

JEN-977
Box 8
PACKET 7

THOMPSON, ALFRED
1885-1955

X

X. Rev. August Thompson

Individual Questionnaire for

Biographical Record of Ministers

of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church (in America) and its parent synods:
The United Danish Ev. Luth. Church, The Danish Ev. Luth. Church Association
in America and The Danish Ev. Luth. Church in North America.

(Compiled for the Synodical Historical Archives)

Personal Data: (Please give all information you can)

Full name:

Born when: where:

Baptized when and where:

Confirmed when and where: by whom:

If immigrant, date of arrival in America: located where:

Date of ordination: where: by whom:

If not in above synods, when and where accepted as member pastor of our synod:

Retired from active ministry when: why:

Located where: occupation:

If dead, what date: where: cause:

Buried where date

Marriage: (1) to whom date and place:

Wife's birthdate and place:

Her parents: location:

If wife is dead, give date

(2) Second wife (if any; give same information about her).....

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Apr. 29 1955

ALFRED THOMPSON

By N. B. Hansen, Hutchinson, Minn.

Alfred Thompson passed away in Los Angeles, California, on March 22. It was well known that he had been seriously ill for some time. The Board of Foreign Missions of our church sent him a greeting from its annual meeting February 15-16.

I would like to write a few words about this friend. He was well known to my parents and especially my older brothers and sisters. He often mentioned both in letters and in private conversation that my father and my brother Hans were among his very best friends.

Alfred Thompson became intimately known to me when I was asked to become a member of the "Sudan Committee" back in 1936. I took Rev. P. C. Jensen's place on this committee and have now represented our synod for 19 years in this work. For many years Pastor and Mrs. Thompson were our only missionaries in this field. There has naturally been much correspondence with the Thompsons during these years.

All who knew Alfred loved him much. He was a humble servant of God. You felt humble in his presence. He never embarrassed anyone. His strength was in his private contact with others. He revealed a deep interest in others. His memory was greater than the ordinary. He always remembered someone he had once met.

It should, perhaps, be said of him that he was a man of much prayer. Many years ago I attended a meeting of the Lutheran Foreign Missions Conference in Minneapolis. One of the speakers was a Rev. M. E. Sletta of Fergus Falls, Minnesota. In his talk he mentioned a little book written by a Pastor G. Munster in Denmark. This man was the president of the Sudan Mission in that country. In this book Munster mentions the power of prayer. He relates two incidents in the life of Thompson and other missionaries. Drought had become a serious problem in the land around Numan. The chief of a tribe came to Thompson and Bronnum asking for help. They knelt together and prayed for rain, and it rained. The same thing happened in Lamurde, where Thompsons spent most of their time in Africa. Spirit worshippers came to him for help. Thompson asked these worshippers to pray to their gods for two days. He and the Christians would pray to their God the following two days. God answered the prayers of the Christians. Thompson spent much time in prayer. Rain came on the second day on which the Christians prayed.

I was greatly impressed when I was in Africa in 1949 and saw the work he and his wife had done in and around Lamurde. The Lamurde church was not only large and well filled at all services, the prayer meetings, held every Wednesday evening, were entirely under the leadership of the Africans and the church was filled at all meetings.

The thing that impressed me most I believe was the type of spiritual life that was evident in his church and daughter churches - about 27 of them at that time. You felt a true, sincere, Christian atmosphere in this field. This was the first congregation to be able to be without white leadership. Many of the pastors and other Christian leaders throughout the province of Nigeria have come from the Lamurde territory. The Danish missionaries said, "Han vinder alles Hjertter" - he captivates the hearts of all, certainly was true of Thompson.

I was told the following of Alfred Thompson during the years that he was unable to return on his regular furlough due to the wars: The weather is very hot in that part of the country. Man soon runs out of energy. Thompson carried on his work in spite of the heat. He would go from congregation to congregation conducting services. A black man would often preach for him, but he would administer the sacraments. Many were the times when he would faint in the midst of a communion service. The people would carry him out

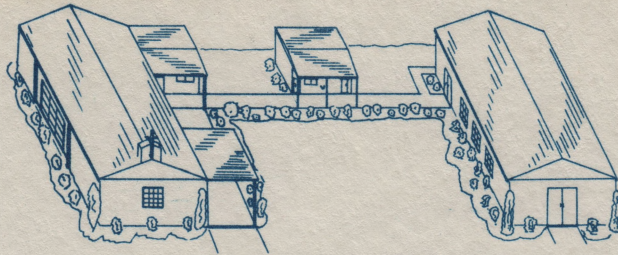
of the hot church, bathe his face with water, and when he would come to again he would carry on the interrupted service whether it was a communion service, baptism, or wedding.

The Thompsons have had some trying times during their years of service. It was not easy for them to leave their children with others while they went to Africa. But God blessed them with many children in Africa - children that still call them father and mother. Since the Sudan Mission was not supported directly by our church, not many of the congregations were inviting the Sudan missionaries to visit them, but that changed with the years. One congregation after another became interested in this mission and extended invitations to them. They became loved and wanted throughout our synod. Contributions to the Sudan Mission have been very generous for many years.

Thompson was a spiritual son of the late Jens Dixen. He had attended Bronson High School at Kenmare, North Dakota, and while there yielded his life to God's service. He had Christian parents and felt the call of God from the time he was 10 years old to serve God on the mission field.

Thompson is no longer with us, but his memories will long remain. We thank God for him and for what He accomplished through him in Africa. On his behalf I wish to thank those that received him into their home, congregations, and prayers. God grant us many such servants in our church.

4863 E. TULARE
FRESNO 2, CALIFORNIA
OFFICE PHONE 5-4237



B. J. ENGSKOW, B.A., B.D.
PASTOR
PARSONAGE 4895 E. TULARE
PHONE 5-4237

We Preach Christ Crucified!

+ Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church +

April 13, 1955

Rev. P. C. Jensen
Blair, Nebr.

Kære ven P.C.Jensen:

Da jeg endnu intet har set om Pastor Alfred Thompson's Død eller Begravelse. mente jeg maaske dette uddrag fra min Broder Ernst I. Engskovs Brev vilde interessere Luthersk Ugeblads Lesere: (altsaa fra et Privat-brevsom jeg lige modtog)

"Mange tak fordi du omgaaende lod mig vide om Thompson. Ja, jeg havde saadan haabet, at jeg endnu engang skulde faa lejlighed til at se og snakke med vor gode gamle ven. Men saadan skulde det altsaa ikke vere. Thompson var den ydmyge, stille tjener, der gav sig selv helt for andre og intet krevde for sig selv. Derfor brugte Gud ham stort Og vi er en stor skare af sorte og hvide, der vil føle Savnet, men vil prise og takke Gud for, hvad han var for os."

Of course, you will get the details about the funeral etc., from Rev. Girtz and the family, but I thought this tribute was so beautiful. and above all, so fitting, that you might want to quote it. My brother added that his visa has been cleared, and, God willing, he will land in New York May 1. He looks forward to the trip to USA and seeing family and friends here again. Well, just this.

Fraternal greetings,

MAIN STREET LUTHERAN CHURCH

CORNER FOURTH AVENUE AND MAIN STREET

N. B. HANSEN, PASTOR

HUTCHINSON, MINNESOTA

April 12, 1955

PARSONAGE:

415 HASSAN STREET SO.
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On Rev. Alfred Thompson

Rev. P. C. Jensen
Blair, Nebraska

Dear friend:

I'm sending you a copy of our Jubilee Booklet - 1945. Therefore, we are celebrating our eighty-fifth anniversary this year. I am sending you also a carbon copy of an article written ^{by} Thompson and published in the early years of the Sudan Mission either 1913 or 1914. This is a translation from the Danish, but authentic as far as information is concerned. Thompson, as far as I know, was born at Spencer, Iowa. I regret that we do not have more detailed information about his life. There is a good deal of material available in his articles in the "Sudan" and in letters that I have on file. If you are interested in more data I know I could find a great deal if I had the time. Back in 1935 he and Mrs. Thompson became honorary members of the Immanuel Lutheran Church ⁱⁿ ~~and~~ ^{Rainey} and remained members there until they transferred to Los Angeles.

Sincerely yours,

N. B. Hansen
N. B. Hansen

NBH:tg

Pastor Alfred Thompson

"My parents were both born in Denmark. They came to the U. S. in 1883 or 84. They made their first home in Iowa, where I was born on October 4, 1885. I was raised in a Christian home. God called me to go to Africa when I was about 10 years old. My older brother had given some thought to go to Africa at that time, and I believe I was influenced thru him somewhat.

I was converted when I was 20 years old. I felt all the time that that God was calling me to serve in Africa, but I knew I was unable to go until I had been converted. But I did not wish to be a Christian. I went to Valparaiso College in 1904 to prepare myself for temperance work, thinking that this would take the place of foreign mission work in Africa. But God showed me that this was not His will with me. I was converted the following winter, and then I had a deep desire to prepare myself for foreign mission work. There was no opening for me at this time, but in 1908 there seemed to be an opening for me. I then went to Moody's Bible School in Chicago. I was there five months, returned home for a year and returned in 1910 and graduated in 1912. I thank God that the way is now open for me to go to Africa, which I have longed for so long.

People ask: "Are you not afraid to go to Africa?" No I thank God from the bottom of my heart, that I may go! Will you not pray for me, that God may use me in this work, to which He has called me."

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Missionary Alfred Thompson

With the passing of Pastor Alfred Thompson, we have lost one of the pioneer missionaries of our rather young synod. He was one of the apostles of love, and his love was both for his Lord and for all men everywhere. It was a joy to have him here as a member of Olivet. He was always ready to speak a kind word or a word of encouragement. He visited the sick among us, and he assisted at Holy Communion. We shall miss Brother Alfred and his gentle ways and his kind smile. As his last pastor I would like to add this my tribute to all those that will be paid him, in public, but most of all in the hearts of those whose faith he helped kindle and whose faith he encouraged by his gentle ways. May peace and blessing attend the memory of this saint of God.

JMG

Dear Editor Jensen:
This is something for
you returned L. U.
We had about 1300 at our Easter
service - so we are off - and
to a lot of work - but getting on -
happily -
JMG

PASTOR ALFRED THOMPSON

Pastor Alfred Thompson was born October 4, 1885 near Graettinger, Iowa. His father was Carl Thompson and his mother's maiden name was Dorothea Sorensen. His early years of education he received in Iowa and when the family moved to North Dakota he then attended Brorson High School. It was at Brorson under the teaching of Missionary Jens Dixen the Holy Spirit convicted young Alfred of sin and then led him to the assurance that his sin was forgiven and he was a child of God.

When he was only eleven years old he felt the first call to serve the Lord on the foreign field and in 1904 went to Valparaiso College to begin his preparation for this service. For additional study he attended the Moody Bible Institute from which he was graduated in April 1912. With Africa the special burden on his heart he then waited for an opening and finally through his friend and teacher from Brorson he learned that the Danish Mission was beginning work in Sudan and were calling him to help in this new field. In November 1913 he was accepted by the Mission Board in Aarhus, Denmark. On the 21st of January, 1914 he was ordained in Fredens Kirke in Copenhagen by Bishop Ostenfeld.

Miss Flossie M. Gibson, his fiancée, joined him in Denmark just prior to the ordination service and together with three other missionaries became the second group to sail for the new mission field in Sudan. On arrival in Africa they remained for a short time at an English mission station at Rumasha. Here Miss Gibson had to stay alone for some months while Rev. Thompson was sent farther inland. The way was finally opened so that she was able to join him and they were married at Wukari about 25 miles from Ibi. The wedding journey that followed is a story all by itself, but the honeymoon was cut short only ten days after the wedding when word came that Dr. Bronnum was very ill at Numan and Rev. Thompson was to come to him at once. ~~Because of~~ ^{Since} Numan ~~being in~~ ^{was} closed territory because of cannibals, the government had forbidden women missionaries to enter this area so

he humbly thanked God for having permitted him to serve and to see the fruit of that service in Sudan.

Pastor Thompson was called into the presence of his Savior on March 22nd, 1955 at the age of 69 years, 4 months and 18 days. Those who remain to feel the loss are his wife Flossie May, his daughter Edna (Mrs. Neil Vandyke) his son LeRoy, two brothers Chris and Charley and two sisters, Miss Minnie Thompson and Mrs. Christina Jacobson.

Services were conducted from the new Olivet church on Friday, March 25th. with Pastor Girtz officiating. Other pastors present were Rev. J.H. Vammen, Rev. Samuel Hansen, Rev. Ben Engskov, Rev. Allan Hansen, Rev. William Hanson, Rev. Franklin Rasmussen and Rev. A. Kloth, who served as honorary pall bearers. Rev. Girtz represented Synod with a greeting, and Rev. Engskov represented the Sudan Mission Board. Rev. Samuel Hansen spoke for the Ministerial group of Los Angeles area and Rev. Kloth read the obituary.

Rev. Alfred Thompson was laid to rest in Inglewood Cemetery to await the resurrection morning. May the Lord bless his memory.

Pastor Alfred Thompson død



Pastor og Mrs. Thompson

Tid har Helbredet svigtet mere og mere og han var meget syg i den sidste Tid. Begravelsen foregik fra Olivet Kirke, som han tilhørte, og Pastor Girtz forrettede Gudstjenesten bistaaet af Pastor B. J. Engskov fra Fresno, der repræsenterede vort Ydremissionsraad. Pastor Thompson overlever af sin trofaste Hustru og mangelrige Medarbejder i Sudanmissionen, Florence, og deres to Børn, LeRoy, der er hjemme, og en gift Datter i Michigan. Foruden disse ved vi af en Broder i Sidney, Montana, og en Søster i California. En anden Søster, Mrs. Jack Johnsen, døde for nogle Aar siden i Sidney, Mont. Pastor Thompson var velkendt i vort Samfund fra hans og Hustrus gentagne Besøg i Kirkerne, naar de var hjemme paa Orlov og fortalte med Varme om deres Livsopgave, at være Kristi Tjenere blandt de Sorte i det mørke Sudan, og om de Venner for Guds Rige de havde vundet der. De hørte til de første Missionærer, der udsendtes af Dansk Forenet Sudanmission, som grundlagdes 1913 af Lægmissionær N. B. Brønnum, der endnu lever i Roskilde, Danmark. Dr. Brønnum maatte selv forlade Missionsmarken ret tidlig, men har tjent Sagen som dens Hjemmesekretær og Leder i Danmark, indtil han for et Par Aar siden aftraadte af Aldershensyn. Pastor Engskov overtog saa Ledelsen efter mange Aars Tjeneste paa Missionsmarken. Thompsons var ikke direkte vort Samfunds Udsendinge, men tilhørte vor Kirke, hvor, især han, havde sin aandelige Hjemstav.

Alfred Thompsons Forældre kom fra Danmark, vistnok i 1883, og bosatte sig i Iowa, hvor han blev født d. 4. Okt. 1885. Hans troende Forældre plantede tidlig Troen i hans Hjerte og Kærlighed til Herrens Sag. Allerede fra 11 Aars Alderen følte han sig draget til Afrika som Missionær, der dog først efter hans Omvendelse i 20 Aars Alderen blev helt klart for ham. Han frekventerede Valparaiso College en Tid, senere ogsaa Brorson Højskole i Kenmare, N. D., hvortil hans Forældre var flyttet. Her kom han under Sudanmissionens amerikanske Talsmand, Lægmissionær Jens Dixens Paa-virkning. Dixen var blevet opildnet for denne Mission, da han var med ved den store Missionskonference i Edinburgh Aar 1910 og hørte Dr. Karl Kumm, den engelske Sudanmissions Fader. I 1908 var Thompson paa Moodys Bibelskole i Chicago fem Maaneder; han vend-

te tilbage i Foraaret 1910 for at fortsætte og tog Eksamen to Aar efter. Det blev hans Bøn at komme ind i en Missionsgerning i Afrika. Da saa det danske Sudan Missionsselskab blev dannet kort efter, ansøgte han om Antagelse og blev antaget paa et Bestyrelsesmøde i Aarhus d. 12. Dec. 1913. Hans Hustru, den Gang Frk. Florence Gibson, født 24. Okt. 1888 i Allegan County, Mich., frekventerede ogsaa Moodys Bibelskole et Aars Tid efter at hun havde taget Uddannelse som Lærerinde og tjent som saadan i tre Aar. Hun var en af „de frivillige Studenter,“ der gav Gud Løfte om at tjene paa Missionsmarken, hvor han vilde bruge hende. Saa traf hun Alfred Thompson og de blev forlovet med hinanden i det fælles Formaal.

Da Bestyrelsen ønskede Thompson ordineret i Danmark, fik man Københavns Biskop, Dr. theol. H. Ostfeld, til at foretage Indvielsen d. 21. Jan. 1914 i Fredens Kirke, Kbhv. Udsendelseshøjtideligheden blev afholdt allerede d. 5. Jan. s.A. i Vor Frue Kirke i Aalborg. Frk. Gibson naaede ikke frem i Tide, men ankom med Damp til Hamburg d. 13. Januar. Sammen med Thompson og tre andre antagne Missionærer besøgte hun flere Steder i Danmark og de var med til et større Missionsmøde i Holstebro. Den 24. Jan. forlod de Danmark og rejste over Liverpool til Vest Afrika. De var det unge Missionsselskabs andet Hold af Udsendinge.

Fra Amerika kom Hilsen underskrevet af J. Kildsig, Jens Dixen og Anna Jensen: „Alt hvad din Haand formaar, gør det med al din Magt.“ Det Raad fulgte Thompson stille og ydmygt uden Selvhævdelse, men med den indre Styrke Guds Aand giver en lydig Sjæl. For ham blev Bønnen det væsentlige Missionsmiddel.

Fra Amerika fik Missionen financieret Støtte fra en Forening ved Navn „Lebanon,“ organiseret med det Formaal af Jens Dixens Elever og Venner i Nord Dakota Kreds efter Dixens Hjemkomst fra Edinburgh Mødet. Selv om mange Privatgaver fra vort Samfunds Folk blev givet til Sudanmission, var den dog ikke officielt anerkendt som vor Opgave, saadan som Indianer- og Japanmissionerne. At en privat Forening indenfor Samfundet støttede en saadan Mission med store Summer, medens der var haardt Brug for alle Midler til vore egne forpligtede Opgaver, foraarsagede ikke saa lidt Irritation, særlig i Nord Dakota Kreds, som bedrøvede især Arbejderne derude. I 1916 udsendtes nemlig nok et dansk-amerikansk Ægtepar af vore til Sudan; det var Læge Mogens Uhrenholt, der havde faaet sin Inspiration paa Brorson Skole og sin Uddannelse paa Dana College og Creighton Universitet i Omaha, og saa hans Hustru, den tidligere Lærerinde Eline Arildsen fra Cedar Falls. De blev særlig Lebanons „egne.“ Dr. Uhrenholt døde af tropisk Feber i 1919 og hans Hustru et Aarstid efter derude.

I 1933-34 blev Sudanmissionen optaget af vort Kirkesamfund som en af dens ekstra-synodale Missioner for frivillig Støtte paa Betingelse af at „Lebanon“ Foreningen opløstes som saadan, hvilket skete, ikke mindst ved Missionær Thompsons Medvirken for denne Plan, som først blev iværksat af N. D. Kredens Formand. En Komite blev valgt til at virke i Missionens Interesse.

Om Alfred og Florences Bryllup meddeler Dansk Sudanmissions mangeaarige Formand, Pastor Anton Pedersen, i sin Bog om Missionens Grundlæggelse (1916): „I Juni 1914 fandt Pastor Thompsons og Frk. Gibsons Bryllup Sted i Wukari hos Missionærene Hr. og Fru Guinter (af det originale engelske Sudanmissionselskab „Sudan United Mission“). Til Stede var de kvindelige danske Missionærer, Frk'ne Rose, Tillisch, og Erichsen, samt Missionær Erland Kjær (de tre sidstnævnte blev udsendt sammen med Thompsons). Først blev der sunget en dansk Salme, „Jert Hus skal I bygge,“ i den med Blomster og danske, engelske og amerikanske Flag pyntede Kirke, og derpaa fandt Vielsen Sted efter det amerikanske Ritual, hvorefter en Salme paa Hausa blev sunget. Kongen i Numan havde sendt et Faar i Brudegave.“

Vi skal ikke her gaa i Enkeltheder om Thompsons frugtbare Arbejde paa Missionsmarken. Det begyndte under meget primitive Forhold og trange Kaar. Mrs. Thompson var den første Kvinde, der fik Adgang til Numan. De fik særlig deres Virke i Undervisningsarbejdet, men som den første Præst fik Thompson ogsaa det pastorale Arbejde. Stor Glæde var det for dem, da den første Kirke blev tilladt Opførelse i 1916; den kostede 100 Kroner og tjente som Skole i Ugedagene. De arbejdede blandt Hausafolket og maatte lære dets Sprog, som de fik Anledning til i Forbindelsen med de engelske Missionsstationer. Numan ligger paa en Forhøjning hvorom Benuefloden snor sig og er Bachama Stammens Hovedby i Provinsen Yola i Kolonien Nigeria. Efter Samraad med de engelske Missionærer fik den danske Mission denne Provins anvist, og Dr. Brønnum valgte Numan som Udgangspunkt efter at han fik Tilladelse til at bosætte sig paa en Højryg udenfor Bygrænsen. Byen havde ca. 2000 Indbyggere. Han ankom dertil 5. Okt. 1913. Nigeria Kolonien er 6 Gange saa stor som England og var delt i 17 Provinser; den havde en Befolkning den Gang paa ca. 13 Millioner Indfødte, hvis Religion for en stor Del var en Blanding af Hedenskab og Muhammedanisme.

Rejsen dertil foregik med Baad først opad den store Nigerflod og derpaa ad Bifloden Benua. Klimaet er ret vanskeligt for hvide Folk at udholde under de usanitære Forhold, der var almindelige. Thompsons maatte paa Grund af et Feberangreb rejse til Danmark i 1916 for et Kurophold, men vendte snart efter tilbage igen. I 1920 havde de Orlov og besøgte deres Hjem i USA medbringende deres aarsgamle Søn LeRoy. Efter deres Tilbagekomst blev de ansat i Bachamaernes gamle Hovedstad, Lamurde, hvor Dr. Brønnum i 1920 havde opnaaet Tilladelse til at aabne en Missionsstation. Byen ligger ca. 30 Mil nordvest for Numan. Siden Thompsons begyndte der i 1921 er der vokset op den største Missionsvirksomhed og Skole udenfor Hovedstationen i Numan. Pastor Thompson tog sig særlig af Prædikant og Administrationsarbejdet og Mrs. Thompson var Skolens Liv og Sjæl, ligesaa i Arbejdet blandt Kvinderne. De havde den Glæde at vinde mange Unge for Kristus, som lod sig uddanne til Evangelister, Lærere og Præster, der nu danner Kraften i Missionens Fortsættelse eftersom de Indfødte mere og mere overtager Kirkens Ledelse. Pastor Thompson var som en Fader for dem,

og han bar dem i sit Hjertes Kærlighed som sine Børn i Herren. En optoges endog som Barn i deres Hjem. De havde efterladt deres egne Børn i Amerika; Sønnen havde paadraget sig en Sygdom som Dreng som han aldrig rigtig forvandt Følgerne af. De kom efter Tur hjem paa Orlov og i 1941 forlod de Missionsmarken og bosatte sig i eget Hus i Los Angeles, nær Olivet Kirken paa West Adams Blvd. LeRoy og Faderen fandt rigelig Beskæftigelse og Fortjeneste som Plænepassere. Men stadig laa Dragelsen mod Sudanmissionen i deres Hjerter og i 1948 drog de atter til Afrika og indlagde et Par Aar travl Virksomhed paa deres gamle Station i Lamurde, hvor de blev budt hjertelig Velkommen hjem. Men deres Kræfter var svækket og i 1950 vendte de atter tilbage til deres Hjem i Los Angeles efter at have besøgt Venner i Danmark og paa Vejen gennem USA. Paa Missionsmarken i Sudan var der da 40 hvide Missionærer samt 5 indfødte Præster og ca. 160 Evangelister; et Resultat som frydede den gamle opslidte Pioner-Missionspræst. Den 27. Febr. i Aar blev 6 flere indfødte Præster ordineret.

Personligt blev vi vel kendt med hinanden. Først som Præst i Sidney, Mont., hvor han besøgte sine Slægtninge under en Orlov i 30erne. Og som Kredsformand deroppe i de Aar kom vi i nærmere Forbindelse i vort Samvirke for at faa det trykkende Forhold mellem Kredsen og „Lebanon“ afviklet og ordnet paa en bedre Maade for alles Vedkommende. Og i 1947 havde vi den Glæde at „holde Hus“ for og hos Pastor Thompson i hans Hjem i L. A. en Maanedstid medens min Hustru og jeg var paa Besøg derude og hans Hustru var paa Missionsrejse i Midtstaterne. Det var dejlige Dage, hvor vi fik Anledning til at faa et Indblik baade i Sudanmissionens vældige, men vanskelige Opgave, og i en tro Herrens Tjeners rige Erfaring og Sjæleliv. Gud lønne hans Sjæl i Himmerig!

P. C. J.

Sidney, Mont. Pella Mgh.s gamle Pionerkvinde, Mrs. Peter Andersen, afgik ved Døden Lørdag d. 9. April ude i Salt Lake City, hvor hun i de senere Aar har haft sit Hjem hos sin yngste Datter, Dr. Camilla Friend. Hun blev 91 Aar, men den i sin Tid saa aktive Kvinde var nu blevet baade blind og døv. Hun kom med sin Mand og tre Børn fra Danmark til Montana Paaskedag 1889 og var de første Danskere til at bosætte sig som Farmere ved Sidney. Ligesaa var de med til at faa en dansk luthersk Præst dertil og en Menighed begyndt i 1908. Mrs. Bertha Andersen var en afgjort Kristen og meget intresseret i vort Missionsarbejde. Da de blev ret velstaaende, var de særlig aktive med at faa danske Settlerne til Egnen og deres gæstfrie Hjem blev et Samlingscentrum baade socialt og kirkeligt særlig i de første Aartier. Mr. Andersen, hvem hun blev gift med d. 17. Aug. 1883, døde d. 24. Juni 1939. I de næste 10 Aar boede hun i sit lille Hus tæt ved den gamle Kirke indtil hun blev for svag og kom under Datterens Pleje. Et Livsrids af Andersen findes i Dansk Almanak 1940 (S. 141). Mrs. Andersen blev begravet fra Pella Kirke og ved sin Mands Side d. 13. April.

Santalmissionens Aarsmøde afholdes i vor Kirke i Luck, Wis., d. 6.-8. Maj.

(Sluttes paa Side 12)

PASTOR ALFRED THOMPSON

In Memoriam by J. M. Girtz

Pastor Alfred Thompson was born October 4, 1885 near Graettinger, Iowa. His father was Carl Thompson and his mother's maiden name was Dorothea Sorensen. His early years of education he received in Iowa and when the family moved to North Dakota he then attended Brorson High School. It was at Brorson under the teaching of Missionary Jens Dixen the Holy Spirit convicted young Alfred of sin and then led him to the assurance that his sin was forgiven and he was a child of God.

When he was only eleven years old he felt the first call to serve the Lord on the foreign field and in 1904 went to Valparaiso College to begin his preparation for this service. For additional study he attended the Moody Bible Institute from which he was graduated in April 1912. With Africa the special burden on his heart he then waited for an opening and finally through his friend and teacher from Brorson he learned that the Danish Mission was beginning work in Sudan and were calling him to help in this new field. In November 1913 he was accepted by the Mission Board in Aarhus, Denmark. On the 21st of January, 1914 he was ordained in Fredens Kirke in Copenhagen by Bishop Ostenfeld.

Miss Flossie M. Gibson, his fiancée, joined him in Denmark just prior to the ordination service and together with three other missionaries became the second group to sail for the new mission field in Sudan. On arrival in Africa they remained for a short time in an English mission station at Rumasha. Here Miss Gibson had to stay alone for some months while Rev. Thompson was sent farther inland. The way was finally opened so that she was able to join him and they were married at Wukari about 25 miles from Ibi. The wedding journey that followed is a story all by itself, but the honeymoon was cut short only ten days after the wedding when word came that Dr. Bronnum was very ill at Numan and Rev. Thompson was to come to him at once. Since Numan was in closed territory because of canni-

bals, the government had forbidden women missionaries to enter this area so once more Mrs. Thompson found herself forced to remain behind while her husband went on to be with Dr. Bronnum. However, the way finally was opened some time later when she signed papers to the effect that she would go at her own risk and she was permitted to join Rev. Thompson at Numan. Together they worked here for several years in this trade center which was an ideal spot for a Mission center, and then moved on to Lamurde, which really became "home" to them. Here they both served the Lord with complete love and loyalty and until Rev. Thompson was called into the presence of the Lord the work in Lamurde completely filled his heart and mind.

Lamurde is now a large native town where the government has provided the school buildings, but the rest of the mission buildings have been built largely by funds from friends in America. Here from the earliest days in the work, the Thompsons gathered the boys and girls about the station and in their own home and their hearts and lives became so knit together that it was a bit hard to really feel at home in America when they had to return to this country to stay.

The thirty-seven years spent in Sudan were richly blessed and through the prayers of friends and the work of the Holy Spirit the Word bore fruit and there was a rich harvest of souls. In the Lamurde District 2,199 have been baptized since 1913, and today there are thirty-one evangelistic centers in this area. Pastor Thompson helped to train many of these native workers and three of "his boys" are now ordained and many are teachers in the Mission.

Just how much he meant to these boys and girls, men and women became very evident now during his final illness when letters came from them, even as many as five in one day. One of the boys wrote: "I long to give my whole heart and life so that the work you began may go forward." These expressions of love and

devotion filled his heart with joy during the hard and trying days of illness and he humbly thanked God for having permitted him to serve and to see the fruit of that service in Sudan.

Pastor Thompson was called into the presence of his Savior on March 22nd, 1955 at the age of 69 years, 4 months and 18 days. Those who remain to feel the loss are his wife Flossie May, his daughter Edna (Mrs. Neil Vandyke) his son LeRoy, two brothers Chris and Charley and two sisters, Miss Minnie Thompson and Mrs. Christina Jacobson.

Services were conducted from the new Olivet church on Friday, March 25th with Pastor Girtz officiating. Other pastors present were Rev. J. H. Vammen, Rev. Samuel Hansen, Rev. Ben Engskov, Rev. Allan Hansen, Rev. William Hanson, Rev. Franklin Rasmussen and Rev. A. Kloth, who served as honorary pall bearers. Rev. Girtz represented Synod with a greeting, and Rev. Engskov represented the Sudan Mission Board. Rev. Samuel Hansen spoke for the Ministerial group of Los Angeles area and Rev. Kloth read the obituary.

Rev. Alfred Thompson was laid to rest in Inglewood Cemetery to await the resurrection morning. May the Lord bless his memory.

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With the passing of Pastor Alfred Thompson, we have lost one of the pioneer missionaries of our rather young synod. He was one of the apostles of love, and his love was both for his Lord and for all men everywhere. It was a joy to have him here as a member of Olivet. He was always ready to speak a kind word or a word of encouragement. He visited the sick among us, and he assisted at Holy Communion. We shall miss Brother Alfred and his gentle ways and his kind smile. As his last pastor I would like to add this my tribute to all those that will be paid him, in public, but most of all in the hearts of those whose faith he helped kindle and whose faith he encouraged by his gentle ways. May peace and blessing attend the memory of this saint of God.

THE MOTHER OF JESUS WAS THERE

By Lawrence Siersbeck

Pastor St. Mary's Lutheran Church Kenosha, Wisconsin

Aside from the commendation uttered by the angel Gabriel upon the day of the Annunciation, not much praise is given to Mary directly by others or her son Jesus. She was deserving of praise, and it is conceivable that her husband Joseph and Jesus indicated their appreciation for a wife and a mother in their own ways. There are, on the other hand, evidences that she suffered much for having been the mother of the Savior of the world.

MOTHER'S DAY

Millions of greeting cards will be mailed to remember the coming mother's day. Millions of dollars will be spent in flowers, hundreds of thousands of dollars in chocolates, candies and fruits, and as much for other presents,—in the observance of the day. With these greetings and presents will go many genuine expressions of gratitude. It is also probable that some sons and daughters will turn to a new life remembering the example and witness of their Christian mothers. The recognition of motherhood on this day is also a recognition of the dignity God has bestowed upon the human race. He crowned man with glory and honor, having already created him in the image of God.

THE MOTHERS THEMSELVES

Some mothers have expressed their tinge of embarrassment in listening to and receiving this annual recognition, and have felt it to be somewhat obsequious for a day. For the sake of the kind gesture of the children they have accepted the tribute graciously. A Christian mother said, "I am the one to be thankful. God created me and gave me the privilege of becoming a mother. My children have given me years of happiness. I look back upon the work, the hustle, the hours of vigil with almost nostalgic delight. I am the one to thank God for His loving kindnesses, and I stand in debt to Him, to my family and many others for my happiness. My concern now is how I can repay for all that has been given me." Now what can we add to such a person's joy that will be little more than frosting? The outward observance of mother's day will be worthy only in proportion to the intrinsic worth of a mother and her children. By this we are thinking of qualities God bestows upon those who walk in the Christian way of life.

MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS

And that brings us to Mary, the mother of Jesus. The name indicating her relationship to her son seems one of the very beautiful gems in all literature. A young Jewish girl, of whom we might say 'too young to marry,' a virgin till the angel spoke,—is given that sweet and gracious title 'Mary, the mother of Jesus.'

It was at the wedding of Cana when John notes that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was there. She was there too, when the angel Gabriel came, when Jesus was born, when the shepherds came and the wise men. She was

there when the little family went to Jerusalem to the temple. She was there when they nailed Him to the cross. One cloud crosses the horizon of her memory. It was the day she and Joseph left their twelve-year old boy in Jerusalem. But how could she help that? Was it not a part of God's plan? And was it not really Mary's and Joseph's influence that led the boy Jesus to the men who knew Scripture?

And so the fondest memories most of us have of our mothers is that they were nearly always there when we were small,— to lead us by the hand, to protect us from falling, to wake us in the morning (or did we wake her?), to prepare breakfast, get us off to school, wait for us at noon with a hot lunch, there at home when school was out. Mothers were there in church with us, at the baptismal font, at the communion table, kneeling with us at the bedside, and by our sickbeds, at our birthday parties. Most mothers consider their calling as such sacred, and would not for the world forego the privilege of being with their children,—ever guiding, encouraging, warning, inspiring to achievement.

Nurses and day nurseries are not adequate substitutes for a mother's care. A Christian nurse may take her place, but the mother's own loss is greater than she may realize in these early years of childhood. Sometimes a widow is forced to become breadwinner too, and many of them have stood up to the difficult two-fold task courageously. But the rank and file of young Christian mothers today, in times of unusual tension and with increasing demands placed upon them for their time,— are meeting the situation of being with their children where and when they are needed. The faces of these young women and their husbands greet us in the pews of our churches in greater numbers than ever before. They are becoming increasingly aware of the spiritual needs of the hour, and do something about it.

The greater tribute to motherhood lies in a more important area than that of flowers and presents. The daily walk of the children reflects directly upon mother and father. In the Christian home the example of God-fearing children bears witness to the influence of the parents. What blessing is it if we send cards, presents, or surprise mother with these earthly remembrances, if our hearts are far from Christ? By the same token, our gifts and tributes have a more salutary effect when they come from consecrated hearts and lives of children.

OUR REGARD FOR WOMANHOOD

There are other ways in which we may indicate our appreciation for our mothers, and among these is a high regard for womanhood. True, there are women who do not deserve it and who are a menace to their own sex. Yet even the derelicts can only be won back by our proper esteem of womanhood. It may be the lack of proper esteem and courteous treatment that led some of them upon the wrong road. Most women, however, have

wholesome self-respect and high regard for Christian ideals. When Mary, the mother of Jesus, was at the foot of the cross, our Lord gave us an example in those hours of physical agony and mental anguish, when He committed his mother to the care of the beloved John. From then on, she kept busy in the Christian congregation. We have no record of her resting on any laurels. Her life as a mother must have ended as it began—a handmaid of the Lord.

AN AFTERTHOUGHT

Every decade creates its peculiar type of a young woman, who is generally called the 'modern girl' or something like that. Today she croons into a microphone some modern melodies that make more or less sense. People applaud, not so much because of the song, but because she is attractive and they want to keep her standing there. Thirty years ago the girl did the same. She was called a 'flapper' then. A song came out about that time that went something like this,

"You're the kind of a girl that men forget,
Just a toy to enjoy for a while;

For when men settle down they always get

An old-fashioned girl with an old-fashioned smile."
Well,—most of those flappers got married anyway. But the 'flapper' was really forgotten. Today she doesn't even want her children to see the crazy pictures of herself in that setting. When the courtship became serious in those days, as in all days, it was the same qualities of love and of understanding, mixed with a wholesome fear, respect and reverence, that counted as it did 3500 years ago when Boaz found the young Moabitish girl Ruth, and they were married, and became the parents of Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of King David.

The modern girl, even today, is not the girl that the thinking man marries. When that day comes he will marry the real girl who will make a home for him and his children. He will never want to be away from her for long. And she will become a mother. If he is the right kind of a man, he will defend her and the home to the end with his life if necessary. The modern girl and the modern young man are only temporary frills, but motherhood and fatherhood have an aspect of timelessness.

The Christian counsellor will say to the young couple who plan to be married, "Before you create your home, seek God's blessing. Take God's Word with you. Let prayer ascend from your hearts as incense to His throne. Let Jesus Christ be your daily guest!"

Two little girls sixty odd years ago took their dolls into the church on a week day. With prayer and ceremony they baptized their little charges at the font. The pastor saw it and with some displeasure reprimanded the girls. But what he did not understand was that the girls were unconsciously preparing themselves for motherhood, and that in their make-believe world, the rite of Christian baptism was included. They should probably not have permitted their fantasy to carry them so far. But the incident shows how God has placed the calling of motherhood into the hearts and minds of little girls, and reminds us of the importance of the influence of Christian parents and the Christian congregation in

keeping this destiny sacred. The crowning glory of womankind is the calling to Christian motherhood. The husband's, father's and the young man's sacred responsibility is to keep Christian motherhood inviolate by the support of active Christian faith and living.

ANOTHER AFTERTHOUGHT

No one can be much more proud than grandparents. In this pride they may stumble and fall unless they realize that their work and responsibility is not nearing its end when their grandchildren come. But when they look into the faces of little children, including grandchildren, they should be mindful of how much God expects of them before the afternoon of life is spent. They should work harder for the Kingdom of God,—that Christ may dwell more richly in men's hearts including their own. They should work harder to give new generations Christian opportunities. They should above all live Christ in all the areas of life! They should remember to

"Work for the night is coming,
When man works no more."

A few weeks ago a boy of about seven brought two people in the middle years of their life to the pastor after the service and said, "Here are my grandfather and grandmother from..." And the grandfather said, "We are so happy that our children and grandchildren are active in a Christian congregation. Mother and I are so thankful!" More often than we realize, generations rise up and bless the name of the Lord, when grandparents are faithful.

MARY AND JAMES

The mother of Jesus was there where and when she was needed the most. We believe she carried through with faithfulness to the end. James, who wrote one of the letters of the New Testament, is generally acknowledged to have been her son also. In reading that letter, the memory of a faithful mother keeps coming through the lines. In fact, that is one of the reasons for ascribing the authorship to the half brother of Jesus. Here are some of the admonitions from this important letter:

"Keep one's self unstained from the world."

"God has chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith."

"Faith apart from works is barren."

"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."

"Confess your sins one to another. Pray for one another."

"Be patient, the coming of the Lord is at hand."

The mother of Jesus was concerned about more important things than earthly security. She had little of this world's goods. Such a spirit requires courage that only faith in God can provide. The letter of James indicates the high spiritual standards of the home from which he came. The soul of James must have been fanned into the warmth so characteristic of Mary, as he wrote,

"But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty and insincerity."

When the members of the first Christian congregation at Jerusalem elected the head of their congregation, they chose a man of gentleness and warmth. His name was James, another son of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

ALFRED THOMPSON

By N. B. Hansen

Alfred Thompson passed away in Los Angeles, California, on March 22. It was well known that he had been seriously ill for some time. The Board of Foreign Missions of our church sent him a greeting from its annual meeting February 15-16.

I would like to write a few words about this friend. He was well known to my parents and especially my older brothers and sisters. He often mentioned both in letters and in private conversation that my father and my brother Hans were among his very best friends.

Alfred Thompson became intimately known to me when I was asked to become a member of the "Sudan Committee" back in 1936. I took Rev. P. C. Jensen's place on this committee and have now represented our synod for 19 years in this work. For many years Pastor and Mrs. Thompson were our only missionaries in this field. There has naturally been much correspondence with the Thompsons during these years.

All who knew Alfred loved him. He was a humble servant of God. You felt humble in his presence. He never embarrassed anyone. His strength was in his private contact with others. He revealed a deep interest in others. His memory was greater than the ordinary. He always remembered someone he had once met.

It should, perhaps, be said of him that he was a man of much prayer. Many years ago I attended a meeting of the Lutheran Foreign Missions Conference in Minneapolis. One of the speakers was a Rev. M. E. Sletta of Fergus Falls, Minnesota. In his talk he mentioned a little book written by a Pastor G. Munster in Denmark. This man was the president of the Sudan Mission in that country. In this book Munster mentions the power of prayer. He relates two incidents in the life of Thompson and other missionaries. Drought had become a serious problem in the land around Numan. The chief of a tribe came to Thompson and Bronnum asking for help. They knelt together and prayed for rain, and it rained. The same thing happened in Lamurde, where the Thompsons spent most of their time in Africa. Spirit worshippers came to him for help. Thompson asked these worshippers to pray to their gods for two days. He and the Christians would pray to their God the following two days. God answered the prayers of the Christians. Thompson spent much time in prayer. Rain came on the second day on which the Christians prayed.

I was greatly impressed when I was in Africa in 1949 and saw the work he and his wife had done in and around Lamurde. The Lamurde church was not only large and well filled at all services, the prayer meetings, held every Wednesday evening, were entirely under the

leadership of the Africans and the church was filled at all meetings.

The thing that impressed me most I believe was the type of spiritual life that was evident in his church and daughter churches—about 27 of them at that time. You felt a true, sincere, Christian atmosphere in this field. This was the first congregation to be able to be without white leadership. Many of the pastors and other Christian leaders throughout the province of Nigeria have come from the Lamurde territory. The Danish missionaries said, "Han vinder alles Hjerter"—he captivates the hearts of all, certainly was true of Thompson.

This is an incident in Alfred Thompson's life during the years that he was unable to return on his regular furlough due to the wars: The weather is very hot in that part of the country. Man soon runs out of energy. Thompson carried on his work in spite of the heat. He would go from congregation to congregation conducting services. A black man would often preach for him, but he would administer the sacraments. Many were the times when he would faint in the midst of a communion service. The people would carry him out of the hot church, bathe his face with water, and when he would come to again he would carry on the interrupted service whether it was a communion service, baptism, or wedding.

The Thompsons have had some trying times during their years of service. It was not easy for them to leave their children with others while they went to Africa. But God blessed them with many children in Africa—children that still call them father and mother. Since the Sudan Mission was not supported directly by our church, not many of the congregations were inviting the Sudan missionaries to visit them, but that changed with the years. One congregation after another became interested in this mission and extended invitations to them. They became loved and wanted throughout our synod. Contributions to the Sudan Mission have been very generous for many years.

Thompson was a spiritual son of the late Jens Dixen. He had attended Brorson High School at Kenmare, North Dakota, and while there yielded his life to God's service. He had Christian parents and felt the call of God from the time he was 10 years old to serve God on the mission field.

Thompson is no longer with us, but his memory will long remain. We thank God for him and for what He accomplished through him in Africa. On his behalf I wish to thank those that received him into their homes, congregations, and prayers. God grant us many such servants in our church.