work is only possible in a restricted way. That is a pity but also a lesson to me, knowing for instance that God in fact has no direct need of me to reach His goals. But at the same time I am glad for the times we could go to the ports. Like on Good Friday when we passed on telephone cards on the ships and bunches of tulips. We didn't really board the ships but stayed at the foot of the



gangway. Tulips fit in well with Amsterdam and many sailors were excited about them. An elderly sailor from Georgia even wanted to hug me for such a present but of course it couldn't be. At the same time it was a nice opportunity to also provide sailors with Bibles, under the motto: Flowers do fade away but the Word of God stands forever.

Recently I was invited by crewmembers in Scheveningen to actually come aboard, still keeping that certain distance from one another. It was a small ship moored near the entrance of the harbour. A strong wind coming from the sea made the ship move up and down and once inside I felt this nausea coming up: getting seasick in the harbour! So obviously I am not a sailor. The cook however noticed it and served me this piece of toast with ketchup plus a cup of coffee and remarkably, it proved a good cure against feeling sick. Our conversation in the end turned to Jairus and his daughter that had been healed by Jesus, the Master over Nature, over sickness, demons and even death.

One sailor had the wish for children but his wife is working as an au-pair in Abu-Dhabi and so it is hard to meet her in between times. The Indonesian cook shared with me that his contract had been extended for two months.



He was rather anxious to hear from his wife, for she is going to give birth to a baby the coming week. Just when I was aboard he was informed that he must work one month longer. I see that he is taking it in this message in a resigned manner but I also notice that it is hard on him. He is Muslim but wants me to pray for him and this we do. I would also like to help him in a practical way but am not in the capacity to do so. I can share the Word with him from a Bible in his own language. In our post-modern world this doesn't seem much but God's Word is full of LIFE and I believe the Gospel is the best there is to offer to sailors. It looks as if our Mission has no chance against worldly odds, but in Ecclesiastes 11:1 it says: *"Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days"*.

We only need to trust God to do the rest!

Marien Gijsbertsen.

Amsterdam

It was so special to be greeted one evening by a Philippino seaman with: *Hallo pastor Theo*". That took me by surprise for truly, I didn't recognise him. I was then asked to put on a face-mask. There was ample opportunity to speak to the sailors and several Bibles and pieces of literature were gratefully accepted, including the "Interactive Sailor Bible". They also appreciated the woollen hats and jackets, shirts, sandals, gloves and socks (they had asked for socks especially) . Sometime later some went with us to the car for them. Yvonne had made some special gifts for the ladies on board: nicely hand knitted shawls and small paper tissue cases: it brought such a joy to them. In the end the men asked me to come back soon. Yes of course I wanted to come again. Later, over the phone, a new date and time was arranged. My contact person aboard received a bottle ship souvenir and for two other persons I had wooden crosses. In leaving I was asked to pray for them. This I did of course and what a joy to hear them say afterwards: AMEN.

On the picture below part of the "Happy crew" on board a gigantic ship. The Brazilian ships pastor sent this photo to me. We could pass on many Bibles in Portuguese as well as in Tagalog and French. Afterwards I received mails from family members, also from Brazil, telling me how glad they were that God hadn't forgotten about their people on board a ship in Amsterdam. Even the pastor of the church in Brazil wept when shown the movie shots that the ship's pastor had taken of himself and me.



At the entry to the Docks I'm always asked the same standard question and then my body temperature is taken. "It's fine again, 36.6 degrees", I heard them say for I don't know how many times already. Once aboard another huge ship I first had to report to the ship's Irish doctor. I told him that I had just been checked with 36 degrees. "Well, well, we'll see about that in a minute", he reacted and to tease me he rubbed the thermometer some, blowing at it at the same time to raise the temperature. With a smile he told me afterwards: "It is 36 degrees and a bit".

I spoke to some men aboard and had a lengthy conversation with the doctor. In leaving he shook my hand, patted me on the shoulder and called me "his friend". The captain also let me know to be welcome on board his ship, asking to make an appointment for a next visit. Then he would "organise something". The crew consisted of people from Holland, the Philippines, Lithuania and Latvia. I left some literature behind and a bottle ship for the captain. He pressed it to his heart saying: "how nice".

Yes, the Lord leads us to the right persons. God is at work and so are we! A hearty thanks for all the faithful prayers and other tokens of fellowship.

Theo en Yvonne van Zuilekom.

Expect the unexpected... THANK U LORD!

After 7 yrs of wishing nasa akin kana....

Thank u **Theo vanZuilekom**...

#Missionaries in Amsterdam 🙏🙏🙏



Ambulant Ship visits - On the Move

April. We had the opportunity to speak to the crews of ships moored at the Parkkade in the centre of Rotterdam. At



times we used a portable amplifier and once, when on our way with the Bible school students, the batteries went flat at a certain moment. But then we fixed it by connecting it up by linking it to a car battery of our parked car near the waterside. We continued spreading the Word by giving out portions of the Gospel. A passing policeman called it an illegal meeting but said: "you can carry on but keep the right distance".

In the meanwhile I have finished my three year Bible school training and have already been offered a job on a ship. Now, with the leave that is left to me I still have some time for ship visiting. Conferring with other maritime Missions we discovered which

doors are open to us these days. Exchanging ideas proved useful to open various barriers in order to reach the seamen. During these times they are happy to see visitors. The Post order businesses have also found a way to visit ships, providing the sailors with telephone cards etc. On my bicycle I made a tour crossing the various bridges in Rotterdam, also cycling past the Lloyd- and Parkkade mooring places. I notice three Philippino sailors watching the Erasmus bridge which is full of people right then, all being ready to start on a march or a demonstration but were later dispersed by the police. The Philipinos told me that within two months they will be signed off when their ship arrives in Turkey. A Russian captain nearby shouts from the Bridge at us that nobody is allowed on-board and that the crew is OK. It's just typical how a ships master shows his concern to us by addressing us as port mission workers. On another ship a Polish crew is taking in stores in carton boxes and are too busy for a talk. How do ships visits take place during these days of extreme caution? Personally I prefer to follow the book with a high standard of protection. Still, it must not stand in the way of reaching people with love, attention and the Word of God. I have noticed that every ship has its own safety standard. As port missionaries we also listen to one another and so up came the idea to put on new gloves every time we reach a ship. But above all there is the need for prayer and direction where to go or not. To us this Corona virus is invisible but not to God. He leads us. The Word is a comfort and consolation and the promises of God STAND, even when promises in the world are broken. Even so, day by day life continues and sailors have their questions about life and faith that need to be answered.



Just within a week's time I could share the Gospel with Philipinos, Egyptians, people from Iraq, Pakistan, Bangladesh,



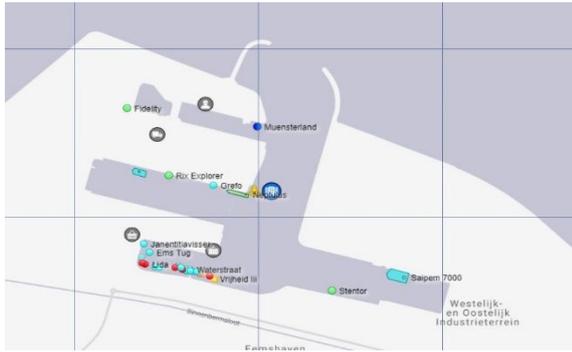
Latvia, Poland, Rumania, Russia, Serbia, Ghana, Myanmar, Japan and Greece. That's a trip around the world! It seems that sailors from Asia have difficulty of being signed off from their ship. Also they don't fancy the idea of remaining in quarantine for two to four weeks when arriving in their homeland. On a ship with a crew of twenty with about just as many nationalities, I met a Philippino who had just heard that he could be signed off. To the men from Myanmar this was not yet possible but they accepted it in a friendly way. A Latvian Officer could not go home yet either because there was no flight to his country. The Officer to replace him could not get out of Russia for the same reason. Visiting another ship I heard that the new Egyptian captain had just arrived the day before. The Philipinos I spoke to were much

concerned for their delayed flying home. Most of them had already served three months extra! We cannot help them to a speedy trip home even when they are anxiously awaiting that very day but our presence can help them in some way and also maybe the card with which they can reach us.

Michiel Kramers.

Delfzijl and Eemshaven - "Seek ye first the Kingdom"

In the beginning everything seemed to be so easy going and you could freely enter the docks. And I am still thankful



for this and the many talks we did have with captains and crewmembers. Opposition is there also and not unknown to us but now, to me, coming from an unexpected direction. I underwent namely the unlikely experience, from one day to another, to land in hospital! However, there was also recovery and it has been a blessed experience all the same.

Now we have landed in quite a different situation: the Corona time. In the Eemshaven port all the necessary preventive measures have been taken and in general most companies can carry on as usual. Personally I did not want to risk anything

by visiting ships and stayed home for a while. We are undergoing a particular period when even churches are closed for months. But via "streaming" services you can still hear God's Word. Anyhow it feels strange not to be able to meet people and only being able to encourage one another via pixels. In spite of it, in my opinion, there is only one direction

we can take. I read in Psalms 27:8 that God clearly asks to seek Him first. Not only just asking, no, it is a powerful appeal and command repeatedly found in other places in the Bible. An appeal to be obedient to His call.

Yesterday I wanted to go to the ports with my friend Harm but through circumstances we had to postpone our meeting for a week. I had this strong wish today to visit ships and decided to go to places that had closed their gates to other areas where, in the past, I had encountered resistance. To these places I went to pray, sitting in my car with a clear view over the area to bless it and to pray for the crews and ships, asking God for open doors. Later I drove to the Broekman dock and checked with the Watchman there. I had met this young man at previous occasions. Yes, there were Corona restrictions but I was



allowed to proceed to the docks. When asked if he was a Christian: "eh, well yes in times past I used to go to church". It was an opening for a conversation and in the end I could present him an Interactive Bible. I went to a ship called Rise explorer. I didn't board it but from a short distance I was able to communicate with some Ukrainian sailors, that is to say, the Captain and his First Mate, speaking English fairly well. The captain didn't have any distinctive marks on his sleeve and neither did he have a nice uniform. He just wore a cap with CAPTAIN on it. Well, that's a good distinction as any, I reckon.

It took me quite some time to convince the men that the presents I had with me were to be had for free. Namely an Interactive Bible and a bottle ship souvenir. Initially the captain refused to accept my gifts but then had admiration for the bottle ship. "For free, how is this possible". I countered: "There are more things to be had for free. What about GRACE?" In the end the two gentlemen thankfully accepted my presents. The bottle ship is for my little museum. I hope that many will come to see it". In parting I blessed the ship, wishing the men a safe journey. "God bless you all" "The Saipan 7000 which I visited next seemed an impenetrable fortress. The ship was due to sail to Norway next month but was still in port without employ. Well, next week Harm and I will try again.



In closing, just going over my report I want to ask you to pray intently for the Eemshaven port. That doors will open so that God's love can be shared in all frankness. He is the Lord of creation and His desire is that many will be saved. Ezekiel 18:23. It is mighty to be able to tell about His plan of salvation to a people whose domiciles are to be found around the globe. God is God!

Jan Peter Kapteijn.

The seafarers mentioned in this newsletter do have in actual life different names. For privacy reasons the proper names are not mentioned. The photo's in this bulletin are printed with permission.

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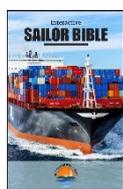
We would like to ask you to keep on praying for the health of **all workers of Het Havenlicht and their families** but especially for: **Anneke Best** and **Jan Peter Kapteijn** and **Inez de Baat**, to continue in the ministry God has given.

A hearty thanks for all you valuable prayers and other tokens of fellowship.

In this way God is working, also through you, in order that sailors can hear **His Word** and accept it.

We are grateful towards God for the many chances to be a blessing to seafarers.

Emmaus Bible Courses, 5Fish and Our Daily Bread you can download on smartphone, tablet en computer.



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