

# A. H. MCNEIL

## Commemoration

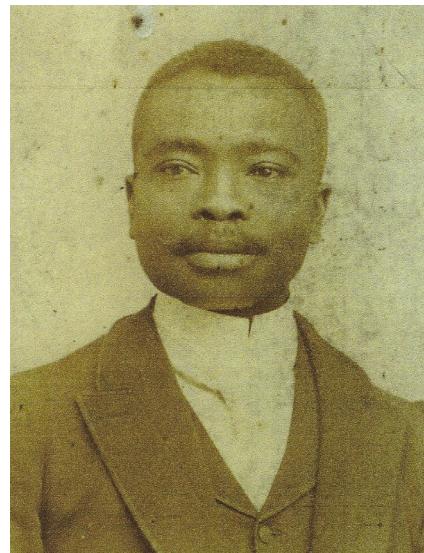
**10:30 AM, Saturday, October 7th, 2023**

**Grace Episcopal Church  
216 East Sixth Street, Hopkinsville, KY**

### **A SPECIAL MAN OF A SPECIAL BACKGROUND AT A SPECIAL TIME**

The Rev. A. H. (Alexander Hamilton) McNeil (aka "Aaron" McNeil, a name by which he is fondly remembered by his community today), was a trail-blazer as a churchman, educator, and community leader, as the first African American Episcopal clergyman in Hopkinsville, Kentucky. He was a special man of a special background at a special time. He was born, October 10, 1858, in New Hanover County, North Carolina, and was a graduate of Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute. March 11, 1887, the Diocese of Missouri, admitted him to be a postulant, and May 6, 1887, he was recommended to be admitted a candidate for holy orders. October 28, 1894, he was recommended by the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Kentucky for ordination to the sacred order of the diaconate. January 19, 1896, he was ordained a deacon in the Diocese of Kentucky by Bishop Dudley. He served faithfully as the first pastor of the Mission of the Good Shepherd, Hopkinsville, Kentucky, until his death in Hopkinsville, January 14, 1901. Named after Alexander Hamilton, the statesman who advocated emancipation, the Rev. A. H. McNeil, like Aaron, the brother of Moses after the Exodus, ministered to former slaves and descendants of slaves. The building of the Chapel of the Good Shepherd (now called the Aaron McNeil House) was constructed in 1896. It also served for a school under his leadership and as a library for African Americans in Hopkinsville. From the beginning the church was truly a community center. The Aaron McNeil Center was incorporated in 1971. In 1983 the Aaron McNeil House was designated a Kentucky Landmark. Effective January 1, 1992, the boards of the Aaron McNeil Center and Crisis Relief merged. By the ongoing work of the Aaron McNeil Center, ministry continues among minorities and disadvantaged persons in need, as the lasting legacy of the Rev. Alexander Hamilton McNeil, the faithful deacon, a special man of a special background at a special time. Had he lived longer, he would have been ordained a priest in 1901. His life inspired the community service that has continued to be done in his name; and more than a century later, his saintly life still lives on.

### **PUBLIC EVENT**



**THE REV. A. H. MCNEIL  
1858-1901**

### **SPONSORS**

**The Episcopal  
Diocese of Kentucky**

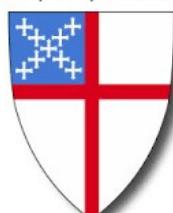
**The Commission  
on Racial Healing**

**The Aaron McNeil Center**

**Grace Episcopal Church**

### **ALL ARE INVITED**

**The Episcopal Church**



**Welcomes You**