

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

## HIGHLIGHTS Seafarers International House

### MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Overwhelming!

Dear friends of Seafarers International House (SIH):

*"Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; For I am the Lord your God, the Holy one of Israel, your Savior". Isaiah 43:2-3*

Haven't we all felt overwhelmed this past year? And yet, you have helped us weather the storm caused by the pandemic with your overwhelming support ... this imperfect storm that disrupted the lives of so many of us as well as those often unseen seafarers during the crew change crisis and invisible asylum seekers detained in jail-like facilities, while the immigration process grinded to a halt.

You, our supporters, expressed compassion for seafarers and immigrants during the time of crisis by increasing contributions significantly. When we had to cancel our major fundraiser, the

2020 Setting the Course Banquet, individuals, shipping industry partners and unions, decided to send donations instead of buying tickets so that our 6 port chaplains could continue to visit ships that some likened to "floating prisons" because travel bans made crew changes impossible for most.

Spring was financially disastrous as we had to stop operating the guesthouse, which typically subsidizes our mission with about 75% of total income. Tragically, we had to part with our guesthouse staff, first hoping to rehire them in the summer, then by the end of December. Saving our organization when our services are needed most, we received a "gift" in the form of a respite organization (Comunilife) that leased our space from April to July to attend to community members recovering from COVID-19. With that blessing, we were able fulfill our continuing mission to seafarers and immigrants, while contributing the health insurance of the laid-off staff members throughout the year. And all through the pandemic we have been able to house seafarers in a midtown hotel now temporarily known as "SIH relocated".

The Right of Asylum Online Advocacy Event was a great way to reach new friends – over 100 people attended all across the nation with over 2,000 seeing it on social media in the days after. Many participated in lobbying against new asylum rules and sent contributions to support our work with asylum seekers.

When senior groups, businesses, and congregations could not meet in person to assemble Christmas-at-Sea satchels, they contributed financial-

*A seafarer in the port of New Haven, CT, for a moment does not feel overwhelmed thanks to the encouragement of Port Chaplain Ruth Setaro.*

#### MISSION

*Seafarers International House (SIH) is the Lutheran response to the urgent needs of vulnerable seafarers and immigrants.*

SIH offers hospitality, social assistance, and advocacy to a multi-national and multi-faith community in maritime ports on the Eastern Seaboard and in New York City.

ly and assembled satchels in their homes and, in the end, showed 2,080 seafarers during the Christmas season that their sacrifices are appreciated.

We have been overwhelmed by the gifts of "imperfect storm weatherers" like you who enabled us to serve almost 20,000 people in the ports and at SIH relocated where we now provide lodging and social work assistance.

We thank the amazing individuals, congregations, synods, foundations, shipping industry partners and unions who helped us through the tempest of 2020 and who prepared a solid ground for 2021, where we will continue our service to seafarers in the ports of Baltimore, Philadelphia, New Jersey and CT, and housing seafarers and asylum seekers who are beginning to remerge after the lock-down.

We are overwhelmed by your support. If you like to learn more about our ministry **watch the 5-minute video on our home page [www.sihnyc.org](http://www.sihnyc.org)** and share it with your congregation or assembly.



*Marsh Luther Drogel*  
Pastor and Executive Director



# 2020 Program Impact

**19,746** immigrants and seafarers directly benefited from SIH services while their lives were disrupted during the pandemic

**2,080** seafarers, regardless of faith, received Christmas-at-Sea satchels filled with warm clothing and holiday greetings prepared by congregations and volunteers to recognize these key workers

**12** asylees stayed for free at the guesthouse and at *SIH relocated* a total of 442 nights; we also hosted 11 local disaster survivors

**18** volunteer visitors brought hope to 8 asylum seekers before detention center visits had to be cancelled

**3** months (April - June) during which a community partner cared for people recovering from COVID-19 at the guesthouse

**14,644** seafarers, the invisible essential workers, who often worked on extended contracts, were visited on 1,407 ships receiving essentials they had requested during the crew change crisis

**1,351** seafarers were transported to the mall or medical facilities before COVID-19 restrictions made shore leave impossible for most mariners

**72** seafarers received at times free lodging at *SIH relocated* when between job assignments because of COVID-related disruptions and quarantine requirements

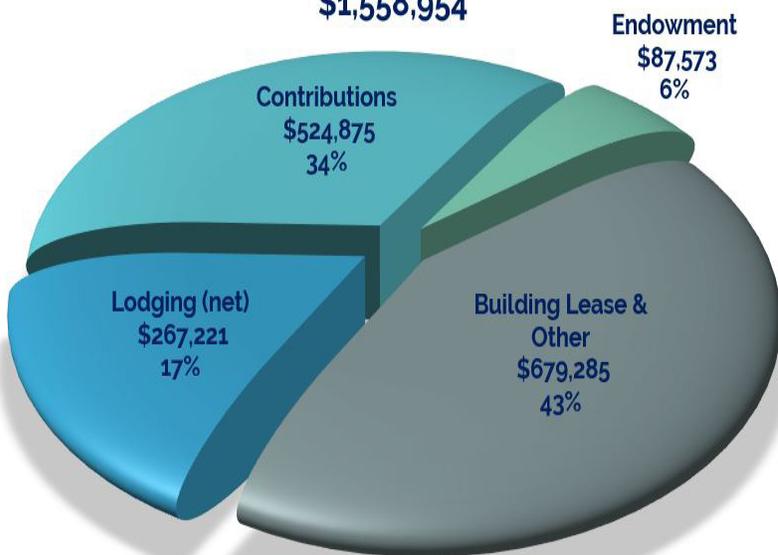
**2** advocacy campaigns, one championing seafarers to be recognized as essential workers, and another online campaign attended by over 100 people drawing attention to a failing immigration system and opposing new rules that would have dismantled asylum to the United States

## 2020 FINANCIAL REPORT

COVID-19 related challenges are reflected in our finances with lodging revenue that accounted for 72% of income last year dropping to just 17% in 2020. Overwhelmingly, it was our supporters' response that enabled us to fulfil our mission with contributions accounting for 34% of income, up from 22% in 2019. Even with the ability to lease the building for three months to a partner organization that took care of COVID-19 patients in recovery, operating expenses exceeded revenues by \$551,048. Program services accounted for 83% percent of expenses with only 17% spent on support services and fundraising. Net Assets increased from \$6,150,830 in 2019 to 6,159,175 in 2020. The figures below reflect unaudited revenue and expenses and are subject to change once audited. To request the audited 2020 financial statements send an email to [henryk@sihnyc.org](mailto:henryk@sihnyc.org). [📎](#)

Operating Revenue 2020 (pre-audit)

**\$1,558,954**



Operating Expenses 2020 (pre-audit)

**\$2,110,002**

