



Harbor of Hospitality

Seafarers International House

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Mission Highlights



Rev. Marsh Luther Drege
Executive Director

We plan to make a difference. We plan to be part of God's plan. That's why we stand with seafarers. We stand with immigrants. We stand with domestic violence survivors and victims of human trafficking.

The numbers to the right tell part of that story, but what they mostly tell is that Seafarers International House is in the most unique position to visit seafarers in seven different ports, and house immigrants who are just coming out of detention or other challenging circumstances. What these numbers tell is that, while we continue our ministry of presence to seafarers who come into the ports or who stay at our guesthouse, our robust growth has been especially seen in the number of individuals and the number of nights (1,971 nights provided in 2017 compared to 805 in 2016) where we provide room in the inn for the most vulnerable of immigrants.

Indeed in 2017 we budgeted \$92,000 for aiding the asylees who come stay with us and yet actually invested over \$128,000 to assist and house those asylees who came our way. Obviously the need was greater than our plans and that is okay. "For I know the plans I have for you" declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future' (Jeremiah 29:11). We are planning for the need by being open to where the need is. We plan to

Seafarers

| | 2017 | 2016 | 2015 |
|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Ships Boarded | 1,335 | 1,686 | 1,852 |
| Seafarers Visited | 17,438 | 18,970 | 21,500 |
| Van Trips | 2,680 | 3,145 | 4,074 |
| Seafarers Transported | 8,679 | 7,661 | 11,478 |
| Christmas-at-Sea Gifts | 1,775 | 1,771 | 2,226 |

Immigrants

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-------|-----|-----|
| Refugees - Asylum Seekers | 31 | 23 | 12 |
| Lodging Nights | 1,971 | 805 | 709 |

Community

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Domestic Violence-Human Trafficking | 27 | 8 | 14 |
| Local Disaster Victims | 168 | 72 | 56 |
| Youth Service Gatherings | 10 | 5 | 4 |
| Church Gatherings | 225 | 181 | 179 |
| Community Gatherings | 497 | 398 | 447 |

2017 was an unusual year for the port mission. Two port chaplains experienced serious health issues (shoulder surgery and stroke), removing them from service each for a month, another port chaplain experienced family health issues, removing her from service for one month, and two of the ports (Connecticut and Philadelphia) experienced a significant drop-off of ship arrivals in the last two months of the year. Based on the first nine months experience and adjusting for the impact of these health issue and ship arrival factors, the number of ships boarded would have been 1,800, the number of seafarers visited would have been 19,200, the number of van trips would have been 3,000 and the number of seafarers transported would have been 9,000.

serve where the grace of God is most needed and our board of directors and supporters back that plan with all their resources and passion.

We currently plan also to take stock of our mission center- which is our guesthouse in Manhattan. After more than 50 years it is showing its age, and we are called to be good stewards of this valuable resource. Our Facilities Working group is seriously looking at the infrastructure of what our building needs are for another 50 years of service.

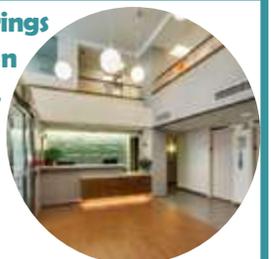
Concurrently, our leaders are looking at our mission strategy and planning for emerging needs.

This much is true: we are the Lutheran response to the urgent needs of vulnerable seafarers and sojourners and, with your help, we will continue to plan for those needing our unconditional love today and into the hope and future of tomorrow.

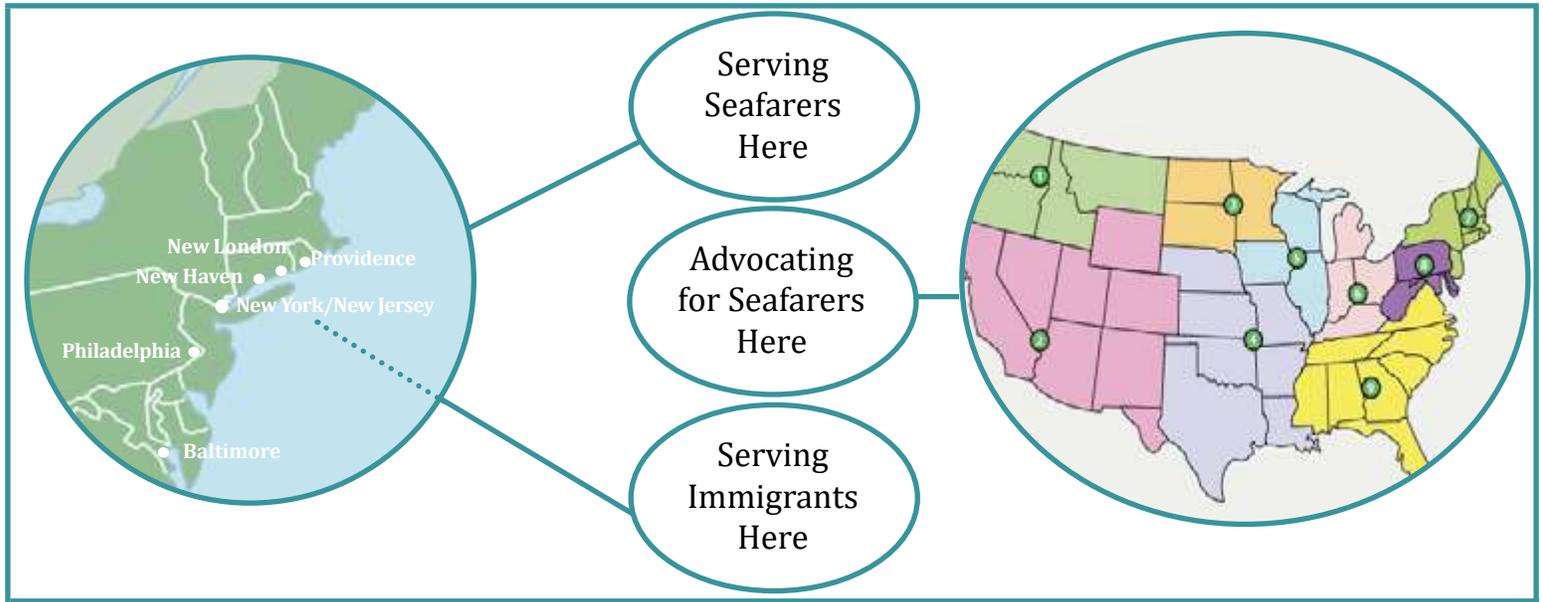
Blessings,

Remember, our Guesthouse also accommodates church gatherings and civic groups traveling to New York City in connection with their missions and needing safe, affordable lodging. Through these accommodations, we support your missions. And by staying here, you help to support our mission to seafarers, immigrants and other displaced persons.

Sleep Well, While Doing Good



YEAR IN REVIEW



Non-Polarizing Advocacy

“We have entered a whirlpool. Social conventions, economic truths and political consensus have been upended. Nearly all our self-evident values have been sucked into a vortex of fear, doubt and denial.”

That’s how we at Seafarers International House saw the world in January 2017. Little has changed since then, and we are challenged to articulate our role as an ELCA social ministry to seafarers and immigrants in this polarized environment.

Seafarers just need a little time in port to disembark their ships, stand on *terra firma*, do some shopping, mingle with people ashore and return to their ships. Only the United States requires disembarking seafarers to hold visas in order to protect our homeland security.

Immigrants just try to escape violence or seek a better life or grew up here not knowing they were undocumented. They are subjected to workplace and residential raids, imprisonment and deportation, in order to protect our cultural heritage.

Collectively, we need to uphold and advocate for the common good of all humanity. Part of that collective effort is Seafarers International House’s mission to seafarers and immigrants. Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton has stated, *“As Lutherans, we live out our biblical calling by serving in ministries with migrants and refugees in our communities and advocating for laws that reflect this commitment.”*¹ We will continue to stand with and advocate for our seafarers and immigrants.

But we must listen too, especially to the people with whom we disagree, lest we lose the possibility of learning and the opportunity of reaching common understandings. We must become eloquent listeners, willing to allow ourselves to be persuaded by those people with whom we disagree.² That willingness will breed trust; that trust will overcome fear, doubt and denial; and we may recover our better values and the common good.

1. Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, *Statement on Dreamers, February 9, 2018*
2. Robert B. Reich, *THE COMMON GOOD, Alfred A. Knopf, New York 2018*



Seafarers International House is a Lutheran response to the urgent needs of vulnerable seafarers and sojourners