

A SELECTION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN FIGURES OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF SOUTH CAROLINA



Members of Calvary Episcopal Church in Charleston with
Bishop William Alexander Guerry in 1916.



Racial Justice &
Reconciliation
Commission

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE
OF SOUTH CAROLINA

THE VENERABLE ERASMUS L. BASKERVILL

1870-1937

The Venerable Erasmus L. Baskervill was born in Clarkesville, Virginia. He served in the United States Army from about 1894 to 1903. He was part of the Philippine Campaign and was honorably discharged as a first sergeant.

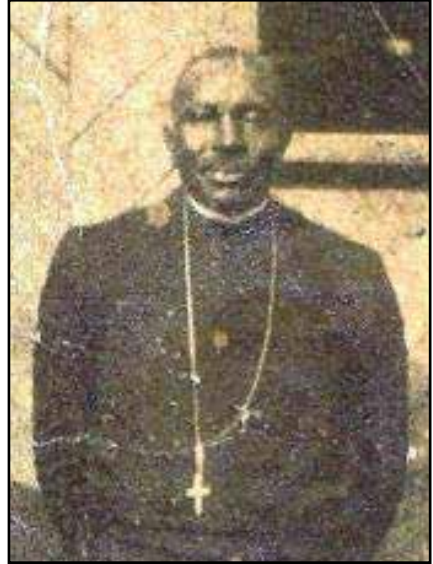
From 1904 to 1908 he attended the Bishop Payne Divinity School in Petersburg, Virginia, signing the matriculation register as a student from the Diocese of Lexington (Kentucky). He was ordained to

the diaconate by the Rt. Rev. Lewis W. Burton in January 1908, and to the priesthood in December 1908.

He came to the Diocese of South Carolina in February 1913 and was rector of Calvary in Charleston where he would eventually found the notable Calvary Preschool and Kindergarten which, at its founding, was the only school for African American children on the peninsula.

Many of Charleston's African American citizens attribute their early childhood education to the school Father Baskervill founded. In 1913, the Rt. Rev. William Alexander Guerry appointed Baskervill to the position of Archdeacon for Colored Work following the sudden death of the Ven. Joseph Silas Quarles.

Camp Baskervill, an African American summer camp founded in 1939, on the grounds of what is today Holy Cross Faith Memorial Episcopal Church on Pawleys Island, was named in his honor. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.



MAUDE EVELYN CALLEN

1898-1990



Maude E. Callen was a midwife and pioneer in the field of public health. Born in Quincy, Florida in 1898, she had many siblings and was orphaned at age six. Callen was raised by her uncle, a physician in Florida, and became a devoted nurse. She graduated from Florida A&M College and went on to the Tuskegee Institute for nursing coursework.

In 1923, she was called as an Episcopal missionary nurse and set up a practice as a nurse-midwife in poverty-stricken Pineville, South Carolina. At the time, there were only nine nurse-midwives in the entire state. Known as “The Angel in Twilight,” Callen delivered more than 600 babies over the course of her lifetime.

In 1936, Callen became a public health nurse with the Berkeley County Health Department. There, she trained young black women as midwives and taught them about prenatal care, labor support, delivery, and newborn babies. *Life* magazine published a photo essay

of Callen's work in 1951 and, as a result, readers donated thousands of dollars to support her work in Pineville where she continued to attend to thousands of patients most of whom were African American and poor.

She eventually opened the Maude E. Callen Clinic in Pineville in 1953, which she ran until she retired in 1971. Even after her retirement, Callen continued to volunteer and managed a nutrition program for senior citizens. The program offered cooked meals, home delivery of those meals five days a week, and transportation for the elderly.

Callen was honored with many honorary degrees and awards, including an American Institute of Public Service Award and the Order of the Palmetto, given to her by Governor Richard Riley. She continued her volunteer work until her death in 1990.



Maude Callen was the subject of a photo essay by W. Eugene Smith in Life magazine in 1951 that included this photo above and the photo on the opposite page. Photos are copyrighted by Life magazine.

RUBY MIDDLETON FORSYTHE

1905-1992

Ruby Middleton Forsythe was born on June 27, 1905 in Charleston. She attended the Avery Institute for grammar and high school. Avery epitomized excellence and provided its students with the best liberal education and cultural experience. She received her bachelor's degree from South Carolina State College and started her teaching career in North Carolina in 1924.

In 1928, she married the Reverend William Essex Forsythe and together the two taught children from first-grade through sixth-grade in a one room school house that became the Holy Cross Faith Memorial Parochial School. This was the only educational facility for African Americans on the island.



Legendary for their impact on children in the hardest days of Jim Crow segregation and oppression, when the State of South Carolina and the County of Georgetown paid very little expense of educating African Americans, the Forsythes were knowledgeable followers of the radical idealist William Edward Burghardt DuBois. They were tough taskmasters who drove their charges in preparation

for higher education. Almost all attained high-school degrees and a number gained college credentialing (especially at Voorhees College in Denmark and at South Carolina State).

Rev. Forsythe died in 1974 but “Miss Ruby,” as she was known, soldiered on without him in the School House until 2000 (she died the day after the 97th graduation ceremony). From 1926-2000, the Forsythes educated one thousand four hundred African American children. Forsythe received four honorary doctorates and Newsweek magazine declared her one of “America’s Unsung Heroes.”

THE REVEREND WILLIAM ESSEX FORSYTHE

1889-1974

William Essex Forsythe was born in the Florida panhandle when it was truly rural and sported a memorable Gullah-Geechee accent and even more memorable cigars. He was ordained in Virginia in 1926 after earning a D.D. from the Colored Divinity Branch of the Virginia Episcopal Seminary.

Shortly after his ordination, Forsythe was assigned to serve two missions each with its own school. Holy Cross-Brookgreen Mission dated to 1896 and Faith Memorial mission dated to 1903. Father

Forsythe served as vicar of both missions from 1926-1930 and then as vicar of the merged mission, Holy Cross Faith Memorial, starting in 1930. While Rev. Forsythe served as Vicar of Holy Cross, the church operated a one-room school house which served as the only local school for African American youth.

In 1928, Forsythe married Ruby Middleton and together the couple taught children from first-grade through sixth-grade in what became the Holy Cross Faith Memorial Parochial School. The school building was fully completed in 1938 and doubled as the Pray House on Sundays and the rectory where the Forsythes lived upstairs with their son (and sometimes with neighborhood children displaced by bad luck and hard times).

As one community leader later recalled of Rev. Forsythe and his long ministry to Holy Cross, "Salvation came to Pawleys Island in the form of an Episcopal priest."





The Reverend Henry Lacy Grant

THE REV. HENRY LACY GRANT

1925 - 1990

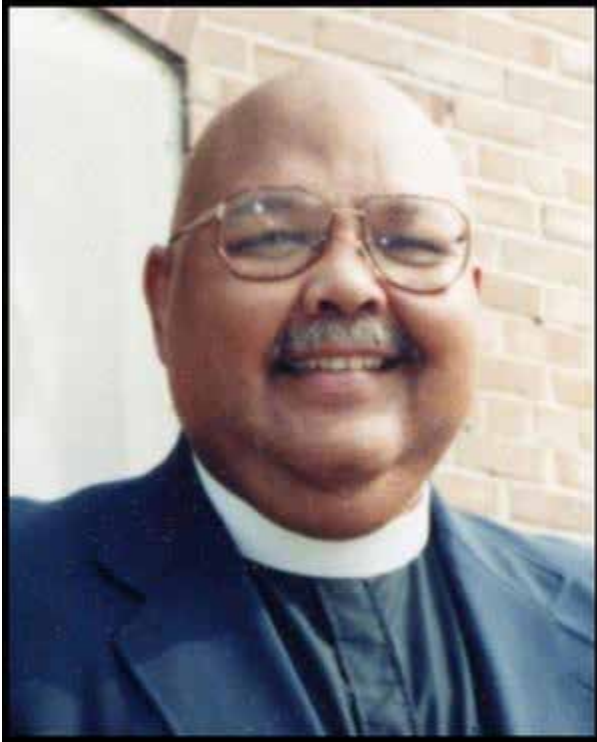
The Rev. Henry Grant was a native of North Augusta, South Carolina and notably served St. Stephen's, Charleston for twenty-five years from 1960 until 1985, the longest tenure in St. Stephen's history. Father Grant also served as the director of St. John's Episcopal Mission Center, Inc. on the East Side of the city.

An ardent community worker, Father Grant was instrumental in the founding of many community programs including the Franklin C. Fetter Health Center, Operation Compenso, and the Adult Day Care Center at Camp Baskervill. Father Grant received numerous awards and citations, including the Order of the Palmetto, and a citation in the U.S. Congressional Records.

Father Grant is remembered as having been a fierce advocate for the black community, race relations, and as an advocate for social justice at the height of the Civil Rights Movement. At the East Side Mission, his ministry became the center of life for a 12-block area of 1,800 low-income families with 3,300 children.

He organized social clubs, day cares, kindergartens, adult education classes, Scout Troops, employment programs, and many other programs of social uplift. Many African American clergy, business, and political leaders of today grew up impacted by Father Grant's work at the mission center.

Known as "the Rock," to his congregants at St. Stephen's, his faithful ministry grew the parish and his famed St. John's Mission was a vital resource to the city he served.



The Reverend Theodore "Ted" Lewis, Jr.

THE REVEREND THEODORE R. LEWIS, JR.

1946-2017

Father Lewis was born July 25, 1946 in Galveston, Texas. He became rector at Calvary Episcopal Church in 1992. During his tenure, the Community Housing Development Organization Office became located at Calvary. This organization's purpose was buying and rehabilitating blighted houses. They also helped first time home owners with purchasing property.

Father Lewis, a very community-oriented clergyman, also was responsible for forming partnerships with HALOS (a community program that supports foster children), the Charleston Area Justice Ministry, and the Union of Black Episcopalians, which held its national conference in Charleston one year. In addition, Father Lewis served on the Charleston County School Board for several years.

In 2003, Calvary was honored by the city of Charleston 's MOJA Arts Festival as an historic site. In 2005, Calvary made history with the ordination of three Black priests (the Rev. Terrence Lee, the Rev. Jimmy Gallant, III and the Rev. Dallas Wilson). This was unprecedented in the Diocese of South Carolina.

Also during Father Lewis's tenure, the church continued to do outreach within the community by donating knitted baby clothes to the Caleb Ministry for women who had stillborn babies or miscarriages, and providing New Year's Eve services for the community, partnering with two neighboring churches. In 2011, the church cemetery was revitalized with 66 grave sites and 100 cremation niches.

In his final years at Calvary, in 2012 at the General Convention of The Episcopal Church in Indianapolis, the choir director, Lonnie Hamilton III remained steadfast to his faith and helped to save the Episcopal Diocese by not participating in the schism of churches leaving the diocese. For this he received the bishop's cross as well as honorary canonship. Father Lewis retired from Calvary Church in 2013 and died on December 21, 2017.

THE REVEREND STEPHEN B. MACKEY

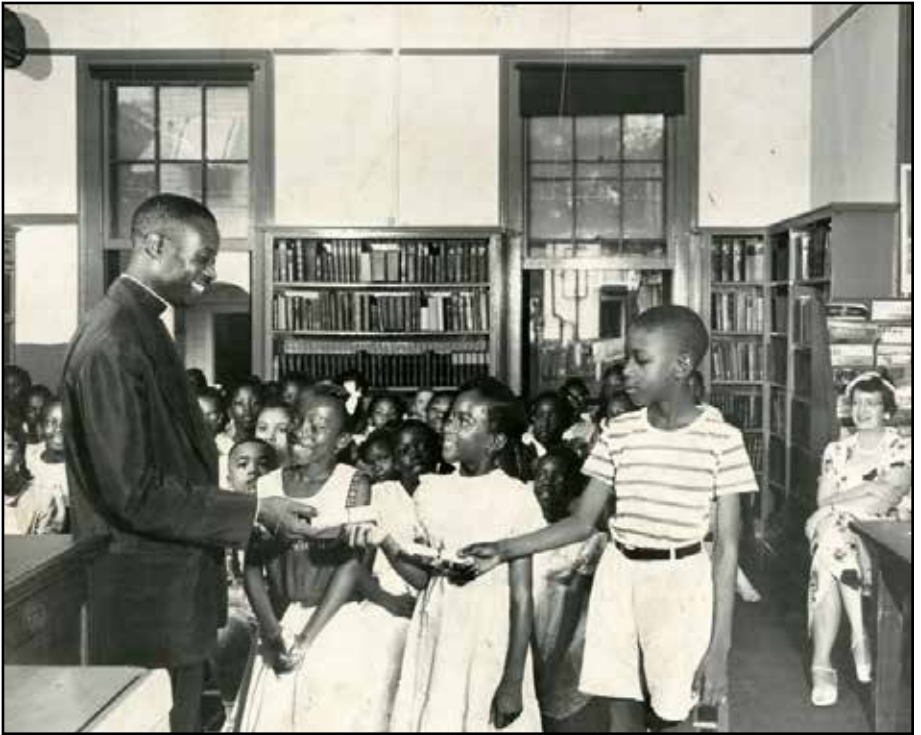
1901-1984

The Reverend Stephen Bradford McIver Mackey was born August 1, 1901 in Summerville, South Carolina to Samuel Benjamin and Emma Nelson Mackey. He received his early training at the Alston Elementary School in Summerville and completed his high school and junior college at St. Augustine's Junior College in Raleigh, North Carolina. Reverend Mackey obtained his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Lincoln University in Pennsylvania in 1929 and a Bachelor of Theology Degree from the Philadelphia Divinity School of the Episcopal Church in 1933. He later earned the Master of Divinity Degree in 1971.

He was ordained deacon in the Episcopal Church in 1934 and priest in June 1935. He served as priest-in-charge of Epiphany Church in Summerville from 1934 until 1940 when he became rector at Calvary Episcopal Church in Charleston. He served at Calvary until his retirement in 1972. Father Mackey was made rector emeritus of Calvary upon his retirement.

It was during Father Mackey's tenure that the church in 1942 moved from 71 Beaufain Street at Wilson Street to its present location at 106 Line Street. The move was made necessary due to the expansion of a public housing project for Whites. The money from the sale was used to purchase the Line Street property and under his leadership the church grew substantially.

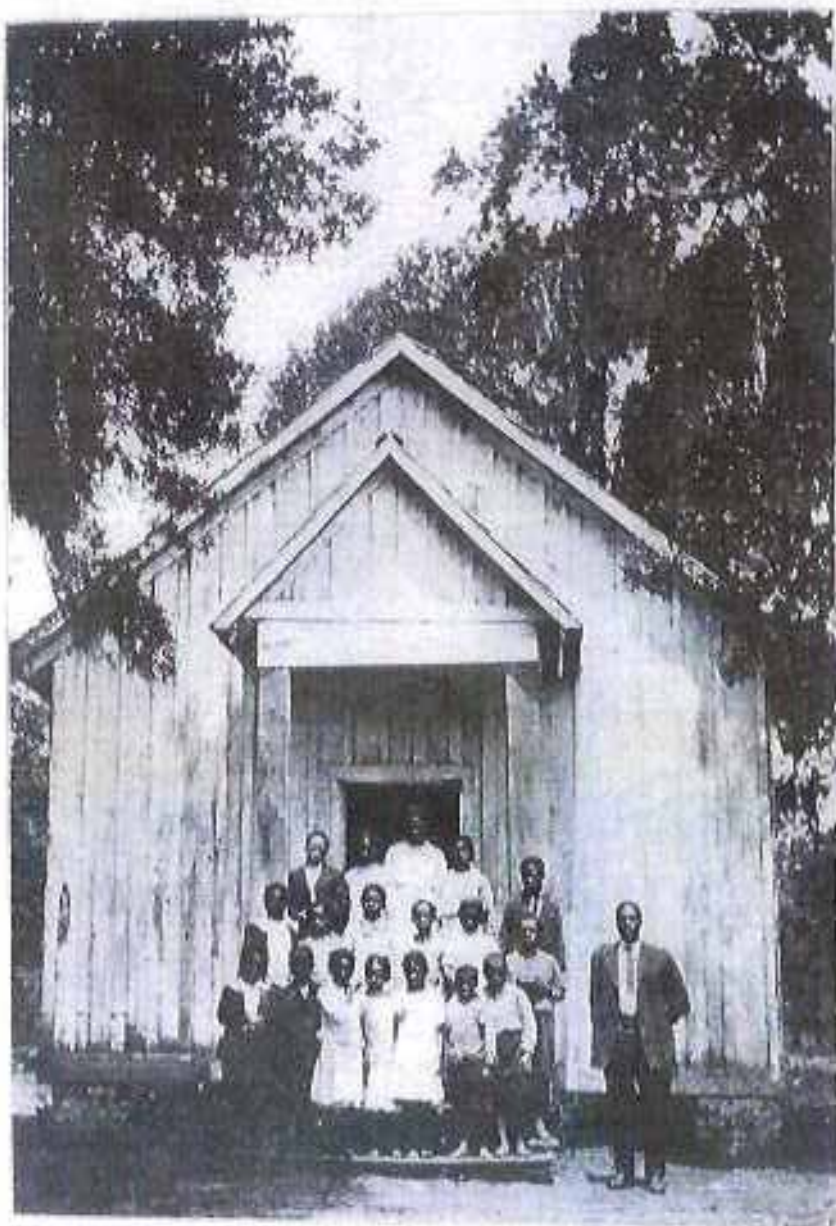
Father Mackey was a gentle man with a huge heart. He served as the Executive Secretary for the Negro Work of the diocese (1940-1944) and Archdeacon for Negro Work (1944-1948). In 1940 he was appointed Executive Secretary for Camp Baskerville in Pawley's Island and later became director of the Board of Managers. Under his leadership the bunk and staff houses, pool facilities, recreation center and dining hall were constructed. In 1976 Bunk House #2 was dedicated in his honor.



The Reverend Stephen B. Mackey awarding reading diplomas to three children at exercises held at Dart Hall Library, 19 Kracke St., on Tuesday morning, Aug. 4, 1953. Image from the Records of the Charleston County Public Library.

Father Mackey and his wife, Naomi, were dedicated to the Calvary Kindergarten. At one time, it was the only preschool and kindergarten facility for Black children in Charleston. Mrs. Mackey taught at the school for many years.

Father Mackey served on the Mayor's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency, the Family Services of Charleston, Voorhees College, McClennan-Banks Memorial Hospital Boards and the Commission on Mutual Responsibility and Interdependency in the Body of Christ. Father Stephen B. Mackey died in 1984.



*Faith Memorial Chapel in 1915.
It is believed that Benjamin Martin is the man to the right.*

BENJAMIN BUTLER MARTIN (1879-1924)

AND

VIOLA GLASGOW MARTIN BROWN (1888-1988)

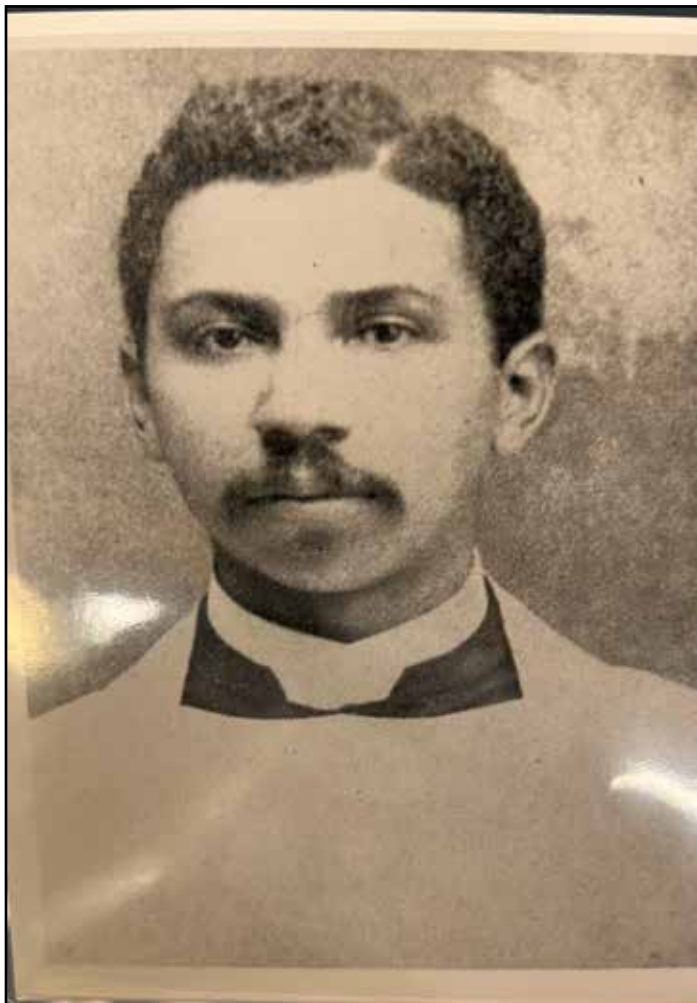
Benjamin Butler Martin and Viola Glasgow Martin Brown taught more than 400 Black children on Waccamaw Neck/ Waverly/ Mills and Brook Green (today's Pawleys Island) in Georgetown County from 1908 to 1926. Instructing the “three Rs” at primary- and middle-grade level, the couple also conducted prayer service and worship each Sunday at two buildings —Faith Memorial and Holy Cross— that doubled as churches and parochial schools. The couple, from freeholding and educated families in Fairfield County and Newberry County, were themselves schooled by Episcopalians, Black teachers, and priests in Fairfield and Newberry counties.

“Mr. Ben”—or “B.B.”— wanted desperately to be ordained and had completed baccalaureate training and sought admission to divinity school at the Petersburg Colored Branch of Virginia Divinity School. However, he was never admitted to studies, probably because he was an amputee who had lost his left arm in a childhood trauma. He was then forevermore a licensed lay leader who assisted the bishop, the Archdeacon Erasmus Baskervill (who was Black) and visiting ordained priests. To the people of Waccamaw Neck—Annieville, Georgieville, Parkersville, Waverly Mills, and Brook Green— however, he was as much a priestly figure as they ever had. He died suddenly of pneumonia in 1924.

His surviving widow, Viola Glasgow Martin Brown (Mizz Viola), was a credentialed school teacher who taught primary- and early-grade students; she continued to do so for several years after his untimely death. The widow married Washington Brown (1888-1965), a local lay leader directly descended from the family that founded Holy Cross and Faith Memorial pray-houses; and she raised a total of 11 children, one of whom, The Rt. Rev. Richard Beamon Martin (1913-2012), was ordained at The Petersburg Colored Branch of the Episcopal Divinity School (later Bishop Payne Divinity School) and became Bishop of Long Island.

THE VENERABLE JOHN HENRY MINGO POLLARD

1855-1908



John Henry Mingo Pollard was born a slave in Lunenburg County, Virginia, on February 10, 1855. As a young man, he showed great promise, and he graduated from the public schools in Petersburg, Virginia. In Petersburg, he began his studies for the ministry of the Episcopal Church. On June 28, 1878, in the chapel of the Virginia Theological Seminary—and with the graduating class—Pollard was ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Francis M. Whittle.

After his ordination, he sat in diocesan conventions. Pollard was ordained to the priesthood at St. Paul's Church, Norfolk, by Whittle, on December 14, 1886.

J.H.M. Pollard (initials were his preferred usage) began his ministry at St. Mark's Church in Charleston in January 1887. His title was assistant to the Rev. Anthony Toomer Porter, the rector of St. Mark's since 1878. Porter was also the rector of the nearby Church of the Holy Communion, and in 1887 he was only the nominal rector of St. Mark's. In effect, Pollard was priest-in-charge and, upon Porter's resignation,

Pollard was elected St. Mark's first African American rector on June 4, 1888. While rector, he encouraged St. Mark's to follow the Great Commission and to embrace their African American brothers and sisters in furthering the mission of the church.

Pollard went to South Carolina at the height of a controversy that had divided the diocese since 1875: the right of the black clergy and laity to have a seat and vote in the diocesan conventions. Pollard maintained that since the parish had fulfilled all of the canonical requirements for full membership in the diocesan convention, he and his parish were entitled to all rights and privileges at the convention.

He was supported in his stand by his bishop, the Rt. Rev. William B. Howe and the question was settled in 1889 by a compromise that admitted St. Mark's Church into union with the convention but put all other black churches and missions in a separate convocation under the bishop. In 1890, Bishop Howe placed Pollard in charge of all black missions in the Charleston district.

On February 1, 1898, Bishop Joseph B. Cheshire installed Pollard as Archdeacon for Colored Work for the Diocese of North Carolina. He died in Littleton, on August 2, 1908

THE REVEREND THAADDEUS SALTUS

1850-1884

Thaddeus Saltus was born on September 9, 1850. He was baptized at Grace Church in Charleston and was confirmed in St. Mark's by Bishop Thomas F. Davis on the night of May 7, 1871. Though he felt a call to ordination, he could not attend seminary. To become a candidate for ordination in those days, one had to demonstrate a working knowledge of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, and an understanding of the organization and catechism of The Episcopal Church. Despite the obstacles before him, Thaddeus Saltus was examined successfully on November 27, 1877.

A candidate then had to be recommended for ordination by the Standing Committee. As reported in the journal of the May 1881 convention, they did so recommend him—as they said reluctantly because of his skin color, which made him de facto inferior—and he was ordained to the diaconate in St. Mark's by Bishop William Bell White Howe on February 6, 1881, the fifth Sunday in Epiphany. Rev. Saltus was

the first African American ordained in the Episcopal Church in South Carolina.

After his ordination to the diaconate, he “entered upon his duties immediately as assistant to the rector,” the Rev. Anthony Toomer Porter. Saltus was ordained to the priesthood in St. Mark's by Howe on March 3, 1882. He served as pastor of St. Mark's from that date, Porter being only the nominal rector until Saltus's declining health forced him to take



a leave of absence, a leave from which he did not return. Thaddeus Saltus attended the “Meeting of the First Convocation of the Colored Clergy” at the Church of the Holy Communion in New York City on September 12-14, 1883.

He was only 34 when he died on June 20, 1884, in Summerville of phthisis pulmonalis. On June 21, 1884, the day after the death of Thaddeus Saltus, the *News and Courier* published an extract from the previous day’s meeting of the St. Mark’s vestry. In it the vestry says of him:

“He was so faithful to his trust that on his elevation to the priesthood he was unanimously elected by the vestry assistant minister of St. Mark’s Church, and in this sacred position won for himself the confidence and love of his entire congregation. A very fine reader of the service, an interesting and instructive preacher, an untiring and devoted pastor, he has made an impression for good which will long remain in the hearts of those to whom he has ministered. Singularly fine and judicious, he secured the hearty co-operation of old and young; and now as we gather around his bier, and know how much of worth and of usefulness and of spiritual power lies stilled in this sleep, we can only say: It is the Lord – let Him do what seemeth Him right.”



St. Mark’s Episcopal Church, ca. 1977 (Photo Credit: The Library of Congress)

THE REVEREND ST. JULIAN AARON SIMPKINS, SR.

1887-1963



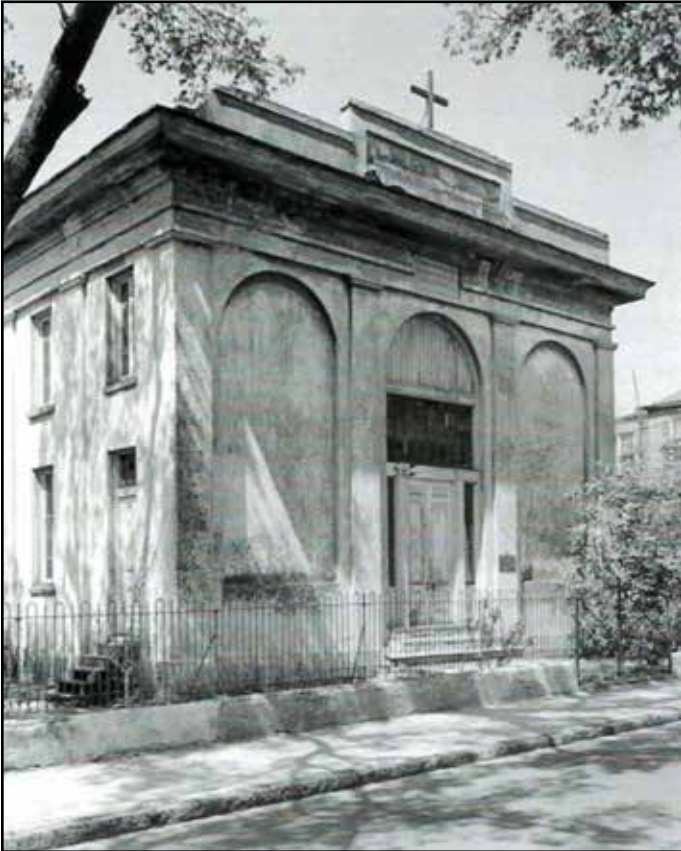
The Rev. St. Julian Aaron Simpkins, Sr. was born in Aiken, South Carolina on August 2, 1887. He graduated from the Bishop Payne Divinity School in 1914. He was ordained by Bishop William Guerry to the diaconate in 1915 and to the priesthood in 1916. He served churches in Aiken, Spartanburg, New Orleans, and Pineville before beginning at long tenure at St. Stephen's, Charleston.

He came to St. Stephen's, Charleston in 1940 and led a vibrant ministry until 1958. During his tenure at St. Stephen's, the Rev. Simpkins also served as Secretary of the Colored Council, President of Church Workers among Colored People, and as President of the International Missionary Union of Charleston.

He also served as Rector of St. Mark's Church, beginning in 1950 (where he served until 1959), while still at St. Stephen's. Father Simpkins' wife, Mrs. Fannie A. Green Simpkins, established and ran a well-attended and popular kindergarten at St. Stephen's which, in its time, alongside the school at Calvary, Charleston, was one of the only kindergartens for African American children on the peninsula.

His son, the Rev. St. Julian Aaron Simpkins, Jr. would serve in the dioceses of southern Ohio and, later, Rochester (NY) where he became Canon for Inner City Work. Father Simpkins's son is one of the five signers of the original incorporation papers for the Union of Black Clergy and Laity which eventually changed its name to the Union of Black Episcopalians (or UBE).

After retirement, Father Simpkins moved to Savannah, Georgia. He died November 3, 1963.



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Charleston in 1937, a few years prior to when Father Simpkins served as rector.



Catherine Springs

From the Collection of the Summerville Museum and Research Center, SC

MRS. CATHERINE B. “KITTY” SMITH SPRINGS

1828 -1895

Mrs. Catherine Smith Springs was a free person of color and a dressmaker with a thriving King Street business who eventually opened a hat and dress shop in Summerville. She apparently married Richard Springs, a dry goods merchant with a store on Hutchinson Square, in the heart of Summerville’s downtown.

Also known as “Kitty,” she was probably born in Charleston and her mother was half Cherokee. Interracial marriages were not recognized at the time, so when Richard died in 1889, he willed all his possessions and property to her for her “services for years as a housekeeper.”

Catherine donated money and land to build landmark institutions such as the Church of the Epiphany, Summerville and the Banks School, the beginning of public education for African Americans in the area. The Banks School was operated by Epiphany and was used as a primary school for African Americans until the Alston School was built on property Catherine deeded for a school house.

A number of buildings she owned or helped build still stand including Epiphany Church where a monument has been placed to honor her memory as a founder of the church (pictured to the right).





THE DIOCESE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN SOUTH CAROLINA