

## **G. ERNEST THOMAS**

**Boston University School of Religion B.R.E. 1929**

**School of Theology S.T.B. 1932; Th.D. 1935**

### **BIO AND WRITINGS**

#### **BIOGRAPHY**

- 1907 Born February 16 in Bolton, Lancashire, England, the son of George and Hannah (Beddows) Thomas
- 1910 Came to the United States of America to live in Manchester, New Hampshire
- 1915 Became a naturalized citizen.
- 1925 Graduated from Pinkerton Academy, Derry, New Hampshire.  
Assistant Director, summer Boy's Camp, Old Lyme, Connecticut.  
Began studies at Boston University School of Religious Education.
- 1926 Preached in summer at Swiftwater and Benton, New Hampshire Methodist churches.
- 1927 Pastor for the summer at Claremont, New Hampshire Methodist Church.
- 1928 Appointed pastor, Brookline Methodist Church, Brookline, N.H.  
Ordained Deacon and received On Trial, New Hampshire Methodist Conference.
- 1929 Received B.R.E. degree, Boston University School of Religious Education.  
Appointed pastor, Trinity Methodist Church, Manchester, N.H.  
June 19. Married Mildred Winslow Klein in Brookline, N.H.  
September. Began studies at Boston University School of Theology.
- 1930 Ordained Elder and received into Full Membership, New Hampshire Methodist Conference.  
October 18. Daughter Joan Alice born.
- 1932 March 29. Son Norman Ernest born  
Received S.T.B. degree, Boston University School of Theology.  
Began Th.D. studies, Boston University School of Theology.
- 1934 February 14, son Donald Markham born  
Appointed pastor at Baker Memorial Methodist, Concord, New Hampshire
- 1935 Awarded Th.D. degree, Boston University School of Theology
- 1936 Encounters with Bob Barton gave impetus to begin writing.

- 1938 Traveled to thirteen countries including the Holy Land and the Soviet Union.
- 1939 Appointed pastor of St. Luke's Methodist, Long Branch, New Jersey  
Became a ministerial member of the New Jersey Annual Conference
- 1940 December 11, daughter Carol Ann born.
- 1941 Appointed senior pastor, Haddonfield Methodist, Haddonfield, New Jersey
- 1943 Developed a program of stewardship which gained national recognition.
- 1947 Elected delegate to the General Conference of The Methodist Church.
- 1949 Thomas Building dedicated at the Haddonfield Church.
- 1950 Appointed Director of Spiritual Life, Board of Evangelism of The Methodist Church.  
Moved to Nashville, Tennessee
- 1951 Lectures delivered in Little Rock, Arkansas, published as *America Whither Bound?*
- 1952 *America Whither Bound?* Presented by a Texas layman to all members of Congress.
- 1953 "Little House" erected at our summer home in Monroe, New Hampshire.
- 1954 Led Board of Evangelism mission to nine South and Central American countries.
- 1955 Conducted the conference at Kenlake, Kentucky which launched a national  
Spiritual Life Movement
- 1956 Led sixty Methodist ministers in a mission to Great Britain, followed by seminars  
in Paris and Berlin.
- 1959 Preached for an eight-day mission in Belfast, Ireland.
- 1960 Preached for one month in major cities in Argentina.
- 1961 Delivered the Denison Lectures in Denison, Texas. These were published as  
*Jesus and Discipleship*.
- 1962 Appointed Senior Pastor at First Methodist Church, Birmingham, Michigan.  
Became a ministerial member of the Methodist Detroit Annual Conference.
- 1963 Elected delegate to the North Central Jurisdictional Conference.
- 1969 Dedication of the Thomas Parlor and Thomas Fellowship Hall of First Methodist Church,  
Birmingham
- 1970 Membership of First United Methodist Church of Birmingham reached 4,000.
- 1972 Retired from pastoral ministry; became Minister Emeritus at First United  
Methodist Church, Birmingham, Michigan.  
Honored with original musical play titled "Earnestly, Tenderly."  
Moved to Nashville, Tennessee.
- 1972-78 Conducted Spiritual Life missions throughout the United States.
- 1978 Returned to Birmingham, Michigan.  
Became Personnel Consultant for the F. Joseph Lamb Company.
- 1979 Wrote "The Margin of Life," a public service ad which won a national award.

- 1984 Took trips to Texas, California and Florida to interview outstanding golfers, and wrote of how they overcame physical handicaps.
- 1989 Moved to Twin Towers, Cincinnati, Ohio.  
Honored by The Foundation for Evangelism as one of forty outstanding Methodist leaders in evangelism in the period 1949-1989.
- 1993 March 1. Died in Cincinnati, Ohio.

# WRITINGS

## BOOKS

- 1937 *Trixie: Stories of the Circus as Told to G. Ernest Thomas by Bob Barton.* New York: E. P. Dutton.
- 1938 *Old Covered Wagon Show Days.* New York: E. P. Dutton.
- 1944 *An Adventure in Stewardship.* Chicago: General Board of Lay Activities, The Methodist Church.
- 1946 *To Whom Much Is Given: The Stewardship Questions of Jesus.* New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury.
- What Jesus Was Like: Or Aspects of the Physical Life of Jesus.* Great Neck, New York: Pulpit Press.
- 1948 *How to Live Your Faith.* New York: F. H. Revell.
- 1950 *Faith Can Master Fear.* New York: F. H. Revell.
- 1951 *Holy Habits of the Spiritual Life.* Nashville: Tidings.
- A Primer for Churchmen.* Nashville: Tidings.
- 1952 *America—Whither Bound?* Nashville: Tidings.
- 1953 *Spiritual Life Through Tithing.* Nashville: Tidings.
- 1954 *Rediscovering Christmas.* Nashville: Tidings.
- Spiritual Life for Methodist Christians.* Nashville: Methodist Evangelistic Materials.
- 1955 *Six 20<sup>th</sup> Century Mystics: Their Devotional Practices.* Nashville: The Upper Room.
- Spiritual Life in the New Testament.* Westwood, N.J.: F. H. Revell.
- 1955? *Tell America about Christ.* Nashville: Tidings.
- 1956 *Steps to the Christian Life.* Nashville: Tidings.
- 1958 *This Is Christmas: A Theology for Christian Laymen.* Nashville: Tidings.
- Twenty-five Ways to Assimilate New Members.* Nashville: Tidings.
- 1959 *Daily Meditations on the Seven Last Words.* Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Through Christ Our Lord: Sermons on the Mission of Christ.* Nashville: Tidings.
- 1960 *Personal Power through the Spiritual Disciplines.* Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- A Pocket Book of Discipleship.* Nashville: The Upper Room (compiler)
- 1961 *Jesus and Discipleship.* Nashville: Methodist Evangelistic Materials.
- The Care and Keeping of Church Members.* Nashville: Tidings.
- 1962 *Abundant Life through Aldersgate.* Nashville: Tidings.
- 1963 *Disciplines of the Spiritual Life.* New York: Published for the Publication Association by Abingdon Press.

- 1964 *The Meaning of the Resurrection in Christian Experience*. Nashville: Tidings.
- 1966 *Holy Habits and You*. Nashville: Tidings.
- 1973 *Christian Growth: The Cultivation of Congregational Life*. Nashville: Tidings.  
*25 Ways to Assimilate New Members*. Nashville: Tidings.
- 1974 *... with Wings as Eagles: 1974 Mayan Summer Revival*. San Antonio: The Mayans.
- 1975 *the Power of Prayer in Business and the Professions*. Nashville: Tidings.  
*Prayer in Today's World*. Lake Junaluska, N.C.: The International Fellowship.  
*The Way: 1975 Mayan Summer Revival*. San Antonio: The Mayans.
- 1976 *A Touch of the Master's Hand: 1976 Mayan Summer Revival*. San Antonio: The Mayans.
- 1977 *Where God Meets Man: 1977 Mayan Summer Revival*. San Antonio: The Mayans.
- 1978 *Written in the Wind: 1978 Mayan Summer Revival*. San Antonio: The Mayans.
- 1979 *You Can Be Sure: 1979 Mayan Summer Revival*. San Antonio: The Mayans.
- 1980 *Sing a New Song: Spiritual Adventures in the Psalms: 1980 Mayan Summer Revival*. San Antonio: The Mayans. *Mayan Summer Revival*.
- 1981 *The Added Dimension: 1981 Mayan Summer Revival*. San Antonio: The Mayans. *Mayan Summer Revival*.
- 1982 *Secrets of Prayer: The 1982 Mayan Summer Revival*. San Antonio: The Mayans. *Mayan Summer Revival*.
- 1983 *In Times Like These: The 1983 Mayan Summer Revival*. San Antonio: The Mayans. *Mayan Summer Revival*.
- 1984 *The Search for Fulfillment: The 1984 Mayan Summer Revival*. San Antonio: The Mayans.
- 1985 *Inherit My Mountain: The 1985 Mayan Summer Revival*. San Antonio: The Mayans.
- 1986 *Faith Is the Victory: The 1986 Mayan Summer Revival*. San Antonio: The Mayans.
- 1987 *Triumph of the Spirit: The 1987 Mayan Summer Revival*. San Antonio: The Mayans.
- 1988 *Words of Life: The 1988 Mayan Summer Revival*. San Antonio: The Mayans.
- 1991 *Faith for All Seasons*. Dayton, OH: UTS Press.
- 1998 *Adventurous Living: Selected Writings*. Edited by Norman E. Thomas. Dayton, OH: UTS Press.

## ARTICLES, CHAPTERS IN SYMPOSIA, AND PAMPHLETS

- 1947 "Instructions for Conversational Guides: Leading a Conversation Group in a Local Church. Evanston, IL: General Board of Lay Activities, The Methodist Church.
- 1951 "When You Meet a Stranger." *Coronet*, vol. 30, no. 1 (May 1951), 152.
- 1956 "Assimilating New Members." Nashville: Tidings.

- “How to Conduct a Spiritual Life Mission.” Nashville: Tidings.
- 1956? “The Spiritual Life Fellowship Plan.” Nashville: Tidings.
- “What Shall I Do Now?” Nashville: Tidings.
- 1958? “Christ In Christmas.” Nashville: Tidings.
- 1958 “Meeting God through the Best-Loved Chapters in the Bible.” Nashville: The Upper Room.
- 1959 “Devotional Writings.” *Christian Action*, vol. 14, No 3 (March 1959): 43.
- 1959 “Steps That Save a Man,” in Andrew Watterson Blackwood, *Evangelical Sermons of Our Day: Thirty-seven Foremost Examples of Bible preaching*. New York: Harper, 1959.
- 1960 “How to Conduct an Effective Prayer Circle in the Home,” in *A Year of Evangelism in the Local Church*, Gordon Pratt Baker and Edward Ferguson, eds. Nashville: Tidings.
- “Prayer and Personal Power,” *Christian Action*, vol. 15, No. 10 (October 1960): 6-29.
- “The Twelve.” Nashville: Methodist Evangelistic Materials.
- 1960? “Getting the Most Out of Worship.” Nashville: Tidings.
- “God Calls and We Answer.” Nashville: Tidings.
- “How to Be a Fellowship Friend: A link between the church and new members. Nashville: Tidings.
- “Salvation through Christ.” Nashville: Tidings.
- “Six Steps to Christian Faith.” Nashville: Tidings
- 1962 “Science and religion: a partnership,” in John Clover Monsma, *Science and Religion: Twenty-three Prominent Churchmen Express Their Opinions*. New York: Putnam, 1962.
- 1972 “A Twentieth Century Miracle: Story of the Upper Room.” Nashville: The Upper Room.
- 1975? “Managerial Growth through Leadership Development” (3 booklets). Pontiac, MI: Leadership Development.
- 1977 with William McKee Aber and Jerry L. Schmalenberger. *Why Belong to the Church?: a collection of dynamic evangelism sermons*. Lima, Ohio: C.S.S. Publishing Company.

## **SERMONS Preached and Published at First Methodist Church, Birmingham, Michigan**

- “And Many Believed on Him There.”
- “Certain Grounds for Faith in God” (Sept. 25, 1966).
- “Christmas Is a Dream Come True” (Dec. 25, 1966).
- “Eight Days That Shook the World.”
- “The Escape of the Soul” (May 22, 1966).
- “Eternal Life Made Real” (1966).
- “Faith in an Hour of Crisis” (May 29, 1966).
- “Forward in the Faith.”

“Forward to the New Day” (Sept. 8, 1968).

“The Glory of Small Things.”

“How Beautiful Are the Mountains.”

“Keeping a Sense of Wonder.”

“Keeping Life in Proper Focus.”

“The Layman’s Ordination” (Feb. 5, 1967).

“Living above Your Worries.”

“The Margin of Life.”

“Reaping Life’s Rewards.”

“Science and Faith.”

“Shacks on Skyscraper Foundations.”

“The Spirit of the Age.”

“Steps that Save a Man.”

“The Summons of a Holy Quest.”

“What I Know about God—for Sure” (Aug. 10, 1969).

“Why Hold Fast to Faith.”

## **MEDIA**

1973 with Walter J. Harrelson. “Jesus.” [Tidings Tape of the Month, April 1973]. Audiobook on cassette. Nashville: Tidings.