

for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work. In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

Matthew 11:25-30

At that time Jesus said, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

Icon of Deaconess Alexander by Louise Shipps

Deaconess Anna Ellison Butler Alexander

Date of Commemoration: September 24

The only Black deaconess in the Episcopal Church, teacher and minister in southern Georgia.



Anna Ellison Butler Alexander (1865-1947) was born to recently emancipated slaves on Butler Plantation in McIntosh County, Georgia. She was the first African-American set aside as a deaconess in the Episcopal Church in 1907. She founded Good Shepherd Church in rural Glynn County's Pennick community where she taught children to read—by tradition, from the Book of Common Prayer and the Bible—in a one-

room schoolhouse. The school was later expanded to two rooms with a loft where Anna lived. She ministered in Pennick for 53 years, leaving a legacy of love and devotion still felt in Glynn County. Deaconess Alexander served in difficult times, however. The diocese segregated her congregations in 1907 and African-American congregations were not invited to another diocesan convention until 1947. Similarly, it was only in the 1950s that a woman set aside as a deaconess was recognized as being in deacon's orders. However, her witness—wearing the distinctive dress of a deaconess, traveling by foot from Brunswick through Darien to Pennick, showing care and love for all whom she met—represents the best in Christian witness.

A Collect for Deaconess Alexander

O God, you called Anna Alexander as a deaconess in your Church, and sent her as teacher and evangelist to the people of Georgia: Grant us the humility to go wherever you send, and the wisdom to teach the word of Christ to whoever we meet, that all may come to the enlightenment which you intend for your people; through Jesus Christ, our Teacher and Savior. Amen.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 20-25

Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

When your children ask you in time to come, ‘What is the meaning of the decrees and the statutes and the ordinances that the Lord our God has commanded you?’ then you shall say to your children, ‘We were Pharaoh’s slaves in Egypt, but the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. The Lord displayed before our eyes great and awesome signs and wonders against Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his household. He brought us out from there in order to bring us in, to give us the land that he promised on oath to our ancestors. Then the Lord commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our lasting good, so as to keep us alive, as is now the case. If we diligently observe this entire commandment before the Lord our God, as he has commanded us, we will be in the right.’

Psalm 78

- 1 Hear my teaching, O my people; *
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
- 2 I will open my mouth in a parable; *
I will declare the mysteries of ancient times.
- 3 That which we have heard and known,
and what our forefathers have told us, *
we will not hide from their children.
- 4 We will recount to generations to come
the praiseworthy deeds and the power of the LORD, *
and the wonderful works he has done.
- 5 He gave his decrees to Jacob
and established a law for Israel, *
which he commanded them to teach their children;
- 6 That the generations to come might know,
and the children yet unborn; *
that they in their turn might tell it to their children;
- 7 So that they might put their trust in God, *
and not forget the deeds of God,
but keep his commandments;

2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof,