



ORDER OF SERVICE
AND
TRIBUTES

FOR THE LATE
ALVIRA EWURABENA AMOONUA TANOH
1934 – 2021



WEDNESDAY 3RD MARCH 2021

BURIAL SERVICE AT TRANSITIONS FUNERAL HOME, HAATSO
INTERMENT AT GETHSEMANE MEMORIAL GARDENS, EAST LEGON





Alvira Ewrabena Massry as a child with her Mother and Aunt

ORDER OF SERVICE

OFFICIATING CLERGY

Revd Fr Daniel Nii Attukwei Quaye- Parish Priest

Revd Fr (Prof) Kwamena Sagoe- Priest Assisting

Revd Fr Edmund Quartey (Parish Priest All Saints Anglican Church Adabraka)

In Attendance

St Augustine Anglican Church, Dansoman



PART I BURIAL SERVICE

Processional Hymn - A&M 334

Prayer

Psalm - 121

Lesson- John 11: 25- 26

Biography/ Tribute

Hymn - A& M197

Sermon

Offertory Hymns- Supp: 30, A & M 240

Blessing of Offertory



PART III - AT THE GRAVESIDE

Professional Hymn- A&M 609

Sentences

Hymn - A & M 401

Committal /Laying of Wreaths

Laying of Wreaths

Vote of Thanks

Hymn- A& M 477-

Benediction



PART II THANKS GIVING SERVICE

Hymn- Supp 40

Thanksgiving Prayer

Hymn- A& M 550

Absolution

Dead March in Saul

Recessional Hymn -A&M 228



ALVIRA EWURABENA AMOONUA TANOH
A SHORT BIOGRAPHY (26th June 1934 - 7th February 2021)

Our dearly beloved mother, sister, aunt, cousin and friend, known as “Alvie” or Ewurabena to the many who were close to her, was born on June 26th 1934 to Halim J Massry, a Lebanese business man from Mreijat in the Beqaa Valley in Lebanon, and Sophia Ewuradwoa Acquah- Moses of Cape Coast, Gold Coast Colony, an entrepreneur in her own right.

She is survived by her two sisters, Anita (Mama Anita) and Justina (Auntie Baaba). Fortuitously she was blessed in her last years through the effort of her grandson, Christopher, to discover and reunite with her younger brother Ghasan and her Massry cousins. Her other brothers through her mother Sophia were lost at birth and Yusuf on her fathers side also predeceased her in recent times.

Alvira was blessed with 4 delightful children of her own and several wonderful children of her husband’s, Emmanuel Kwesi Gyekye Tanoh,

whom she also considered her own to the very last.

Education & Marriage:

Alvira attended St Monica’s Primary and Middle School during the war years from

1940 to 1949, obtaining her Middle School Certificate and full scholarship to attend St Monica’s Secondary School in Asante – Mampong, from which she graduated in 1953, having passed her Cambridge Senior School Certificate Exams with ease.

By all accounts, she was a very capable and bright student academically, and a very keen participant in extracurricular activity’s. Theater and school drama presentations were her first love. She had occasion to star in many plays including some of the Shakespearean classics. Till the day that she passed on, she could recite from memory all of her lines in these plays (As



You Like It, Macbeth, The Merchant of Venice etc) and every other character's lines perfectly, and without skipping a line or missing a beat. This was a marvel to behold!

Her love of theater and the arts would inspire her participation in later life to join her sisters, Anita and Justina as actors in the production of some of her elder sister's (Efua Sutherland) plays at the famed drama studio in Accra.

After graduating from St Monica's, she obtained work at the Ministry of Education, Kinbu, Accra as a clerical officer. It was at Kinbu that she met her future husband, Kwesi Gyekye Ta-



noh. Theirs was a whirlwind romance. It was by no means an easy marriage but like all love, it had its moments of joy and laughter and the gift of the 4 children they had together - Kobena Obuadum, Nana Efua Apeaa, Tanokuma, and Gyekye.



Alvira with her father, Halim J Massry, and Obuadum and Apeaa

Work :

She served her time well in education but chose after a few years to follow her heart by applying to the National Radio Service, where she obtained employment as a radio announcer in 1958 (coincidentally the plans to set up a national radio service in the Gold Coast Colony were adopted in the year of her birth in 1934 - perhaps she did have the ear of the Lord after all)

Like many young idealists of the time, her husband, Kwesi Gyekye, had been an ardent supporter of Nkrumah's Independence Movement. Sadly like many of his generation, the advent of PDA and the movement of Nkrumah's rhetoric and actions to a "hard left" position, rather than a Democratic Socialist world view, alienated a broad section of the intelligentsia. The passing of the Preventive Detention Act, in their view, confirmed their worst fears of a coming dictatorship. This led to disillusionment and eventu-



London 1966 | Television School

al opposition to their hitherto nationalist hero Kwame Nkrumah and his CPP.

In 1962, barely a few months after Tanokuma was born, she followed her husband into exile, having received an urgent tip off of his imminent arrest. They travelled under cover of darkness, stealing successfully across the Lome Border and thence to Lagos via Cotonou, thereafter crossing the Atlantic to the United Kingdom by passage on the steam boat service of Elder Dempster Lines.

Years of Exile 1962 - 1968

Life in exile was harsh, cruel and unforgiving, both financially and emotionally for her and her young family. She found separation from her children heartbreaking. Her mother and sisters whom she had left behind in Ghana were never far from her thoughts.

Alvira was not, however, one to be immobilized by misfortune or hardship. She quickly found work as a freelance presenter for BBC Africa Service from 1962 to 1968. Her colleagues and su-

pervisors were among the ablest of BBC's "Africa Hands", Frank Barber and Veronica Manoukian, who in no small measure contributed immensely to her development as a broadcaster.

She was a regular contributor, host and narrator of the popular "London Fanfare" a women's magazine program, "Ghana Calling" and "For Parents and Teachers", an educational and family program.

All of these were very popular programs in the BBC African Service in the 60's, at a time when the BBC was transitioning (with some difficulty) from being an empire radio broadcaster to one that had to contend with the forceful rise of the new independent African nation states and the nationalist and anti-imperialist sentiments that came with these phenomenal events in world history.

She occasionally presented for the BBC's domestic radio services and participated in BBC Television programs including feature documentary's such as "Remaking Africa". Frank Barber wrote in his testimonial for Alvira the following in September of 1968:

"Mrs Tanoh also contributed numerous features to other programs in the Africa Services, and with her professional approach and unflinching reliability, was a most valued contributor .."

During this unsettling period in her life she found time to become a proud mother again, giving birth to Gyekye, her last biological child in 1964.

Not resting on her laurels and with fierce optimism, that she would return to Ghana sooner than later, Alvira undertook a professional broadcasters course covering presentation, news reading, script reading, public speaking and ancillary courses. This was part of her determined preparation for her eventual return to Broadcasting House in her beloved Ghana. She successfully completed these courses at Guignard Vodravisson in London in November 1966.

Her final years in England were economically very difficult but with perseverance her boundless optimism was rewarded, when she at last returned to Ghana in 1968 with Gyekye and all of her three other biological children who had joined her from Ghana in the latter part of 1964. Throughout this period she was in constant touch with her father.



GBC Till Retirement

Alvira restarted her life in Ghana with her characteristic gusto and love of life. Armed with her references and the evidence of her very productive work with BBC, and of course her impeccable record with the National Service as an announcer, she was welcomed back into her GBC family in 1969.

During her second stint at broadcasting she moved from radio to television, serving as a station announcer, presenter and editor in the Film Preview Unit, and in many other roles, in which she excelled, finally retiring as a Senior Production Director (Television).

She was thrilled to be in the midst of broadcasting greats such as Vincent Assisi, John Hammond, Robert Owusu, Edward Faakye, Emelia Elliot, Genevieve Nylander, and of course her dear friend Vida Koranteng Asante and numerous others. Others who were not in front of the cameras but made Broadcasting tick in its hey day, including Patience Thompson, Mrs Lili Nketsia, Mrs C Gyampo, there are simply too many to recount, many of whom she had started out with in radio and who had, by the time

of her arrival, migrated to the more glamorous environs of television.

Alvira was privileged to serve under several Director Generals including the late Colonel Assasie and Kwame Karikari who was Director General at the time of her retirement.

Ewurabena came from a family of strong activist women who were undeterred by the obstacles and barriers placed before women by both traditional and western culture. Her innate self confidence and her belief in the equal capacity of women in all aspects of earthly endeavour was best demonstrated by her eleven year stint as President of the GBC Ladies Association.

She and her colleagues worked tirelessly to build a formidable and respected women's group, whose purview was on matters affecting the welfare of women in and out of the workplace. This association has become a celebrated example to others and would be the precursor to many groups of this nature in both the public and private sector.

For her exemplary leadership, she was honored by her "Ladies" with an honorary plaque and citation which read in part :



" you served with enthusiasm and passion . We will forever cherish your good deeds.."

The leadership of the association graciously featured her in a widely televised documentary which extolled her seminal achievements as its head. A gesture that touched her deeply.

The Church:

A biography of Alvira cannot be written without recalling her earnest and life long devotion to the Anglican Church, in particular, and the wider community of the followers of Christ.

Her upbringing at home and in the care of nuns at St Monica's helped to fashion and mould her considerable faith. It was this abiding faith in the redemptive power of Christ, as an apostle of justice on earth and beyond, which forged her eternal optimism and infectious belief that things can only get better and that Christian

love always would triumph over evil.

She never gave up, even in moments of despair, because she believed, quite plainly, that God was by her side and would see her through.

It is with this conviction that she participated in the founding of several churches of the Anglican Faith including St Monica's (Bubuashie), St Augustine's (Dansoman), and St Matthews (Mandela, New Bortianor).

She was also a devout member of the Guild of Good Shepherd and served a stint as Master Shepherd. Her role as a Chorister, Prayer Group Founder and Convener will be remembered fondly by the supervising clergy and congregations of St Monica's and St Augustine's.

For these exemplary efforts and record of devoted service, she was bestowed a Bishop's Badge of Honor, which she will carry with her on her onward journey to meet the Christ, in lasting testimony to her service here on earth.

Family:

Loving, Vivacious, Caring, Just, Passionate, Fearless, Devoted, Welcoming - these words come to mind in any description of what Alvira Ewurabena gave to and meant to all of us, namely her father, mother, sisters, brother, children, grandchildren, friends, colleagues, and wider family, during her eventful life.

She was more than welcoming to her in-laws and was protective of the women, in particular, in an unspoken pact of mutual solidarity. She was a fan of Karen, Angela, Ernest, Eibhilin, Millie, and her darling Barbara's spouses. Mr. Goodhead a more recent addition was warmly and equally welcomed. She kept a relationship





with each of them, where possible, regardless of the fortunes of any particular marriage.

A special place in her heart was reserved for her grand children - Nii, Tasha, Christopher, Arelo and James and the many offspring of her wider circle of children. Like many grandmothers, she considered their arrival as her seminal achievement. Though an apostle of discipline, she never failed to convey the deep love and affection for her children and grandchildren.

Alvira was blessed with steadfast friends, who in their own devotion to her, buoyed her spirits in the toughest of times and were a source of countless tales of expressed love, humor and the endless glow of true friendship.

Notable among these were the Budu-Arthur Sisters of Esikado, Sekondi - Aunties, Anna, Bronya, and Akoto. Together with her own beloved blood sisters, these were truly family.

Ewurabena also had a flourishing life with her neighborhood family in Dansoman till the very end. She was a founding member of the local housing association. They were her other extended family. As one of the original settlers in the area, she became a calling point for new comers and a fount of advice and help. It is here that she reconnected with Auntie Adoley, forming a life long and enduring friendship.

Alvira's life has truly been a enriching journey. She rose above her difficult circumstances to give a life of genuine service to her children, family, friends, colleagues and country.

Above all she lived the very essence of the Christian creed that had been her beacon, summons and call to faith, She Truly Loved Her Neighbor as Herself.

She departed this life and started her onward journey 65 years and approximately 3 hours from the birth of her first born in the early hours of Sunday 7th February 2021.

She went full circle to her maker.

*"Grandma Mountain", "Alvie", Ewurabena ,
Mama*

*Nantsew Yie , A Kyere Kwan Pa. Ye Da Wo Ase
Da Da.*

Mamma Da Yie.





TRIBUTE TO MAMA – FROM HER CHILDREN

Mama was Mama. And Mama remains Mama. Our Dearly Departed Mother, without a doubt, loomed large, lovingly and positively pervasive in the lives of us her children. In turn, each of us - Goosie, Apeaa, Gyekye and Nat - adored and loved her immeasurably.

Mama was indeed a Mother in every sense of the true meaning of that word. And we say this not in some abstract way to simply dutifully glorify our Mother at the time of her passing. We say this because we lived it. We say this because we saw it. We say this because we felt it deeply. Indeed for us, one of the purest examples of how Mama absolutely passed the litmus test for motherhood was when we lived in London for several years as children with our parents.

Our Father, of blessed memory, at the time was heavily embroiled in politics in Ghana and was

consequently frequently away from London. It thus fell on Mama to raise four children literally by herself in what was then an essentially alien and not wholly hospitable environment for immigrants in 1960s England.

That was a mean enterprise indeed for anyone to undertake. To work and earn in order to feed, clothe, house, raise and put four children through school almost single-handedly in such an environment as described was without a doubt a supremely herculean task that would have daunted many a young mother.

With hindsight we can proudly say that Mama, nonetheless, proved equal to the task and acquitted herself with complete distinction. What did Mama not do for us her children? How many jobs did she not take on simultaneously and literally work without rest so her chil-

dren could be warm, clothed, housed, schooled and fed in relative comfort and even have toys to play with to boot? From the fabled offices of the BBC Bush House in Holborn to Ealing in Middlesex and enduring the bitter cold and rain-splattered, inclement streets of London year in and year out she trudged and traversed day in and day out for us.

And all this, Mama did with an amiable disposition in spite of the exceedingly trying times. Truly, we sometimes felt the bite of her tongue when as children we were invariably naughty. There were times too when as children we might have felt she was quick to anger. But again with hindsight, and now that we are sufficiently old and knowledgeable enough to appreciate the very difficult context at the time and the sheer weight that she oftentimes bore on her shoulders alone - it is actually quite the miracle that she was even not more frustrated but was rather able to create the kind of home and environment that ultimately produced warm-hearted, well-balanced, well-behaved, perspicacious and well-educated children of fine character. So given such a context did Mama not literally fashion miraculous outcomes in her life through nothing but pure love, hard work and absolute dedication to her children?

And guess what? In spite of her daily grind, Mama still somehow miraculously found time for us. And quality time it was indeed including taking us to the movies to watch her favourite classics such as the Sound of Music, The King and I, Anthony and Cleopatra and many others. She even read us bedtime stories whenever she could and also found the time to take us around to visit family friends such Auntie Anna, Auntie Akoto, Auntie Clara and several others who were sojourned in London at the time.

And when it came to stepping up in later years - Mama was indeed a most ardent and faithful 'stepper'! When Christopher was born in New York and Goosie and Karen were in need of assistance as working parents - Mama was off to New York like a shot to help out as a loving, caring grandmother. When Nat's wife, Angela, of blessed memory had to undergo heart-transplantation surgery soon after their daughter Natasha was born - Mama again literally zoomed to Manchester to give significant assistance and care during those perilous times. Nat's predominantly white neighbours at the time were often agog to see Mama calmly promenading up and down their street with her

only granddaughter Natasha securely strapped on her back! Mama was also in London to help with caring for Stephen and James. And in Ghana she helped out with Christopher and Arelo. It was as though we had our own in-house 'Wonder Woman' ever-willing to come to our aid when the need arose.

Like all of us humans, Mama was not perfect. She was a product of her times and thus sometimes unconsciously subscribed to undemocratic parental practices - for want of a better description. But she quickly adapted and embraced developing trends given her innate perspicacity and her genuinely boundless desire to give love and show goodwill above all else. But it wasn't always an easy adaptation. For instance, in situations where we were sometimes able to box her into a corner with our arguments she had graciously listened to but did not agree with - she would retort with a favourite line of hers: "Because we now live in a permissive society you people think you can just get up and say whatever you want...hmm!" And by "you people" she certainly meant we the offending and seemingly renegade children! All said, given the societal milieu within which she grew up - Mama was definitely quite the enlightened soul in so many important respects.

Mama possessed an extraordinary sense of humour. And she eternally loved humorous anecdotes. One favourite line of her's was: "Ma min ye wo dzi fin" which means something like let me share a joke with you or let me regale you with a funny anecdote. We would oftentimes literally laugh our insides out when she regaled us with anecdotes from her secondary school days at Mampong or when she and her sisters were being naughty and trying to pull a fast one on their own mother during their childhood. She would also encourage us to tell our own fun stories from school and pantomime some of the stuff we had learnt. Apeaa was notoriously good at this! Indeed - Mama's exceptionally amiable and humorous disposition which she sought to bestow on her children has undoubtedly helped us immensely in life. It has given us a luminous and infectious optimism that continues to serve us tremendously well up until this day and has fashioned our overall positive worldviews accordingly.

Mama consistently kept faith with her God. It was probably this faith, among other things, that kept her going during episodes and periods of her life that proved trying and further

aided her to succeed in so many important areas of her life.

Mama was exceptionally generous. This was a wholly desirable trait she shared with her husband, our late Father of blessed memory. And this generosity of hers was not simply reserved for her children. Mama was nice and kind to everyone including strangers she was meeting for the first time. This excellent generosity manifested itself in various admirable ways. For example, Mama always kept an open home. Our friends and family members were always being invited to stay. Family members in need of recuperation were offered invitations to come and sojourn and were made to feel completely welcome.

And there was ALWAYS food in our home. She always maintained that it was wholly reprehensible to maintain a home where food was not readily available for anyone who might walk through the door and be in need of sustenance. Such were the selfless depths of her generosity.

Mama pursued a very dignified and quiet philanthropy within her Dansoman environs and beyond. She quietly paid the school fees of children she barely knew. She fed people she hardly knew. And she never spoke about these acts of generosity and goodwill she undertook. We her children would on occasion stumble upon these quiet acts of philanthropy quite accidentally. Such, for example, would occur when we would quite by chance bump into some of the highly gratified recipients eager to sing our Mother's praises to us. In this respect she lived as she believed. In her own dignified way she gave living meaning to Christian charity.

Mama was also a perfectionist in certain matters. One such matter was with the proper pronunciation of English language words. She had this book on correct English Language word pronunciations written by some unsuspecting gentleman called Daniel Jones and which eventually became dog-eared from constant use over the years. For us her children, Daniel Jones soon became our oppressor even if he was a somewhat benign one. If we dared to mispronounce a word - Mama would shout - "won ko fa Daniel Jones no mbra" - and old Daniel would thus make an appearance and be made to intervene to put words right - so to speak.

Mama was a leader who demonstrated leadership by example. She was also 'political' in her own way even though she was not prone

to shouting out her beliefs from rooftops. Like the way she lived her Christian faith - she also lived out her political beliefs. Quiet and intelligent observation as well as experience had ingrained in her the need for gender equality in society and at the workplace. And how did she go about expressing such beliefs that were quite enlightened, given the times she lived in? Mama helped to establish the GBC Ladies Association at Ghana Broadcasting Corporation and led it as their elected President for over a decade in the 1970s and early 1980s. This laudable Association was formed, among other things, to give women at their workplace a meaningful outlet for their voices to be heard and respected within their vast, nation-wide organisation. GBC Ladies Association grew to become a highly cherished trail-blazer, and an important organisation that effectively sought to empower women in manifest ways within the workplace and beyond.

How could we her children not admire her for such definitive efforts and interventions on her part to chart courses and make interventions that were the practical manifestation of ideals that were selfless, necessary and valuable for society's overall betterment? How could we her children not learn from such exemplary acts of selflessness and purposeful leadership?

We would require reams of paper to write about Mama and the colourful, eventful and quite the laudable life she lived. Those reams of paper may be filled one day but for now - in the way in which she taught us - we write this tribute as 'anecdotal' highlights of a life well and properly lived. And we say 'Mama remains Mama' because when someone impacts lives so positively, lovingly and deeply as Mama did ours - that person - dead or alive - is going nowhere!

Mama was also a caring and loving Mother-in-law. She was a Mother to Karen, Eibhlín, Angela and Ernest. She was a Mother to Barbara as well.

In the event of Mama's passing and given what Mama meant to us her children and the beauty she inspired in our lives - we are thus able to invoke that biblical quote that enjoins us to:

"Give beauty for ashes, joy for mourning, and praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord that He might be glorified."



Tribute to Grandma

The one and only Mrs Alvira Tanoh – as she fondly loved to be called – was a titan of a woman! She lived a long and fruitful life across times of unprecedented change. A broadcasting pioneer, a fiercely independent woman, a pillar of her community and a deeply committed and active Christian. She was all these things and more. Indeed, her story was more remarkable than any tribute can really capture. But most important to us, she was our grandmother.

Yet she was more than just our mother or father’s mother. More than a lap to lay a head on or a heartbeat to feel.

Grandma was the warmth that we could lay next to at aged 4 or aged 24, while she regaled us with stories. The nuns in the convent school, the Lady Precious Stream play, the GBC announcements, and the kind man who gave her the 4 shillings to help her get into secondary school. She had a memory like no other!

She was “Dansoman”, the shelter under which some of the best moments of our formative years were crafted and engraved into our memories.

Grandma was the thoughtfulness and hospitality expressed in her iced tea, ginger drink, cakes and pastries – the ones that were especially for guests. The same ones that we perpetually eyed and clandestinely tasted at odd hours!

She was the discipline embedded in her commitment to the church, her ferocious insistence

on doing things properly and her policing of precise language with her beloved friend Daniel Jones. She was the independence in her fiercely held principles and unwavering faith, while also being the accommodating spirit that would debate opposing perspectives and ideas.

She was the love that made sure the generations that followed had a place to call home. The same love that led her across borders to spend time with her grandchildren. That powerful love that extended the meaning of family beyond mere biological and legal bonds.

She was the anchor that centred our family – a sanctuary of common ground because no matter our different views and ideals, we all love her. No effort was spared to plan gatherings and parties around her light.

She was the laughter, humour and good cheer in the jokes shared with people of all shapes, sizes and ages, the joy-filled family get-togethers and even in the peace signs she made with her fingers in photos. Always reminding us that youth isn’t simply a function of our physical age.

Grandma was the beauty captured in more pictures than we can count and an endless collection of sewn cloths and headscarves – a fashion influencer before the Instagram age! She was the love of life embedded in the innumerable wedding cakes she cut, the infinite “morsels” of food tasted from unsuspecting plates, the knowing smiles and the mischievous grins.

It still feels strange to use the word “was” when

talking about her. We see parts of that warmth, shelter, thoughtfulness, intelligence, independence, discipline, love, laughter, and beauty in each other and in those that have joined together to remember her. For some, these traits were from her direct influence, for others they were a light they could bask in and emulate. For us all, she enhanced those traits within us because she reciprocated in multiples without hesitation when she saw even a tiny spark of good in others. Truly, she laughed with many, prayed with many, encouraged many and comforted many.

So, it doesn't quite capture the truth to say that Grandma was. In each of her family members – immediate, extended or adopted and in those she touched, the essence of her values and character lives on. It feels more true, more hopeful, and more inspirational to say that Grandma is.

Because as long and as we carry even the smallest piece of her with us, she remains in some way. Perhaps she continues to exist – continues to be – in the most meaningful way that a human can. She continues to be in the love she shared with us and the love she taught us to carry, cherish and share with others.

And so, Grandma – the one and only Mrs Alvira Tanoh – to you we say thank you. Not just for who you were, and what you did while air filled your lungs, but also for who you will continue to be in our hearts and minds.

We will surely miss your presence more than words can say. But we will also carry you in ways that words can truly never do justice. We love you Grandma.

Rest Well!

★ *Tribut to my wonderful Grandma* ★

Grandma, you were a titan and we knew it! Your passion for love, truth, justice and family were fierce. Anything less was unbearable!

Your love for God, your children, Karen, Eibhlin, Angela and your grand children was unshakeable. Not a drop of love was wasted.

Grandma, in a world that is increasingly loveless, robotic and inhuman, it is hard to tell what is true, and what is not, and where love is and where it is not. You were a blinding light in the dark shouting, "quick, come this way!" for all those who could hear.

Grandma, who I am, I owe to you. I am so proud to be your grandson. I will tell your descendants your story and try and teach them the things that you taught me.

I will tell them about "Grandma Mountain", who loved us so much and let us play on her back, and whose wonderful laugh warmed the halls of our souls.

I will tell them about Grandma Alvira, our grandmother, our playmate, our protector, God's shield maiden and our guardian angel, who was titanic love, titanic truth and titanic justice.

Goodnight beautiful grandma xxx I'll watch for you in the ★stars★.



(And just so you know, dear reader, that the last time I saw Grandma, she wouldn't eat her lunch unless I was going to share it with her. So I had to eat, so that she would.

I knew something special was happening at the time, but I didn't know what. I didn't know that this was the last time I would see her alive and even at that last time, she wanted me to know, that she loved me)

From Affafa (Christopher)

Tribute to Grandma from Natasha

The thing that Grandma symbolised for me the most was warmth!

And it was an all-embracing warmth. The warmth she so genuinely and effortlessly radiated was so wholesome that it always made me feel very safe and welcome in her presence. Grandma had loads of warmth to spare and it seemed to engulf all those who came around her. Wherever Grandma was always felt like home to me. Grandma constantly said I looked very much like her and I was always secretly delighted that in her eyes, I had at least inherited some of her elegant beauty. I will miss Grandma so much. But she will always remain with me.

May she forever rest in beautiful peace and warmth.

Natasha



TRIBUTE BY SISTERS, ANNIE AND BABS

TRIBUTE BY SISTERS, ANNIE AND BABS in the voice of Sister Annie



*Through all the changing scenes of life
In trouble and in joy,
The praise of my God shall still
My heart and tongue employ*

As sisters we have been through many changing scenes of life; enjoyed good times and also through hard times. Under the disciplinary eye



of our mother Sophia Aquah-Moses, whom we called Aunty Ewuradwoa. We lived sheltered and protected lives in Cape Coast. Our mother was so strict that one day you asked, "Sister Annie, is Aunty Ewuradwoa really our mother?" to which Sister Annie replied, "*Obiara nye hen kasa a, ose gye ma wo maame, ka kyere wo maame, ntsi obeye hen maame.*" And that seemed to have satisfied you. You were always the outspoken one amongst us and the chick that wanted to peep out from under mother hen and see the world.

When I got transferred to Swedru and subsequently got married to B. K. Hammond, you and Babs often spent your holidays with her whilst you schooled in Mampong.

The Lord was gracious to us throughout as we grew into our various roles in life, acting a few of Sister Theo's plays at the then Drama Studio and you going off to build your family in the UK.

The gap of your being away in UK all those years was soon bridged when we all found ourselves living in the same neighbourhood. Remembering the joy of living in close proximity with each other and raising our children as one big family brings back such cherished memories. You were always so full of life. Babs will always cherish all the times she spent with you in Dansoman. Babs and I cannot believe you left so suddenly, unannounced.

Ahema always says we the over eighties are in the departure hall ready to board at any time. It seems your angels came earlier than expected. Alvie, we will really miss you. Rest in perfect peace till we meet again in heaven.



Alvira Massry – My sister...

“A sister is someone who loves you from the heart,

No matter how much you were born apart.

She is a joy that cannot be taken away,

Once she enters your life, she is there to stay.”

Alvira my sister, whom I never met

fate kept us apart and did not let,

until a brave man, Chris, played the bet

united our souls and a story is set

Alvira my sister, you left short and never waited

meeting you was a plan that was plotted

It is a blessing discovering a family you had

celebrating the legacy of our late dad

Alvira my sister rest in peace

you will always be remembered with love and grace

A lady who gathered a loving family

Shined with hope and sympathy in any place.

Ghassan Halim Massry

Rima, Sam and Lara Massry



TRIBUTE BY HAMMONDS

Aunty Ewurabena was such an exciting person that one never got bored in her presence. She always had one story or joke to share that sent you into fits of laughter.

Her return from the U.K. brought a breath of fresh air into our lives. She was openminded and drew us into conversations that used to be considered ‘anbodoism’ at the time. She would openly ask about our relationships and demand we bring our boyfriends home.

Aunty Ewurabena was jovial and very supportive.

Alvie gave me my first opportunity to earn an income in my early teens. She had beautiful long hair which I got to wash and roll for 50 pesewas a week.

Alvie always had an endearing name for almost all her nieces and nephews. Arnoldie was Arnoldie darling, Moofua was Madam Catering Officer, I was Ahemtsy dear, Madam hairdresser



and later when I moved to Dansoman as a married woman, I became Mr Tsegah's secretary and "wona wowo soo wonbenom tea"

Living close to you in Dansoman gave us lots of opportunities to spend time together and enjoy your awesome ginger drinks.

Lots of cherished memories.

Alvie, your voice was so strong when we last spoke and I was hoping to visit for tea.

We never thought you'll precede your elder sister. But who are we to determine how God should work? He has been extremely gracious to us. We are grateful to have been part of your beautiful life. **ALVIE, Auntie Ewurabena, wo na wowoso ye benom tea daakye wo sor aheman mu.** Sleep well, Rest in perfect peace Auntie.

Arnold, Ahema, Ankrr and Moofua

SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF TIMES WITH AUNTY EWURABENA.

From Nana Nyan and all THE SWATSONS

I won't be able to forget Auntie Ewurabena in a hurry.

Somehow Auntie Ewurabena was always a part of our lives or rather we were part of hers. Orokuwa and Okoma stayed with her during their primary school days at Datus in Dansoman.

I stayed with Auntie Ewurabena too, for some time just before I completed form five and so on.

I remember AE's kindness to all and sundry. I particularly recall the period just after I was discharged from Cardio Centre, Korle Bu following the terrible accident I had around late 1998. AE threw an invitation to me, to wit, I could come over to Dansoman to recuperate.

I quickly honoured her invitation and that period still holds interesting memories for me.

After supper we would usually sit in the yard, close to the right fence wall and enjoy the breeze while we talked just about anything.

I was amazed at the way AE could still recite copious portions of the books she read for literature during her school days. And oh, she regaled me with anecdotes of her youthful days with her sisters; Babs and Sister Ani, as she affectionately calls them, at St Monica's Primary in Cape Coast.





AE has this great sense of humour. She would tell me some really hilarious jokes (I think Nat takes a lot after her in that regard) and we would have a good laugh.

Back in the day, it simply was not possible to visit AE and not be made to enjoy her warm hospitality. She virtually wants you to have anything yummy, available in the house.

That was where I got introduced to iced tea, cold ginger drink among others,with all kinds of lovely cookies to go with it.

Cartoons was one of her favourite items on tv and she would watch with close attention, enjoying every bit of it. But some of her friends especially Aunty Adoley, who lived in the opposite house, could not understand this at all. I easily could, because I belong to the club too.

When it comes to sussing out new recipes AE was very adventurous. She would try her hands on a new formular. If you happen to be on the scene, then it was bonanza for you.

A good serving of the newly "outdoored" meal would be placed before you and of course, your comments after the meal would be most sought after.

Most women have just a passing interest in politics but no, not AE. She would ask your opinion on a topical political issue and after hearing your response, proceed to share with you, her well-reasoned out thoughts on the matter.

Living with her at various times, though not for lengthy periods, was still time enough for me to observe that her love for broadcasting was not diminished. Given even the fact that at the time, it was not likely that she would get back into the profession.

A quality I found most admirable in AE was her open-mindedness and yet the same person would stoutly defend what she believed in.

I am very grateful and thankful to have had AE as my aunty. The memory would sure linger on.

Brethren, on my own behalf and that of my folks, I wish to express our heart-felt condolences. Let's be consoled by the fact that ,no matter what; IT IS WELL.

Aunty Ewurabena, your own Babs, Ama Parker, Nana Nyan, Charles Orokuwa and Okoma say; you will always be in our hearts.

ANYEMI Dansoman

Tribute from Augustina Akwei

“Then I heard a voice from heaven saying “Write this: Happy are those who from now on die in the service of the Lord.”

“Yes indeed” answers the Spirit “They will enjoy rest from the hard work because the results of their service will go with them.” Rev. 14:13 GNB

Oh, How do I condense a relationship for almost fifty years into a few lines? Impossible, almost.

I met Mrs Alvira Tanoh when she joined the GBC in 1958. By her amiable nature we soon became friends. We worked in the Programme Operations Department until she moved to GTV.

We were feverishly looking for houses in Dansoman. By coincidence we were allocated houses on the same street. In fact our houses are directly opposite each others. This strengthened our friendship which over the years became more that of a family.

One of the many episodes we often recollect-

ed and laughed about was the day we went to credit gari for our young secondary scholars. The weather was not good but we thought we could make. However, a few metres to the house, it started drizzling. Alvie said “Adoley, you know I can’t run, you can so do that before we end up with soaked gari”. It was Alvie who rather got home soaked.

Anyemi, you were the Big Sister to me. What comes to mind was the major roles you played in the marriage of Nana, Maame and Dina. We are so grateful.

Anyemi, I will really miss you.

I am however consoled that you are at peace with your maker.

Alvie, take your deserved rest till we meet again

Anyemi, Fare thee well

Anyemi, yaawo jogbanj

Tribute to Auntie Alvira from the Condua and Budu-Arthur Families

“Alvie!”; “Mi Cusson!” was what our mother and Auntie Alvira used to call each other. This relationship began in 1951, when they met in St. Monica’s Secondary School, in Mampong. They found themselves in Martinson House, dormitory 2 and became sisters after that. The bond was further tightened through the close relationship between her late husband Mr. Tanoh and our Auntie Anna’s late husband Mr Armaah. With these links Auntie Alvira, Auntie Anna, Auntie Bronya and my mum became more than friends...we were family.

The fun times we had when in primary school Auntie Alvira would come over to visit! Panyin, Kakra and I would clamor to braid, comb, style, curl auntie Alviras’ long hair...and she would let us! She let us practice all sorts of strange hair styles, always with a smile, a laugh. She would encourage us as a group to write, direct and act out plays, which we did with Apeaa as producer and director and Gyekye, as a very reluctant and uncooperative actor. We modeled in fashion shows with Auntie Alvira as our main cheerleader.

We all have a vivid recollection of how once on a trip to Essikado, when we must have been in primary school or thereabouts, the parents stopped by the roadside to buy coconuts. We all watched in wonder as Mama and Auntie Alvira started behaving as if that was the first time, they realized that coconuts contained both juice and edible fruit. They praised God on this absolutely wonderful accomplishment! Gods water and Gods fruit all in one place! They went on and on and on. Incredibly, just a few days before Auntie Alvira passed, Mama called her to chat... and they continued their conversation of Gods water and Gods fruit! A good 50 years later!

When we each remember Auntie Alvira, we remember the joy, the laughter, the fun, the optimism, her faith in God and the sheer beauty of her spirit. We know that her children are our siblings from another mother and know that our family relationship will endure.

Rest in Peace Auntie Alvie. We will always cherish the moments we spent with you.

Tribute by the Arthur Sisters

Mrs Alvira Ewurabena Tanoh, often called by us "Domestication", "Mama de Mama", "J.B. Akenkan" and "Wabane d3n, Obane Shwii". We gave Grandma these names because of her constant friendliness and accommodating nature, which was always there regardless of age.

Grandma, you were a precious gift from God. So beautiful inside and out. You possessed grace, love and patience. You touched our hearts in so many ways. Your home was a welcoming place for any special occasion we held. You were more than a mother to us. On our last-born's wedding day we didn't feel the absence of our own mother so much, because you placed the crown on the bride's head and showered your blessings as a mother does.

You took Charity as your own daughter, the bond between you two was amazing. Her consolation is that she had the opportunity to

support you in your old age. She wished you might have been with us a few more years, so she could more completely repay some of your kindness. But alas this was not to be.

Your door was always open to us and we felt at home. Your usual response to our greetings whenever we visited you was heartwarming. You will sit down and listen to anything we were saying. You had time for anyone and everyone. You always made sure there was enough food to eat and always asked us to feel free to stay and spend the night.

We will dearly miss you. But we believe you are rejoicing, in safer hands. We will surely meet on that beautiful shore one day.

Grandma rest well in the bosom of Our Lord till we meet again. Da yie Grandma, Nyame nfa wo nsie



Alvira with her Aunt Adoley Akwei



Alvira with Beatrice and Charity Arthur



Alvira with Aunt Akoto Condua

TRIBUTE TO MRS TANOH BY THE RESIDENTIAL ASSOCIATION ADOTEI OTSWI ROAD-DANSOMAN

Lord you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations

Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world from everlasting to everlasting, you are God.

You turn men back to dust saying Return to dust, o sons of men. For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by.

The length of our days is seventy years or eighty, if we have the strength yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away. (Psalm 90:1-10).

Members of the Residential Association learnt with shock the passing of one of the founders of the association. Grandma, as we usually called her always had a smile for everyone she met on our street. She was one of the pioneers who ad-

vocated for the streetlights on our road as early as 1998. She was always available for meetings and would contribute her suggestion humbly. She stopped attending meetings due to old age in 2015 but will always send her regards. Grandma was a humble, affable, and welcoming person to all who came into contact with her. She was easily approachable and related well with both young and old. Even when ill health prevented her from attending meetings, she nominated sister Charity Arthur to represent her.

We are grateful for the opportunity to live with her on the 19th Close which was the original name of the road – now Adotei Otswi road. We thank the Lord for having such a pleasant woman assist us to keep our community and association prosperous.

***May the Lord grant you eternal rest
Grandma Alvira.***

GBC LADIES ASSOCIATION’S TRIBUTE TO MADAM ALVIRA TANOH: OUR SECOND PRESIDENT



As President of the GBC ladies Association giving a welcome address in 1985

*He will wipe away every tear from their eyes.
There will be no more death
or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order
of things has passed away.*

Rev. 21:4

We have known our dear mother and our former President, Madam Alvira Tanoh, of the GBC Ladies Association, whose mortal remains lies before us, as a meticulous, hard-working and caring lady.

Mama Alvira Tanoh, was the second (2nd) President of the GBC Ladies Association, of which her exemplary stewardship has remained with the Association till today. She took over from our sweet Mum, Madam Jane Cole (of blessed memory) when she retired from active service in 1977. The late Madam Jane Cole birthed the Association and was the First President. Madam Alvira took over as the second

President till she retired from active service. She was a cherished Ladies President; her personality and general disposition made her likeable to all. She was very jovial, affable and very innovative. Her leadership qualities and exemplary lifestyle made an indelible imprint in our hearts and minds. Even though retired, we were still in contact with her on the activities of the Association and she gladly supported and gave her input.

We are caught between accepting Mama Alvira's departure; loss of a mother, a dear friend, and her presence in the glory of the Lord. We join the family to mourn our former President – The second President of the GBC Ladies Association. We believe the many messages from different sources have come to settle our hearts concerning the purpose of God in this apparent maze. A word from the good Book is worth quoting: "For when David had served God's purpose, in his own generation, he fell asleep " Act 13:36. This aptly describes our loved one's departure from here. Mama thanks for your care.

We really miss you, yet we rejoice with you in glory. Sleep on beloved, sleep and take thy rest.



Alvira with the GBC Ladies examining one of the social projects they oversaw during her tenure as President

Rest peacefully in the Lord's embrace till we meet on the resurrection morning.

It is comforting to know that your last breath on earth became your first breath in heaven.

Halleluyah!!

Good Night, Good Night, Good Night

Mama Alvira.

Dayie

TRIBUTE IN MEMORY OF OUR LATE SISTER ALVIRA TANOH

BY TUESDAY PRAYER GROUP

Dear Heavenly Father I dare to ask this question. Is this how it is going to be? Do we just slip off without a formal goodbye, without a hug, a kiss or a wave. Do we just fade away? Your answer, Yes this is it. Here today and gone tomorrow.

Our sojourn in this earth is fleeting. She has accomplished whatever she was destined to do.

When a new Tuesday Prayer Group was started at St. Augustine Anglican Church, Dansoman, she was one of the founding members. She took care of the notebook of members who attended meetings, the collection and donations made to the Group. We visited the bereaved, the sick and the aged.

As the years passed on the Group became very big with members from the area and all types of churches.

Bank Account was opened at Barclays Bank, Dansoman now (Absa). We always held Christmas Celebration for all members. We were able to give loans without interest to members in need to be paid in due time.

She was very meticulous in whatever she did for the Group. Such as paying for the electricity bill, paying the Preacher, Organist, Singer, Ushers etc., It is a fact that Sister Alvira invited the founders to her birthday party at her home. These are the happy time we will remember her and for her prayers for all of us.

We will always cherish knowing someone like her.

Farewell Sister Alvira

May the Good Lord keep you safe till we meet again

TRIBUTE BY ST. AUGUSTINE ANGLICAN CHURCH TO MRS. ALVIRA TANOH



*Trusting Him while life shall last
Trusting Him till earth be past
Till within the jasper wail
Trusting Jesus that is all*

*Trusting as the moments fly
Trusting as the days go by
Trusting Him what're be fall
Trusting Jesus that is all*

On this solemn day it is indeed very painful and disheartening for St. Augustine Anglican Church- Dansoman to pay tribute to our friend; church member a mother in Christ. The parting of loved ones even among the living is difficult to bear how much more between the living and the dead.

Death remains a mystery that eludes the mortal, when, how and where it will occur is in the hands of the Almighty God. Such was the death of our Christian Mother and friend; Mrs. Alvira Tanoh. Nonetheless as a Christian, whether we live or die, we are for God. Mrs. Alvira Tanoh joined St. Augustine Anglican Church (The Basilica) in the year 1994. She was very active and got involved in all activities in the church. She

served as a P.C.C. Member for several years, she was part of the committee that drafted our Welfare Constitution, Auntie Alvira and few elderly members of the Church came together to form Tuesday Prayer (Shiloh). She was Past Master shepherd of the Guild of the Good Shepherd

Auntie Alvira was almost always present at Church Service until few years ago when she became ill and could not attend church service. The Church has been visiting her and the last visit was on 23rd December, 2020. As we bid farewell, it is our prayer that the legacy left behind would be cherished by all members of the Church.

We know that he has been called from here by the LORD to a higher service. She has indeed been faithful with the little entrusted to him here.

The Auntie Alvira was God's gift to the Parish and we will forever miss her and cherish the memories of the time we spent together.

St. Augustine Anglican Church – Dansoman wish you safe journey to your maker.

May your gentle soul rest in peace in his bosom till we meet again at his great banquet.

Auntie Alvirah sleep well. Amen

TRIBUTE BY THE GUILD OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD IN MEMORY OF SISTER ALVIRA TANOH

*The strife is o'er the battle done
Now is the Victor's triumph won
Now let the song of praise be sung
Alleluia*

*Death's mightiest powers have done their worst,
And Jesus hath his foes dispersed;
Let Shouts of praise and joy outburst
Alleluia*

These words of A&M Hymn 135 summarize the last part of our Sister, friend, mother, and associate's life. But at the end of it we join the welcoming angels at the portals of Glory in holy outbursts of joy. We shout Hallelujah because a good fight has been fought, a mortal race has been run and the treasured faith in Christ has been steadfastly kept. Now awaiting Sister Alvira, is the crown of righteousness, which the Righteous LORD and Judge will award her on that day.

Indeed a person's worth cannot be measured by his or her days on earth; but how well those days are spent to the benefit of humanity.

It is customary to express not only our sorrow and sense of loss, but what a particular person meant to us individually and collectively as a kinsman, colleague, friend or someone whose bounty support and care we enjoyed.

We have had a very happy and successful life together and we have enjoyed every part of it. Your strength and resourcefulness was outstanding and an example to all those around you. You worshipped your Almighty God with full heart and soul. You discharged your heavenly church and missionary duties with decorum and helped others to do the same. Indeed the day of toil is over; the labourer's task is done. Through this loss we are reassured of the resurrection of the dead, for as Paul wrote in Timothy 4 verse 7.



Auntie Alvira affectionately called by both young and old was one of the pioneers of the Guild of the Good Shepherd and a Past Shepherd. Because of her dedications to the Guild and the Church she was awarded Bishop's Badge of Honour by Archbishop of the Province of West Africa and Bishop of Accra Rt. Rev'd Dr. Justice Akrofi (Rtd) and the Past Diocesan Master shepherd Late Adelaide Amoako awarded her a badge for dedicated service to the Guild

As we bid you farewell, it is our prayer that the legacy you have left behind will today stand to pay tribute to you till we meet on the resurrection day. The Guild of the Good shepherd will miss you but we know the task you were given is over, the battle day is past, Now upon the Father's shore lands the voyager at last.

God will surely give you a better place because of the life and role you played in serving him and mankind. Even though we grieve your departure and sorely miss you, we are consoled that the Good Lord has called you home.

***Sister Alvira rest in the bosom of the
Almighty***



The Tanoh, Acquah-Moses and Massry families; The Nsona Ebusua of Gomoa Brofo; and the Agona Nsaba Oyoko Royal Family would like to thank you all for your kindness, support and generosity as we bid a sad farewell to our Mother, Sister, Aunt and Friend

ALVIRA EWURABENA AMOONUA TANOH

*A tribute website has been set up for you to leave tributes, photos or reminiscences
<https://www.forevermissed.com/alvira-ewurabena-tanoh/>*

