

# THE BEACON



A newsletter from Lighthouse Harbour Ministries Vancouver

Winter 2026

## Christmas Day / Matchless Pearl

Ray Hanna — Senior Port Chaplain

Christmas time is a special time for sharing the gospel at Lighthouse. For many of the sailors who celebrate Christmas, it can be a hard time because they are away from their families instead of celebrating Christmas with them. For those who do not celebrate Christmas, it offers us an exceptional opportunity to share the reason for Christmas and bless them with gifts and treats.

On Christmas Day at the Fraser Surrey Seafarers Centre, we had 15 crew from two ships. This was not a large number of crew, but it is a good number to interact with, get to know, sing with and share the Gospel with.

We opened at 5 PM. Many crew members played billiards, ping-pong, and foosball, and later we played cornhole to win prizes. We served lots of snacks and speciality drinks. One of the regular centre volunteers brought his wife and three sons, who interacted well with the entire crew. We



30+ seafarers celebrate Christmas at North Vancouver Centre

sang their national anthems together and then sang some Christmas carols before I shared a Christmas message about buying and giving gifts. I reminded them that although gifts are free to the recipient, they cost the giver something every time. I told them a story about an old indian pearl diver and a missionary. The pearl diver could

not accept that salvation was a free gift and felt he needed to purchase it by undertaking a long pilgrimage on his knees to pay for his sins. Before leaving, he called the missionary to his simple home and told him he would be starting his pilgrimage in the new year and might never return. Since the missionary

was his dearest friend, he wanted to give him something, so he went and got a small strongbox that he had hidden away, and then, with tears in his eyes, told him about the son he had. The missionary was shocked to learn that his friend had had a son, something he had never heard before. The man told him that his son was the best pearl diver on the coast; he had the swiftest dive, keenest eyes, and could hold his breath the longest. He had dreamt of finding the best pearl. One day, he saw one that looked promising, but he had already been underwater a long time. He died shortly after surfacing with what turned out to be one of the biggest and best pearls ever found on that coast. The old pearl diver now opened the strongbox and carefully pulled out a large, perfect pearl, then placed it in the missionary's hand. Now that he was leaving, he wanted to give this fabulous pearl to his dearest friend. The missionary could not accept such a valuable item as a gift, so he offered to purchase it for thousands of dollars. The man stiffened

**“Sowing the Seed”**  
**2026 LHM**  
**Spring Breakfast**  
**Saturday, April 25th 9:00 to 11:30a.m.**  
Bethany Baptist Church • 22680 Westminster Hwy, Richmond  
There is no cost to attend but **seats MUST be reserved by April 17.**  
Please speak to the person who invited you or contact the office to reserve your seat.  
604-988-5084 or email [info@sealight.org](mailto:info@sealight.org)  
There will be opportunity to support LHM. We look forward to seeing you there.

and said, “No,” so the missionary offered more money. The man said, Don’t you understand? This pearl cost my son his life. No amount of money in all the world could pay me for my son. I only want to give it to you as a gift. After a few minutes, the missionary humbly said, “I don’t feel worthy, but I accept this as a gift from you. Thank you.” The missionary went on to tell his friend, Don’t you see that what you’re saying to God is the same as what I said to you? God is offering you a free gift of salvation through the death of his son, and you think you can pay Him for it? This is an insult to God. He offers it to you as a gift, not because it is worthless, but because it is priceless, and no amount of works or pilgrimages could ever pay God back for the gift of His Son. Finally, the old pearl diver understood that his pilgrimage could never purchase his salvation, and that there was nothing he could do to earn heaven except receive God’s offer of salvation by faith and say thank you to God for the gift of His Son. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23).

Thank you for your prayers for the seafarers and workers and all the other ways that you support the Lord’s work at Lighthouse.

## Friendship with Jesus

*Paul Ratsoy — LHM Chaplain*

The weather was not pleasant. It was a rainy autumn morning and as I made my way along a lengthy causeway to the ship I intended to visit, a strong wind caused rain to spray against me primarily from the east. So, I walked with my head slightly tilted to the direction of the wind, in order to use my hardhat to shelter me from the water. Not my type of day, from a climate perspective!

After reaching the vessel and climbing the gangway of the ship, I met an Indian third officer who was not quick at inviting me inside the accommodation area, even in the midst of the bad weather. Following some short conversation through which he

learned of my purpose in boarding his ship, he, somewhat reluctantly, allowed me inside the vessel. We progressed to the ship’s office and were joined, shortly thereafter, by a young female deck seafarer.

I spoke with the two seafarers in the office of the ship for a short time before we were joined by a young Sikh electrician, “R”, wearing a turban on his head. He sat down in the office and, almost immediately after doing so, exhibited a keen interest in spiritual things. Part way through our conversation, his captain (who I never saw) arrived near the office and, I was told, wanted the office vacated. We were to go to the ship’s tally room (adjacent to the deck and, normally, not a very pleasant room to be in because of the proximity to the deck (often without heat) and, commonly, quite dirty). It is not a room that I like to inhabit! But, after a short time, the third officer and female deck sailor left the office. However, “R” stayed with me and communicated to me that he wanted to hear more about the spiritual things that we were discussing, ignoring the order to leave the office. So, he and I stayed in the office for a short time before, again, we were told to go to the tally office. We then walked to that room and continued our conversation.

The unpleasantness of the tally room was far overshadowed by the very encouraging conversation that the electrician and I had there. He asked me how to be good, in the face of his struggle to do so. When I shared about the

God of the Bible, “R” agreed with most everything that I said. However, he also stated his opinion that my religious belief and his were essentially the same: same God and same problem regarding the means of goodness. So, I felt the strong need to correct his error and show him the deep sacrifice of God in Jesus Christ. It was not easy to make this clear to him, but after some time, I believe that he began to understand the difference between earning God’s favour through good acts and receiving forgiveness through a loving, gracious, merciful Saviour. At one point, “R” said: “You mean that if Jesus is my friend, God will not longer be angry with



me, but if Jesus is not my friend, God will be angry with me?" I was very encouraged by his new understanding and believe that he was on the way to knowing the truth.

Please pray that "R" will read the Gospel of John in Punjabi and listen to an audio player that he accepted and that the Lord will draw him to Jesus. All glory is due to our wonderful Lord.

## Would You Like To Buy Her?

*Teus Kappers — Chaplain Emeritus*

It happened to Maria and me while traveling in Romania. We had delivered our precious cargo of smuggled Bibles, praised the Lord and were on our way back home when we came upon a group of gypsies traveling in the same direction. After carefully passing them, we pulled our VW van over to the side of the road and took a few pictures of the four very colourful horse-drawn wagons. The people inside them did not mind at all. Then came the surprise/shock when one of the men came out of his wagon with a baby in his arms. The baby did not look older than a month or two.



He put it into Maria's arms and said, "Here for you to take home for five English pounds." We were shocked to say the least! We had no idea if the baby was theirs or stolen from some very upset mother. Maria quickly returned the baby, and we went on our way home.

Years later, while visiting a ship in Vancouver harbour, I was greeted by a nervous man who showed interest in the gospel. He invited me to come to his cabin to speak further. I was excited because he was really interested in the gospel. After entering his cabin, he quickly closed the door and I then saw a young girl, half-hidden, sitting in a corner. She was not older than about 14. The seamen then asked me, "Would you like to buy her?" I was shocked; I had never come across a situation like this on any ship before. I abruptly got up and left the cabin and the ship without speaking to anyone. What I should have

done was go to the police and file a report, but I didn't do this.

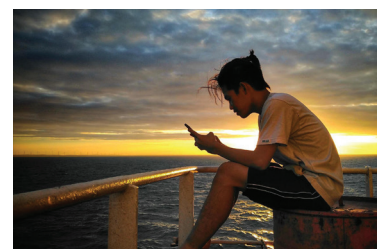
The sale of people is, of course, not something new. One of my favorite Bible stories is about Joseph, sold by his brothers. But what an outcome! "You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good." He went from being a slave to becoming the prince of Egypt. And we should not forget the sale of our Lord Jesus who was sold by one of his closest friends. Here again, we see that men meant things for evil, BUT God meant it for our salvation.

## Reflections of a Sailor

*By Allan (shared by LHM Prince Rupert)*

The sea stretches endlessly before me, a horizon that never seems to draw closer. Though I sail with others, there are nights when the silence between us feels heavier than the waves.

Loneliness creeps in during the long watches, whispering doubts in the stillness. My hands are calloused from the ropes, my back bent from the labor, and yet it is not the work that breaks me—it is the distance from those I love. Their voices echo only in my memory, their laughter carries faintly across the waters of my mind. I long for the warmth of home, for the simple joy of sitting at the table with my family, but the sea keeps us apart.



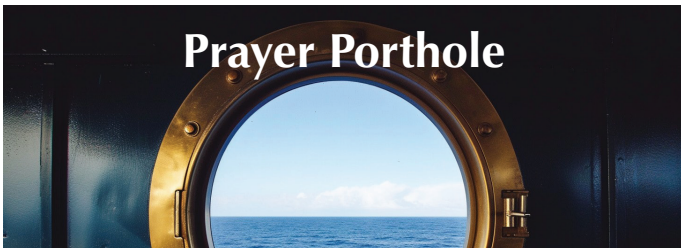
The workload presses me like the tide, relentless and unyielding. Each task completed is followed by another, and the rhythm of duty leaves little room to rest. Yet even in the exhaustion, I find moments of grace. When I lifted my eyes to the stars, I remember that the same heavens stretch above my family. The constellations that guide me also shine over them, a reminder that though we are separated by distance, we are held together under God's sky.

I confess that separation is hard. I confess that loneliness sometimes feels like a storm I cannot weather. But I also confess that I am not abandoned. The Lord is my keeper, my

companion in the night watches. His presence fills the emptiness; His strength steadies me when mines falters. The sea may separate me from my family, but love is not diminished by distance—it is sustained by faith, by hope, and by the promise of reunion.

So I sail on, not alone, but with God as my constant companion. My labor is seen by Him, my loneliness is heard by Him, and my separation is held tenderly in His care. And in that truth, I find courage to face another dawn upon the waters. The waves may rise, the winds may howl, but I know that the One who calms the storm also guards my heart.

And when I finally return, I will carry with me not only the weariness of the voyage, but also the testimony that even in the deepest loneliness, God was near. That even in the hardest labour, His strength sustained me; that during the longest separation, His love bridged the gap. This is my reflection: a sailor's confession of struggle, but also a sailor's prayer of hope.



- Praise God for the many conversations that happen every day and that the seed of God's word will bear fruit as the seafarers leave Vancouver and travel to their next port.
- Pray for safety for all the ships in heavy winter oceans conditions.
- Pray for the seafarers and their families because of the many challenges they experience. Pray that the materials given to the seafarers will find a way into their homes.
- Praise God for Z, a Chinese officer who came to faith and was recently baptized. Pray for his wife and family that they too would believe.
- Pray for the next generation of ship visitors.
- Pray for the Ukrainian seafarers we meet and that among them there would be an even greater openness to the gospel.

## Our Mission

*To love and honour God  
by serving  
the seafarers of the world  
in Word and deed.*

Senior Port Chaplain – Ray Hanna  
Chaplain Emeritus – Teus Kappers



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Methods of supporting the Lord's work at Lighthouse:

- Cash, cheque, credit card, PayPal
- Automatic debits to bank account
- e-transfers. Please send to: [info@sealight.org](mailto:info@sealight.org)
- Planned giving through wills, charitable bequests
- On-line via LHM's secured web site:

[www.sealight.org](http://www.sealight.org).

*"I thank my God in all my  
remembrance of you, always in every  
prayer of mine for you all making my  
prayer with joy, because of your  
partnership in the gospel"*

(Philippians 1:3-5)

### LHM Stewardship Policy

Spending of funds is confined to board approved programs and projects. Each restricted contribution designated towards a board approved program or project will be used as designated, with the understanding that when the need for such a program or project has been met, or cannot be completed for any reason determined by the board, the remaining restricted contributions designated for such program or project will be used where needed most.