



The Mission to Seafarers

Appointment Brief

Part-time Chaplain Ports of Tilbury & London Gateway

January 2026

About The Mission to Seafarers

With a history dating back to 1856, The Mission to Seafarers (“MtS”) supports the men and women working at sea when they need us most through providing emergency assistance, practical support, and a friendly welcome in ports all over the world. Operating under the trusted sign of the “Flying Angel”, MtS touches the lives of seafarers in numerous ways, responding to their needs and connecting them with local communities, including providing:

- Advocacy, advice, and counselling
- Communication, transport, and centre hospitality
- Emergency response
- Hospital and prison visitation
- Ship visitation
- Spiritual support

There are an estimated 1.89m seafarers across the world operating on 74,000 ships. These men and women, of all nationalities, spend up to nine months at sea, far from families, friends and loved ones.

The Mission to Seafarers (“MtS”) has a presence at over 200 ports in 50 countries, operating day and night, 365 days a year. As a Christian-based organisation, our help is importantly offered regardless of nationality, rank, faith or no faith.

Our core work is face-to-face ship visiting which is undertaken by our chaplains, welfare officers, ship visitors, volunteers and centre managers. In more recent years, we have added a digital element to our work in response to the pandemic and the increased speed of ship turnaround times in ports.

In addition to our port-facing work, we have also expanded our portfolio of services to include Family Support Services in the Philippines and India, WeCare training courses in social communications, financial wellbeing and suicide awareness and MtS’s Happiness Index.



Our Values and Culture

MtS is a collaborative, collegiate and respectful organisation. We place great importance on our values which define and reflect our organisational culture.

- **Pioneering:** We encourage innovative thinking and seek to be flexible and entrepreneurial in our ways of working.
- **Inclusive:** We are unconditionally committed to the support of all seafarers and their families without discrimination.
- **United:** We are one global, intergenerational, multicultural family united in vision and purpose, while respecting diversity of culture and context.
- **Collaborative:** We are co-operative in our approach to our work – in relation to individuals, the church, ecumenical partners, and organisations and institutions that work for the welfare of seafarers.
- **Accountable:** We are accountable as stewards of the resources entrusted to us, to each other in recognition of our mutual inter-dependence and to those charged with governance at station, regional and international level.
- **Caring:** In all our dealings we strive to behave with compassion, to act with integrity and to treat everyone with respect.



The Europe Region

The Europe Region consists of more than 40 ports over a wide geographical area stretching from Scotland to Turkey. Please see <https://www.missiontoseafarers.org/our-ports> Many of the ports in the Europe Region are in the UK, but MtS also has staff in Rotterdam, Antwerp, Piraeus and Georgia (in the ports of Batumi and Poti). We also fund port chaplaincy work in Rouen and Vlissingen (The Netherlands) and will soon have a presence in Antibes. The maritime welfare sector in the UK is well developed and we work closely with other maritime welfare societies such as Stella Maris, the Sailor Society, the Merchant Navy Welfare Board and Deutsche Seemannsmission.

The Covid 19 pandemic had a detrimental impact on our work. Shore leave remains limited for some seafarers, whether driven by turnaround times or through the directions of ships' captains and shipping agencies. Despite the difficulties caused by the pandemic, we have continued to support seafarers by ship visiting where we have to the port, shopping for seafarers who are denied shore leave and ministering to seafarers via Facebook, WhatsApp, and the new digital chaplaincy service.

The Ports of Tilbury and London Gateway

The Port of Tilbury is the largest of 8 ports owned by Forth Ports and is the largest, multi-modal port in the South East. On the north bank of the Thames, a few miles east of central London, it is perfectly located to handle cargo for London and the wider South East. Tilbury has a throughput of 16 million tonnes per annum, with an estimated value of around £8.7 billion, making it the largest port on the Thames. The varied cargos, spread across an estate in excess of 1,000 acres, are imported and exported by a variety of short and deep sea vessels. Offering operational support for different cargoes, the port can support ro-ro, container, forest products, grain and bulks as well as cruises and property solutions. With its strong road, rail and barge networks, Tilbury provides supply chain solutions for a diverse range of sectors.

Its conscientious approach to the environment makes the Port of Tilbury the UK's greenest port. The majority of its electricity is generated through its 4 wind turbines, and there is ongoing investment in power, water, and fuel saving solutions at the port. Port of Tilbury is an active member of Essex Wildlife Trust and achieved zero net loss of wildlife when developing the 70 acres of the London Distribution Park.

DP London Gateway is a sustainable, strategically located port on the River Thames. The deep seaport and logistics park has its own international rail terminal and, at just 10 miles from the M25 and 28 miles from London, it is an accessible hub for import and export. London Gateway's deep-water berths are built to handle the world's largest vessels, and its state-of-the-art technology means it can do this in the safest, most reliable and efficient way. The port is equipped with top-of-the-range equipment, including some of the largest quay cranes in the world, as well as automation in many areas, such as the truck handling process and stacking yard. This advanced technology provides market-leading turnaround times for maximum efficiency, as do onsite inspection facilities, with clearance taking just 3 days on average. The site also offers convenient, modern warehousing space, with a logistics park equivalent in size to 400 football pitches, making it one of the biggest of its kind in Europe. This combination of facilities means that London Gateway offers logistics and shipping companies, retailers and manufacturers, a unique opportunity to work more efficiently and sustainably, closer to key consumer markets, in turn reducing road miles and offering a full service on one site.

Job Description

Department:	Ministry
Responsible to:	Chaplaincy Development Manager
Other Key Working Relationships:	<p>Port Staff Volunteers from MtS and other maritime agencies MtS Branch Committee The Church of England (in particular in the surrounding areas) IHQ Staff Regional Director, Europe</p>
Location:	Ports of Tilbury and London Gateway (with occasional visits to Felixstowe)
Term:	Permanent, part-time
Hours:	Part-time (20 hours per week) worked flexibly to accommodate shipping schedules
Role Purpose:	<p>To visit ships on behalf of MtS berthed primarily within the Ports of Tilbury and London Gateway, and operating in line with MtS's core purpose: to promote the spiritual, moral and physical wellbeing of seafarers and their families world-wide.</p> <p>To ensure that MtS's mission is accessible and that our service provision is appropriate for all seafarers.</p> <p>To provide support and the hand of friendship to all seafarers.</p>

Principal Duties and Responsibilities

- Visit ships that call into the port, extending the hand of friendship to seafarers, offering support and responding to need as appropriate
- Offer spiritual, emotional support and advice to seafarers as required, including directing them to other sources of support as appropriate
- Lead seafarers in Christian prayer, where appropriate
- Partner with the Chaplaincy Development Manager to nurture the current volunteer base
- Partner with the Chaplaincy Development Manager to increase the level of community support
- Work with the Chaplaincy Development Manager to co-ordinate ship visits on all vessels (including cruise ships), including scheduling rotas
- Help facilitate access to ships for volunteers and provide training for new volunteers
- Support the provision of communications and transport facilities to seafarers as required
- Provide advice on access to London and other local attractions, including access to the Tilbury Seafarers' Centre

Principle Duties and Responsibilities (cont.)

- Liaise and partner with other port chaplains and welfare workers locally to ensure ministry continuity, particularly in cases of ongoing pastoral care, and justice and welfare cases
- In partnership with the Chaplaincy Development Manager, provide a swift and effective response to any relevant emergency involving an individual seafarer or group of seafarers, where appropriate in close liaison with port authorities or other relevant bodies
- Visit and provide practical and emotional support to seafarers who are in hospital or prison
- Contribute to the broader strategic thinking of the MtS in Tilbury and London Gateway, acting as a trusted and collaborative thought partner to the Chaplaincy Development Manager.
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with other maritime missions and welfare organisations
- Develop strong working relationships with port authorities, managers and staff
- Wherever possible to provide access to places of worship as requested by seafarers
- Assist the Chaplaincy Development Manager and other staff / volunteers in the Seafarer Centre
- Maintain an up to date record of ship visiting activity using the MtS Ship Visitor App
- Ensure e-mails, telephone messages, and Happy at Sea App are regularly monitored and respond as required
- Participate in training opportunities as appropriate

Person Specification

Knowledge and Skills

- Given MtS's priority of better supporting all seafarers, candidates should have a practical understanding of and empathy with the particular challenges seafarers experience
- Strong experience of pastoral work; experience of offering pastoral support to all seafarers and/or marginalised communities would be an asset
- Strong and adaptable interpersonal skills, including being an empathetic listener
- Able to quickly develop productive working relationships with colleagues and other partners
- Able to quickly establish rapport and trust with colleagues and all seafarers
- Able to constructively challenge the status quo
- Solutions focused, able to explore alternative means of doing things to create positive impact
- Excellent organisational and administrative skills
- IT literate, fully conversant with MS Office and willing to learn and use any in-house programmes
- Fluency in spoken and written English is essential.
- Full, clean UK driving licence is essential

Personal Qualities

- This post is open to ordained and non-ordained candidates. MtS is an Anglican Mission but this post is open to Christians of all denominations who possess a strong Christian faith and have empathy with MtS's Anglican roots and with the work and charitable purpose of our work.
- Collaborative and inclusive, able to work as part of an ecumenical wider team

Personal Qualities (cont.)

- Empathetic, supportive and understanding with good self-awareness.
- Demonstrates sound judgement, emotional intelligence and sensitivity
- A highly motivated self-starter, able to work under own initiative and unsupervised
- Culturally and politically aware
- Resilient and able to remain calm and measured in challenging situations
- Shares ideas and is receptive to those of others
- Flexible in approach with the ability to adapt to changing priorities
- Demonstrates integrity, acting at all times in the best interests of MtS

Special Working Conditions

- Visiting ships is an essential part of this role and you may visit as many as three ships per day. You will be required to climb gangways with as many as 80 x 60 degree steps leading to the deck on board ships and then perhaps a further three floors to get to the bridge.
- The Chaplain will be required to comply with the Health & Safety and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) protocols throughout the Ports of Tilbury and London Gateway.

General Requirements

- Applicants must already have the right to live and work permanently in the UK.
- Applicants must have a full clean driving licence that is valid in the UK.
- An offer of employment is subject to a satisfactory medical, references and enhanced DBS check.
- This job description should be treated as a guide to the duties that the post holder is expected to perform. As a term of employment the post holder can be required to undertake such duties as are commensurate with his or her position.
- The job description may be amended to meet changing requirements at any time after discussion with the post holder.
- The Mission to Seafarers operates an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. The post holder will be expected to comply fully with this Policy in carrying out their duties.
- All employees are required to be aware of their responsibilities towards Health & Safety and Safeguarding and must adhere to the Health & Safety and Safeguarding Policies.
- All employees are required to be aware of their responsibilities towards the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and to adhere to MtS's GDPR and Data Retention Policies.

Terms of Appointment

Location: Ports of Tilbury and London Gateway (and occasionally Felixstowe)

Term: Permanent and part-time

Hours of Work: The full-time working week is 40 hours. This is a part-time time role of 20 hours per week, worked flexibly (including weekends and public holidays) to accommodate shipping schedules.

Remuneration: £35,000-£38,000 per annum (pro-rata) depending on experience

Annual Leave: 25 days per annum plus public holidays (pro-rata)

Benefits: *Pension:* Workplace or Church of England Pension

Life Assurance: 3x base salary

Other: Includes Employee Assistance Programme, retail discount vouchers, cycle to work scheme, free eye test, access to training and development opportunities

How to Apply

To apply for this position, please submit your completed Application Form to jobs@missiontoseafarers.org by no later than **noon on Monday 9 February 2026**. We regret that applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

The Recruitment Process

First round interviews: Wednesday 18 February 2026 (online – tbc)

Second round interviews: Week of 23 February 2026 (in person)

