



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NEWS RELEASE**

**Albany Maritime Ministry to Mark the Holiday Season with Christmas at Sea Collection, Advent Open House, and Beer & Carols**

(November 7, 2024) The Albany Maritime Ministry (AMM)'s *Christmas at Sea* hospitality program has begun. Small, gift-wrapped boxes (shoebox or small plastic bin with lid) can be donated for distribution to seafarers who are on vessels at Capital District ports and away from their families during the holidays.

Suggested items for donation include:

- Something local to Albany or NY
  - Warm clothing (knit caps, gloves, work gloves, warm socks, sweatshirt – M, L or XL)
  - Stationery (writing paper, envelopes, notepads, pencils, pens)
  - Toiletries (razors, shaving cream, aftershave, toothbrush/toothpaste, deodorant/fragrant soaps, lotions, combs, etc.)
  - AA/AAA batteries
  - Activity books (puzzles, word searches, adult coloring)
- NO CANDY OR ALCOHOL PLEASE-

Drop-off locations for donations (through the end of the year) include the Unity Lutheran Church (1500 Western Ave, Albany) and the Port of Albany Administration Building (106 Smith Blvd, Albany).

On **Sunday, December 1** from 1:00 to 3:00 pm, AMM will be hosting an *Advent Open House* at the Rev. William G. Hempel Seafarer Center (109 Smith Blvd) at the Port of Albany where wrapped boxes can also be dropped off.

In addition, the AMM will host *Beer & Carols* on **Monday, December 16** from 5:00 to 8:00 pm at the Warbler Brewery (155 Delaware Ave, Delmar), with singing starting at 5:30. People are invited to sing favorite carols and enjoy alcoholic/non-alcoholic beverages. There will be opportunities to make donations to support AMM throughout the evening and The Warbler will be donating a portion of the bar sales.

AMM is an ecumenical association that welcomes seafarers that dock in the Capital District. Led by the Rev. Kate Drefke, Pastor of Faith Lutheran Church (Troy) and Evangelical Lutheran Church of Poestenkill (Poestenkill), the Rev. D. Lowell Chilton, Pastor of First Lutheran Church (Albany) and Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (Loudonville), and a volunteer board, the Albany Maritime Ministry addresses seafarers' spiritual, family, and material needs; advocates for seafarers' rights; welcomes seafarers aboard their ship when they cannot come

ashore; collaborates with related agencies worldwide; and offers special programs and services, such as Christmas at Sea.

For more information about Christmas at Sea, contact volunteer Dick Walker at 518-713-4882 or visit <https://albanymm.us/ChristmasAtSea.html>

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With four transport modes -- ocean vessels, barges, freight railroads, interstate highways -- the Port of Albany is Upstate New York's largest public port/logistics hub and serves as a Port of Entry with on-site U.S. Customs office and bonded warehouse. The Port is open and active year-round and includes deep-water shipping access and approximately 450 acres of land on both sides of the Hudson River in three municipalities. The Port of Albany is located 124 nautical miles north of the Battery in New York Harbor. The facility is currently undertaking nearly \$72 million in maritime upgrades and investment as well as a \$700+ million Port expansion project. For more information, visit [www.portofalbany.us](http://www.portofalbany.us).