



The Mission to Seafarers



Appointment Brief

**Port Chaplain & Rector of Christ Church
Yokohama, Japan**

September 2025

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.



Background to the Role

The Port of Yokohama is one of Japan's largest and busiest international gateways. Though MtS's Seafarers' Centre in Yokohama closed in 2007, MtS continues to thrive through its chaplaincy and outreach programme. Ship visiting, pastoral care, and advocacy are at the core of MtS's daily work here, now enhanced with digital engagement and collaborative partnerships.

The seafarers visiting the Port of Yokohama predominantly serve on car carriers, container ships and cargo vessels, as well as a regular schedule of cruise ships. The vast majority of these seafarers are men, with only around 2-3% of the seafaring population being female. However, one of MtS's key priorities for this role is to be able to better address the needs of both men and women, the latter group facing some very particular challenges in a male-dominated profession.

We are also focused on growing levels of community support and our volunteer base so we can offer a more comprehensive service to seafarers arriving in the port.

The postholder will also be the Rector of the English-speaking congregation at Yokohama Christ Church, an active Anglican community that supports the port chaplaincy ministry. Christ Church, whilst an historic Anglican building with deep roots in the international community in Yokohama, now has a large and thriving Japanese congregation served by a full-time local priest of the Nippon Sei Ko Kai (The Anglican Church in Japan). The Japanese parish, known as Yamate Sei Ko Kai, maintains the building and takes full responsibility for it. But the Rector and people of Yokohama Christ Church also support the parish financially and strive to work collaboratively both in maintenance, mission and outreach.

The Port of Yokohama

Established in 1859, the Port of Yokohama stands as Japan's first modern international trading port and continues to be a pivotal maritime hub in the Asia-Pacific region. Strategically located approximately 30 kilometres south of Tokyo on the northwestern edge of Tokyo Bay, the port benefits from its sheltered position, ensuring stable cargo handling operations throughout the year. In 2022, the port managed a total cargo volume of approximately 106 million tons, including nearly 3 million TEUs of containerised cargo. It handles a wide variety of vessels – ranging from ultra-large container ships and bulk carriers to cruise liners and significant volumes of car carriers, particularly through Daikoku Pier, one of Japan's leading vehicle export terminals.

Yokohama's infrastructure is extensive and modern. Honmoku forms the core of the port's container operations, with 24 berths in total - 14 of which are dedicated to containers. Within this, Minami Honmoku Pier stands out as Japan's deepest berth at 18 meters. Operated by APM Terminals Japan, it can accommodate vessels up to 24,000 TEUs and has an annual handling capacity of approximately 2.4 million TEUs. Collectively, the Honmoku container terminals manage most of Yokohama's container volume, which totalled nearly 3 million TEUs in 2022.

For cruise operations, the Osanbashi International Passenger Terminal is the primary gateway, centrally located to offer direct access to Yokohama's vibrant cultural and tourist areas. The newer Daikoku Pier Cruise Terminal, opened in 2019, serves mega cruise vessels unable to pass beneath the Yokohama Bay Bridge.

The port is integrated into Japan's wider transportation network via major expressways and rail systems, supporting efficient inland logistics. A centre for innovation, Yokohama is also home to Nissan's global headquarters, reinforcing the city's ties to the automotive and maritime industries. The port is advancing in sustainable practices, including LNG bunkering and research into alternative fuels like hydrogen.

As a dynamic and evolving port city, Yokohama continues to drive regional economic development while playing a vital role in the global logistics chain.

Yokohama Christ Church

The Chaplain to the Port of Yokohama also serves as Rector to the English-speaking congregation of Christ Church Yokohama, an historic Anglican community founded in 1864. Since the end of the Second World War, this dual role has formed a unique and integrated model of ministry, combining pastoral oversight of the congregation with seafarers' mission in the port. While each aspect of the role carries distinct responsibilities, they mutually support and enrich one another.

The English-speaking congregation gathers for regular Sunday worship, major feast days, and community celebrations, offering sacramental and pastoral ministry in the Anglican tradition. The Rector leads worship, presides at the Eucharist, and provides teaching and pastoral care to a diverse group of expatriates, long-term residents, and international visitors.

Christ Church is shared with the Japanese congregation of Yamate Sei Ko Kai, part of the Nippon Sei Ko Kai (The Anglican Church in Japan), served by its own full-time priest. The two congregations cooperate in maintaining the historic building and regularly join together for worship and outreach, reflecting a spirit of unity and mutual respect.

The English-speaking congregation includes members from a wide variety of national, denominational, and cultural backgrounds. The Rector must be inclusive, welcoming, and adept at ministering across traditions with sensitivity and warmth. Hospitality, communication, and building community are essential to this role.

Christ Church also plays an important role in the work of the Port Chaplaincy. Many parishioners offer practical, spiritual, and financial support to the Mission to Seafarers. The Rector is therefore expected to value and sustain the dynamic relationship between parish life and port ministry, seeing them as complementary aspects of a single calling.



Job Description

Department:	Ministry
Responsible to:	Regional Director for East Asia Region
Other Key Working Relationships:	Local maritime and ecumenical partners MtS Japan Colleagues & Committee Nippon Sei Ko Kai (Anglican Church in Japan) Yokohama Christ Church Other East Asia Region colleagues International Headquarters (IHQ), London Staff
Term:	Permanent, full-time
Accommodation:	Rectory apartment adjacent to Christ Church
Role Purpose:	<p>As Port Chaplain, the postholder supports visiting seafarers through ship visits, pastoral care, transport, advocacy, and spiritual ministry operating in line with MtS's core purpose, the provision of physical, moral and spiritual support to seafarers and their families, of different backgrounds and nationalities.</p> <p>As Rector, to serve the English-speaking Anglican congregation of Yokohama Christ Church, providing regular worship, sacramental ministry, and pastoral support.</p>

Principal Duties and Responsibilities

Port Chaplaincy (MtS)

- 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
- Working collaboratively with the Lay Chaplain in the nearby Port of Tokyo and offer regular support and assistance with ship visiting and the co-ordination of volunteers.
- Facilitate access to ships for volunteers
- Support the provision of communications and transport facilities to seafarers as required
- Provide advice on access to the city of Yokohama.
- Liaise and partner with other port chaplains, welfare workers and seafarer centres locally to ensure ministry continuity, particularly in cases of ongoing pastoral care, and justice and welfare cases
- In partnership with the Yokohama Port Medical Team and others, 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

Port Chaplaincy (MtS) (cont.)

- Contribute to the broader strategic thinking of MtS in Japan as a regular member of the MtS Japan Committee
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with other maritime missions and welfare organisations
- Develop and maintain strong working relationships with port authorities, including managers and staff
- Wherever possible provide access to places of worship as requested by seafarers
- 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

Rector, Christ Church Yokohama

- Provide faithful and engaging leadership in worship, preaching, and teaching
- Leading Sunday services and other occasional offices at Christ Church
- Officiate at baptisms, weddings, and funerals
- Providing pastoral care to the congregation, whether individuals or families, including those in times of transition or need
- Encourage spiritual formation and discipleship through prayer, study, and service
- Support and equip lay ministry and participation in the life of the church
- Encourage community outreach
- Represent the congregation within the wider Diocese of Yokohama and in ecumenical settings
- Liaising with the Bishop and Nippon Sei Ko Kai (The Anglican Church in Japan) of Yokohama

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 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

Knowledge and Skills (cont.)

- Fluency in spoken and written English is essential. A basic understanding of the Japanese language is distinctly preferred and will be invaluable for daily living but is not essential when ship visiting or in church.
- Full, clean driving licence valid in Japan is essential (see *Special Conditions* below)
- In the role of Rector:-
 - the ability to nurture faith in both committed Anglicans and those new to the Church
 - a collaborative and encouraging leadership style

Personal Qualities

- This post is open to ordained candidates from churches that are officially recognised as member churches within the Anglican Communion. Because of the current stance of the Diocese of Yokohama regarding the Ordination of Women, we regret that we are only able to consider applications from male priests.
- Collaborative and inclusive, able to work as part of an ecumenical wider team
- Empathetic, supportive and understanding with good self-awareness
- Demonstrates sound judgement, emotional intelligence and sensitivity
- 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
- A highly motivated self-starter, able to work under own initiative and unsupervised
- Willingness to learn Japanese (if not already spoken)
- In the role of Rector:-
 - A commitment to parish ministry rooted in Anglican tradition
 - A vision for community engagement and integration with the Mission to Seafarers

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 Chaplaincy Worker will be required to comply with the Health and Safety and Personal Protective Equipment protocols throughout the Port of Yokohama.
- Holders of driving licences from certain jurisdictions may be required to undertake a Japanese driving test.

General Requirements

- Because of the current stance of the Diocese of Yokohama regarding the Ordination of Women, we regret that we are only able to consider applications from male priests.
- For applicants who do not already have the right to live and work in Japan, appointment is subject to successful work visa sponsorship (which would be supported by MtS Japan).
- An offer of employment is subject to a satisfactory medical, references and enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) or equivalent (such as *Safe to Receive*) 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 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 and Safety and Safeguarding to adhere to the Health and Safety and Safeguarding Policies.
- All employees are required to adhere to MtS's Data Retention Policies.

Terms of Appointment

Location: Port of Yokohama and Christ Church Yokohama

Term: Permanent

Hours of Work: Full-time. It is anticipated that the average weekly split of work will be 80% MtS and 20% Christ Church. Flexibility is key in order to accommodate shipping schedules and church activities.

Remuneration: In region of Yen 6m per annum (commensurate with experience)

Accommodation: Fully furnished accommodation (spacious, western-style, 3-bedroom apartment with separate office) including utilities (gas, electricity, water, phone, wi-fi, TV).

Car: The incumbent has access to a vehicle for work at the port

Annual Leave: 24 days per annum plus public holidays

Benefits:

<i>Pension:</i>	To be confirmed
<i>Medical:</i>	Japanese Health Service (this covers 70% of all medical bills with the remaining 30% being for the individual's own account)

Other: Should the successful applicant be from overseas then additional benefits will include:-

Relocation: Reasonable assistance for Chaplain and dependent family at start and end of assignment

School fees: For school-age children at local International School

Home Leave: Annual, economy return flights to home location for Chaplain and dependent family

How to Apply

To apply for this position, please submit your completed Application Form to jobs@missiontoseafarers.org by no later than **Tuesday 30 September 2025**. We regret that applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

The Recruitment Process

Interviews will take place in mid to late October with first round interviews taking place online and final round interviews taking place in person in Yokohama, Japan.