

**A Tribute to
Bishop Frederick Dennis Shodekeh Johnson (6882)
By his Friends and Colleagues of the SLGSAANA-SE**



Late Bishop Frederick Johnson (6882) praying at the 170th Anniversary Thanksgiving Service last year.

The news of the passing of Bishop Frederick Dennis Shodekeh Johnson was received with shock, disbelief and much grief. That his passing came so soon after he had taken a new bride was even more shocking to us.

To many friends and schoolmates from the Sierra Leone Grammar School, he was known as Frederick or Shodekeh. Many others knew him as Dennis. To his congregations in the USA and the members of the south-East branch of the Sierra Leone Grammar School Alumni Association of North America he was simply “Bishop”, our friend, spiritual leader and a pillar of the Sierra Leone diaspora community.

An active member of the Sierra Leone Grammar School Alumni Association of North America, he was instrumental, as one of its founding members, in establishing the South-East branch of the organization. Many of the initial meetings of our group were held at the conference room of the building in which he established his first church in the Atlanta area. He served in the executive of our organization as Social Secretary, Chaplain, Preacher, Mentor, and Member of the clergy at all of our Thanksgiving services. His charm, wit and boyish smile could be counted on to bring some levity to our gatherings.

As a young man at the Grammar School, our Bishop had already demonstrated a strong desire to serve the Lord through service in the church. His theological training at Fourah Bay College was greatly influenced by the likes of the late Rev. Dr. Leslie Shyllon and The late Rev. Dr. Edward Fashole-Luke, both of whom he greatly admired for their intellectual and oratory prowess. After graduation and Ordination into the church, he served a number of congregations in his beloved Sierra Leone and Africa where he honed his craft. He immigrated to the United States to pursue graduate studies, worked in the social services before later becoming an ordained Bishop.

Always a gentleman and an elegant dresser, Bishop was also a dynamic clergyman and a charismatic preacher with the gift of the gab. In an effort to expand God's word in the diaspora, he opened a number of churches in the Maryland and Atlanta areas over the years. His most recent efforts were in Freetown and Liberia. It is indeed a challenging task to establish a new church. As such his dynamism and enthusiasm to spread the word did not always meet with success, but his congregations always appreciated his service and dedication to the diaspora community. The church has lost a great beacon of light.

We know that his passing has been sanctioned by God, and as he himself would say to us in our hour of grief "it is well, it is well with my soul". Farewell dear comrade and friend. We have faith that by God's grace we will meet again in the great beyond. We will miss your wit and charm and great sense of humor, but we know that you are with the lord and it is well.

We thank God for the time we got to share with you, for your numerous contributions to spreading his word, and for your contributions to our efforts to assist our Alma Mater.

Floreat Regentonia!!

God Bless you Dear Bishop.

We would like to extend our heartfelt sympathies to Bishop's family and friends. May the good Lord grant you peace at this your time of mourning.