

# The Assistant Pastor

*September 1940*

**In Memoriam**



**Rev. H. A. Tjernagel**

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## The Assistant Pastor

Published and edited by the pastor of the Jerico and Saude Lutheran churches, affiliated with the Norwegian Synod of the Synodical Conference.

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## Church Directory

N. S. Tjernagel, Pastor

### SAUDE CONGREGATION

Trustees: Chris Treider, Ned Borlaug, E. Ferkingstad.  
Treasurer: Nels Ellingson.  
Secretary: Fred Steensland.  
Cemetery Committee: Olis Borlaug, Juel Natvig, Miss Carrie Natvig, Mrs. John Natvig, Mrs. Otto Hanson.  
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. Carl Miller, president; Mrs. Fred Steensland, secretary; Mrs. Otto Hanson, treasurer.

### JERICO CONGREGATION

Trustees: C. Cutsforth, Olaf Roberson, Lloyd Roberson.  
Secretary: A. N. Anderson.  
Treasurer: J. A. Robinson.  
Cemetery Committee: Mrs. Theo. O. Knutson, Mrs. Thos. Roberson, Mrs. Carl Knutson.  
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. Alfred A. Knutson, president; Mrs. Tollef O. Knutson, secretary; Mrs. Orval Landsverk, treasurer.

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## Services

### JERICO

First and third Sundays 9:00 A. M.  
Second and fourth Sundays 10:30 A. M.  
(First Sunday Norwegian.)

### SAUDE

First and third Sundays 10:30 A. M.  
Second and fourth Sundays 9:00 A. M.  
(First Sunday Bi-lingual Service.)  
Fifth Sundays by special announcement.

This issue of the Assistant Pastor, the first under the editorship of N. S. Tjernagel, is dedicated to the memory of his father and predecessor as pastor of the Saude and Jerico congregations.

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## In Memory of Rev. H. M. Tjernagel

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### Obituary

The Rev. Helge Mathias Tjernagel was born at Follinglo Farm near Story City, Iowa, May 23, 1871, a son of Ole Andreas Tjernagel and Martha Karine Anderson Follinglo. He was baptized by Rev. Nils Amlund and confirmed by Rev. L. Sherven.

He worked on the home farm and attended public school at the Sheldall school, after which he enrolled at Luther College, Decorah, remaining there as a student from 1888 to 1894. He taught at Luther Academy, Albert Lea, Minn., during 1898-99, then attended Luther Seminary, Hamline, from 1899 to 1902. Since then he held pastorates as follows: At Stanwood, Wash., 1902-10, the first year as assistant to Rev. L. C. Foss, the rest of the time as regular pastor of the congregation. From 1910 to 1913 he served as a missionary in the Mrs. T. L. Brevig Eskimo Mission, Teller, Alaska. From here he went to Santa Barbara, Calif., where he served as pastor during 1913 and up to 1916. His next call

was at Crookston, Minn., 1917-18. While here he was called as missionary to the Indian Mission of the Missouri Synod at Gresham, Wis., 1918-23. In 1923 he moved to his last pastorate, the Saude and Jerico congregations of the Norwegian Synod near Lawler, Iowa, which he served until his death. He died in faith at Lutheran Hospital at Hampton, Iowa, February 13, 1940.

June 27, 1904, he was married to Miss Anna Brue at Stanwood, Wash. To them were born twelve children, four of whom died in early infancy. The children who survive are Neelak, Olivia (Mrs. T. N. Teigen), Rolf, Lars, Elna (Mrs. B. W. Teigen), Helga, Bertha, and Borghild. There are six grandchildren.

November 24, 1924, his wife died. Since that time his sister, Miss Bertha C. Tjernagel, has been his constant companion and helper. Besides his sister he is survived by four brothers: Lewis, Nehemias, Martin and Gustav.

He was active in Synodical and Inter-Synodical affairs. He served as President of the Norwegian Synod in the years 1930 to 1934.

### The Funeral

At one o'clock P. M. on February 16th the family gathered about the casket in the home and, led by Rev. H. Ingebritson, sang the hymn, "Nu rinder solen op," No. 466, v. 1-4 in Norwegian hymnbook; said the Lord's prayer in unison; sang the hymn, "Skriv dig Jesus paa mit hjerte," No. 211, and closed with the Apostolic Benediction. This in the Norwegian language. The services in the churches and at the cemetery were in English. Rev. A. M. Harstad was at the organ throughout the services. In addition to the hymns he played Chopin's Funeral March, Dvorak's Largo, and Grieg's Aase's Death, together with "Thy Will Be Done" and "O Sacred Head Now Wounded," hymns by N. Tjernagel, brother of the deceased.

The service at the Saude church was conducted by Rev. H. I. Naumann of Richland Center, Wis., a co-worker at the Indian Mission with the deceased. His highly uplifting testimony was based on the text, Daniel 12, v. 2, 3 and 13. Hymns, No. 230, "If Thou but Suffer God to Guide Thee," and No. 284, "Thy Way and All Thy Sorrows," were sung.

The main service, which was held at the Jerico church, was conducted by Dr. S. C. Ylvisaker, president of Bethany Lutheran College at Mankato. It began with Scripture reading from I Peter 1:3-25. The text of the spirit-strengthening sermon was from II Peter 1:10-21. Hymns, "Like the Golden Sun Ascending," "Now the Shades of Night Are Gone" and "Now the Strife Is O'er" from the Hymnary, were sung. Immediately following, Rev. H. Ingebritson of Lake Mills spoke briefly in behalf of the Norwegian Synod, of which he is president. Rev. A. M. Harstad read memorial wreaths, thanking all in behalf of the family of Rev. Tjernagel.

The service at the Saude cemetery was conducted by Rev. Justin A. Petersen of Scarville. Deceased was buried beside his wife, who had preceded him in death 16 years before. A great concourse of people from his two large congregations filed by to pay the last respects to their spiritual leader who in all humility had served them so faithfully and well. Hymns sung at the grave were "O Holy Spirit Grant Us Grace," No. 18, and "Now Lav We Calmly

in the Grave," No. 594. Pallbearers were trustees of Saude and Jerico congregations.

Besides the five officiating pastors present were two sons-in-law and one son, pastors; present also were the pastors N. A. Madson, S. E. Lee, H. A. Thieste, H. A. Bentrup, Emil Hansen, H. Wunderlich, O. C. Durr, Stuart Dorr, H. A. Preus, O. Schultz, T. Frese, and Dr. Carlo A. Sperati. Present of the family were all the children of the deceased, except Lars (Sitka, Alaska), his sister and his four brothers, and all but two of his 18 nieces and nephews. During his illness at the hospital he was faithfully ministered to by Rev. George Koch of Hampton.

Lunch was served by the ladies' societies of both congregations for the family and those who had traveled a distance to attend, and many others.

### A Tribute

As to a fuller survey of the events in the life of the departed, some brief mention thereof may be appropriate. As a young man at home on the farm he was a member of the old Riverside Band and Orchestra. Later he taught music at Roland and elsewhere, and, as a student at Luther College was a prime mover in the earlier musical development there. He played in the band and acted as student-leader before Professor Haldor Hanson was called as its permanent director. He was a leader in the promotion of the Luther Band Concerts, and took part in the first memorable tour. Later his interest in musical uplift centered largely on the proper employment of music and song in his home and congregations. He had the pleasure as a theological seminary student of introducing his old friend, Prof. John Dahle, to his subsequent work as song director at Luther Seminary, Hamline. Also of encouraging as well as recommending his brother pastor on the west coast, Carlo A. Sperati, a warm friend of the family, as successor of Haldor Hanson, who had resigned as music director at Luther College.

During his pastorate at Stanwood, Wash., he figured prominently in the building and establishment of the Josephine Old People's Home.

At Crookston, Minn., he formed a partnership with Prof. P. H. P. Rydning to publish "Organ Library," a collection of selections for reed organ, intended for use in church and home.

Speaking of his stay on the west coast, it may be mentioned that he was instrumental in bringing to light the history of pioneer Toftezen, the first Norwegian settler in those parts. He was invited to be the principal speaker at the dedication, May, 1939, of the memorial commemorating the advent of the Toftezens in that section of the nation (Washington) close to 100 years ago. Crown Prince Olav of Norway, among others, participating in the exercises. To him the occasion held peculiar interest, but pressure of work hindered his going.

The unusual bodily strength and vigor of the deceased enabled him to withstand the rigors of climate in the Arctic, and his dog-teams took him over the snowy wastes from one mission-post to another, undaunted in spite of the hardships encountered. He had many interesting as well as spiritually uplifting experiences, of which, among his other writings, he has graphically told in various church periodicals and magazines. He lectured on

Alaska in Chicago, St. Louis and many other places. His visits in the far north with Captain Bartlett, the explorer, formed a most happy memory. To lead benighted souls to Christ, be it Eskimo or others, meant to our friend the greatest privilege bestowed on him or any other person here below.

As missionary at Gresham, Wis., the departed designed and superintended the construction of the large Indian Mission school building near there. Indians were hired as helpers in its erection, but were often undependable, and the missionary himself, in order to keep the work going, frequently had to step in and do the work of several, a back-breaking job that nearly undermined his rugged system. The structure rears itself loftily at the edge of a pretty lake, where the reflection causes it to show its beauty two-fold. Here were trained in Christian faith and living the remnant of Stockbridge Indians, originally from Massachusetts, The Last of the Mohicans in very truth. They occupied one township of territory, owned their land and could vote. Here came Sam Miller, the noted Mohican Indian lecturer—he had been largely instrumental in having Rev. Tjernagel take over the call to this work—for divine services, or for confabs and relaxation. The missionary brought the message of salvation to hungering hearts at Morgan Siding and Neopit (the latter place in the great Menominee Indian Reservation) as well as at Gresham, the home field.

He early recognized the great value of the Christian Day School in providing daily religious instruction for the young in conjunction with the other required branches of school work. He established such schools and often helped with the teaching himself. The religious training thus obtained by the young helped both him and them in the work in the congregation, and in life generally. In his last pastorate he prepared as well as distributed among old and young in the congregation his parish paper, "The Assistant Pastor." It became a much valued visitor in the homes of his parishioners.

His bent for landscape-gardening found expression in improving the general appearance of the spacious parsonage grounds. Here he and the children obtained exercise and healthy spirits through useful as well as ornamental work. The result of the occupation thus enjoyed now inspires others through its picturesqueness and restful appeal, a lovely retreat where nature-lovers delight to linger. A homey-looking log house, not far from the parsonage itself, was built in the midst of this setting by his brother Peter and himself, which was dedicated to his wife and named "Strandebarm" in remembrance of her family's original home in Hardanger, Norway. Now both rest in Saude cemetery nearby, awaiting the call on Resurrection Day, when the blessed of the Lord shall join the Great White Host and praise His name forever.

The photograph which appears on the front page was taken eight years ago. The cut was provided by Miss Bertha C. Tjernagel in memory of her brother, and in grateful appreciation to the people of the Saude and Jerico congregations for the kindnesses shown her during the sixteen years that she lived in this community.

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## A LETTER

### To the Children and Relatives of the Sainted Pastor H. M. Tjernagel.

My dear friends:

At the request of Pastor Teigen and Mr. Nehe-mias Tjernagel I am jotting down a few notes of my visits with Pastor Tjernagel during his illness and stay in the Hampton Hospital.

Although I had known Pastor Tjernagel for a number of years and had repeatedly been impressed by his profound knowledge of the Scriptures and by his fearless defense of the Scriptures and of the Confessional Writings, yet the weeks he was in the local hospital have given me the prized opportunity of learning to know him more intimately. Needless to say that my admiration and respect have increased and I have learned to know him as a most sympathetic counsellor and advisor, a faithful shepherd of souls.

During the days that he was being prepared for the operation by the doctors I paid him frequent visits. We spoke of many things pertaining to our dear Lutheran Church and pertaining to the pastoral work in our congregations. I would let him do practically all of the talking, eager to profit by his rich experience and his keen insight. Not realizing at this time the Heavenly Father's intention, I spoke to him about the blessing God grants us pastors in sending us sickness and affliction, and that after the Lord has taken us into His school, we are able to speak to our parishioners in afflictions from our own personal experience that the Lord is faithful and good.

Before the operation his zeal caused him to carry on an extensive correspondence, and to give time to study, especially of Luther's treatise of Jesus' Sacerdotal Prayer (John 17). Again and again he would give me a digest of the portions studied and he would read a number of quotations because of their beauty of thought and expression. Remarks made at a number of times showed that the Lutheran Union question was being given much thought and prayer.

Before the operation he desired the Holy Supper for the strengthening of his faith in the forgiveness of sin and in the grace of God in Christ Jesus. In preparation for his communing I read the 51st Psalm and upon reading the General Confession I asked whether there was any sin weighing heavily upon him which he wished to confess in particular. He then replied: "There is so much to be done in the Kingdom of Christ. And, oh, how little we do, how little zeal we have!" He made a few more remarks on this. I then replied that that was only too true. But even all our neglects had been atoned for by Christ upon the cross. "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from *all* sin." He thereupon received the Sacrament. This was followed

by a prolonged silence when he was engaged in prayer. At that time Neelak arrived and entered the room. He spoke to Neelak with a joyous voice of having received the assurance of pardon. He also expressed his appreciation and gratitude for my ministrations. I yet spoke briefly, citing a number of God's promises, assuring him of the Lord's presence and protection during the operation. On my visits on previous days he again and again expressed his desire and willingness to submit to God's good and gracious will: "The Lord's will be done!" I visited him several times after the operation and again brought him comfort and instruction from the Word.

On the day of his departure I was called to the bedside, and I spoke on the words of Psalm 73, 23, 24, especially on verse 24 (23 Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. 24 Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory). Concluding my remarks I asked him whether he had understood all I had said. He nodded his head and moved his lips from which I could read the "yes." Then I spoke a prayer in his behalf, imploring the Lord, if it was His will to call him hence at this time, to be with him and receive his soul into the heavenly mansions.

Dear children of Pastor Tjernagel: The Lord has been most gracious to you in giving you the Christian father whose care and instruction you have enjoyed. You have the comfort and soothing balm in your bereavement that your father is at home with his Savior. The Lord has welcomed His faithful servant: "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things. Well done, thou good and faithful servant!" May the merciful Savior keep you and all your relatives in the saving faith and grant you all a joyful reunion with the dear departed in eternal life.

Ministering to your father has been a never-to-be-forgotten privilege. I have been the greater beneficiary. His conversations and confessions of faith have been a real tonic to my faith; his humility and his submission to God's will and ways an example that I with the help of the Lord will follow. His words will be treasured memory.

With sincere and heartfelt sympathy,

Geo. A. Koch.

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The tribute, obituary, and account of the funeral printed in this issue of the Assistant Pastor were written by a brother of Rev. Tjernagel, Mr. N. Tjernagel of Story City, Iowa. It was first published in the Story City Herald.

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The Rev. Geo. Koch is a pastor of the Missouri Synod in Hampton, Iowa. He is Chaplain at Lutheran Hospital.