

Title: **Former House leader Merrill accused of misconduct in office**
 Author: BY SEANNA ADCOX The Associated Press
 Size: 31.62 column inches
 Myrtle Beach, SC Circulation: 61238



STATE POLITICS

Former House leader Merrill accused of misconduct in office

BY SEANNA ADCOX
The Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C.

Former state House Majority Leader Jim Merrill is accused of using his position for personal benefit, a prosecutor who's been investigating possible corruption at the Statehouse announced Wednesday.

A Richland County grand jury indicted the lawmaker on two counts of misconduct in office and 28 counts of violating state ethics laws, said Solicitor David Pascoe, a Democrat assigned to the investigation in 2014.

House Speaker Jay Lucas suspended Merrill from office, effective immediately, until he's either cleared or vacates his seat.

A hearing has not been set, according to Pascoe's statement, which specified he would "have no further comment."

Merrill's attorneys said the 49-year-old Charleston Republican "adamantly denies" the charges and looks forward to defending himself in court.

"The work performed by Jim Merrill's private company was completely legal and legitimate," attorneys Matthew Hubbell and Leon Stavrinakis said in a joint statement. They note that in

South Carolina, being a legislator is considered part-time.

Some of the accusations are reminiscent of allegations Gov. Nikki Haley successfully sidestepped in 2012, when the then-GOP-dominated House Ethics Committee twice cleared her, and the state Supreme Court ruled that legislators, not courts, should handle citizen complaints against elected representatives.

Merrill, a state political adviser to Donald Trump during the presidential primary, had no primary or Democratic opponent this year. First elected in 2000, he served as majority leader from 2004 to 2008.

The charges involve Merrill's GOP leadership role and his public relations company, Geechie Communications. He's accused of lobbying for companies as a legislator, not reporting income from them on campaign disclosures, and overcharging the House GOP caucus for work his company performed for GOP candidates.

Merrill's attorneys point to nonbinding legal opinions from the House Ethics Committee and Attorney General

Alan Wilson that it's not illegal for a House caucus to hire and pay a majority leader's business.

"For over 20 years, his vocation and livelihood have been in the field of advertising, direct mail, and public relations," their statement said.

The indictments include allegations that Merrill billed the caucus and the former House speaker's defunct political action committee more than \$275,500 between 2005 and 2011 for candidate mailings and election ad placements, "often adding a markup of more than 50 percent."

One count alleges he "laundered" about \$149,000 to his company from the Charleston Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, which receives money from the state's tourism agency, while he was chairman of a House budget-writing panel.

Merrill also is accused of acting as a lobbyist for the state Association of Realtors, which paid him more than \$391,000 between 2008 and 2012, during which he sponsored legislation the indictment calls beneficial to the association.

Title: **Rifle cartridge case firm coming to Clarendon**
 Author: BY JEFF WILKINSON jwilkinson@thestate.com
 Size: 48.82 column inches
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



Rifle cartridge case firm coming to Clarendon

■ **ProBrass Inc. to invest \$40 million to establish brass cartridge manufacturing and re-manufacturing operations and plans to hire 70 workers.**

BY JEFF WILKINSON

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SUMMERTON

ProBrass, a start-up firm specializing in the manufacturing and re-manufacturing of brass rifle cartridge cases, is heading to Clarendon County.

The company has recently acquired the 144,000-square-foot former Federal Mogul auto parts plant located on 47 acres near Scott's Branch High School. The company is investing \$40 million in the facility, machinery and equipment, creating more than 70 new jobs in Summerton.

At one time, Federal Mogul was the county's leading employer with 300 workers, said George Kosinski, executive director of the Clarendon County Development Board.

"It's going to be a fantastic asset," he said. "It will revitalize the building and be a shot in the arm for Clarendon County."

ProBrass meets military and Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers Institute standards for both the new and re-manufactured brass cartridge cases for small arms am-

munition. The company plans to sell its products through distributors specializing in consumer ammunition.

"We made the decision to locate in South Carolina because, in the Palmetto State, pro-business is not a bland statement but a hard-core reality," ProBrass co-founder and chief executive Christopher Moe said in a news release. "We've benefited enormously from the rapid response to our needs, round-the-clock assistance in our location search and continuous

support."

The state's readySC program will assist with recruiting workers. Hiring will begin next year.

The company will receive job development credits as an incentive.

"Any time a company decides to invest in one of our rural counties, it shows a commitment to our state that we couldn't be more grateful for," Gov. Nikki Haley said in the release.

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PHOTO BY GEORGE KOSINSKI gkosinski@clarendoncountygov.org

ProBrass Inc. will open in the former Federal Mogul plant in Summerton.

Title: **Blythewood woman, former taskforce member, indicted for tax evasion**
 Author: BY TEDDY KULMALA tkulmala@thestate.com
 Size: 25.73 column inches
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



Blythewood woman, former task force member, indicted for tax evasion

BY TEDDY KULMALA
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A Blythewood businesswoman and former member of a governor's task force on regulatory review was indicted this week on two counts of tax evasion, according to the S.C. Department of Revenue.

Terris Shirelle Riley was indicted by a Richland County grand jury on two counts of willful attempt to evade or defeat a tax, according to a news release.

In the 2012 and 2013 tax years, Riley "purposely omitted" the reporting of more than \$1.2 million in income re-

ceived from New Venue Technologies Inc., the Department of Revenue said. Her omission ensured that the appropriate amount of tax, which totaled more than \$50,000, was neither properly calculated nor paid.

If convicted, Riley faces up to \$10,000 in fines and/or a maximum of five years in prison per count, officials said.

Separately, Riley was indicted in 2014

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TAXES

on embezzlement and breach of trust charges in connection with New Venue Technologies. According to indictments released at the time, Riley was entrusted with funds to be paid to various vendors who had supplied computer software to governmental entities within South Carolina. She is accused of converting those funds to her own use.

The 2014 charges remain pending, according to Richland County court records.

Riley was listed as a member of the Governor's Regulatory Review Task Force in 2013, according to a list published on the S.C. Department of Commerce's website. The task force was created in February 2013 by Gov. Nikki Haley to evaluate the state's regulatory burdens on businesses

and propose recommendations to relieve those burdens.

Riley was appointed by state Rep. Todd Rutherford, D-Richland, and was assigned with state Sen. Brad Hutto, D-Orangeburg, to review the departments of commerce, social services, mental health and special needs, according to the list. In the task force's executive summary report published in November 2013, however, Riley was not listed as a member.

Riley also has a pending charge from November 2013 for breach of trust with fraudulent intent, \$10,000 or more, according to court records.

She deferred questions to her attorney, Rutherford, who could not be immediately reached for comment.

Title: **Legislators seek new way to pick boardmembers**
 Author: BY AVERYG.WILKS awilks@thestate.com
 Size: 36.27 column inches
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



RICHLAND COUNTY

Legislators seek new way to pick board members

■ Recreation Commission saga causes Richland County legislators to reconsider how they choose members for boards over which they have no control.

BY AVERY G. WILKS
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A day after S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley fired all but one remaining member of the troubled Richland County Recreation Commission's board, Richland County legislators pushed to change how those board members are selected in the first place.

The Richland legislative delegation Thursday put off nominating new members to fill the six vacancies on the Rec Commission's board.

Legislators, who name the commission, said they need at least a month to gather and vet potential members for the commission, rocked this year by allegations of nepotism, sexual harassment and other improper behavior.

"God bless their souls if

(applicants) want to do that," said state Sen. Darrell Jackson, D-Richland. "I don't have any idea why they would."

The delegation made few decisions unanimously at its annual meeting Thursday.

State Rep. Nathan Ballentine, R-Richland, logged protest votes against nominations to several county boards that are named by legislators, saying the delegation must make its selection process more transparent.

Currently, an appointments committee, made up of five legislators, sifts through applications for open board spots, then passes its recommended selections - but not the discarded candidates - to

the full delegation for a vote.

Typically, the committee reviews applicants without the candidates being present, meaning it cannot ask follow-up questions, legislators said.

"So it's a piece of paper that's completed, and we go off that to determine the best interests of Richland County," Ballentine said.

Ballentine and others suggested the full legislative delegation should meet and review candidates before they are nominated.

Other lawmakers contend the current process works, adding all members of the legislative delegation are welcome to sit in on meetings of

the appointments committee.

"If you come to the hearing, if you come to the committee meeting, you could have that opportunity," said state Rep. Chris Hart, D-Richland.

State Rep. James Smith, D-Richland, who was elected Thursday as the delegation's new chairman, said he would push to change the process.

"In the end, I think we'll have a better, improved and transparent process."

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Smith

Title: **Jurorshave a longholiday**
 Author: BYJOHN MONKAND CYNTHIA ROLDÁN
 Size: 149.42 column inches
 Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



DYLANN ROOF FEDERAL DEATH PENALTY TRIAL

Jurors have a long holiday

Panel will reconvene Jan. 3 to begin deciding whether convicted killer should receive the death penalty
 White supremacist was found guilty Thursday on all 33 counts in his federal hate crimes trial

BY JOHN MONK AND CYNTHIA ROLDÁN

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CHARLESTON

The federal jury of 10 women and two men who found Dylann Roof guilty of federal hate crimes Thursday in the killings of nine African-Americans at a historic Charleston church now must wait more than two weeks for the trial's next phase.

Jurors on Jan. 3 will begin to hear evidence about whether to give the death penalty or life without parole to the 22-year-old self-avowed white supremacist from Columbia.

Jurors took two hours Thursday to find him guilty. Evidence in the case had been overwhelming, including a video confession.

Federal Judge Richard Gergel told jurors that during the holiday recess, they may not look at any news accounts of one of the most sensational S.C. trials in decades. Nor can they discuss the case with anyone – including other jurors.

The killings shook South Carolina and the nation because they happened in a church, because Roof's white supremacist motivations were so blatant and because survi-

vors were so quick to express forgiveness.

"These nine people exemplified a goodness that was greater than this message of hate," prosecutor Nathan Williams told jurors earlier in closing arguments, urging them to find Roof guilty.

After the verdict, Gergel put Roof under oath and asked him one more time if he wants to represent himself in the death penalty phase. Roof said "yes." His legal team of top defense lawyers will be classified as "stand-

SEE GUILTY, 6A

➔ MORE INSIDE

Roof did have friends, survivor says – 9 of them, in the church that night, **6A**

In taking over his own defense, Roof is sidelining a top defender, Palmetto, **1C**

➔ ONLINE

VIDEOS AT THESTATE.COM:

Roof has yet to look her in the eye, Felicia Sanders says. Polly Sheppard's 911 call. Roof's target practice. And Roof's confession to the FBI.

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THESE NINE PEOPLE EXEMPLIFIED A GOODNESS THAT WAS GREATER THAN THIS MESSAGE OF HATE.

federal prosecutor Nathan Williams told jurors Thursday morning

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GUILTY

by” and be able only to offer him advice.

Gergel warned Roof, a ninth-grade dropout with a GED, that he should not try to handle such a task. But Roof was firm. Gergel told him he had until Jan. 3 to change his mind.

If Roof does represent himself, the jury might never get to hear testimony in line with defense attorney David Bruck’s attempts to let the jury see Roof as confused or delusional rather than rational. That kind of evidence would come from psychiatrists and others, but Roof might not call those kinds of witnesses.

Bruck did get to tell the jury Roof absorbed racist readings on the internet but that no normal person would be moved to violence by such readings.

“You have a 20-21 year-old-boy who has given his life over to the belief that there is a fight raging between white people and black people, that there is some vast conspiracy that is being covered up (to hide that fight) ... and only he

can do something about it,” Bruck told the jury.

Prosecutors told jurors Roof’s hatred is “vast.”

“After he killed (the Rev.) Clementa Pinckney, he did not stop. He embraced that hatred, and he executed eight more people,” Williams said.

“When you see those lists of churches, that tells you the depth, the vastness of his hatred,” he said of Roof’s list of potential targets, some in Columbia.

Jurors began deliberating shortly after 1 p.m. and asked at about 3 p.m. to rehear a portion of Roof’s taped FBI confession, from when the FBI asked if he remembered how many people were killed. They came back minutes later with guilty verdicts on all 33 counts.

Gov. Nikki Haley reacted quickly. “It is my hope that the survivors, the families, and the people of South Carolina can find some peace in the fact that justice has been served,” she said in a

statement.

During his closing arguments earlier Thursday, Bruck said Roof acted alone, without encouragement from a best friend or family members. Roof’s motivation came from things he saw on the internet. And that he originally planned to kill himself after killing others showed he thought he was in a war that required those sacrifices, Bruck said.

Don’t give Roof too much credit, Bruck told jurors. “Everything he is doing is just an imitation from something he has learned from somewhere else.”

Bruck said “Roof never gave an explanation for his actions except ‘he had to do it.’ But never gave an answer to ‘why.’ ”

Another prosecutor, Stephen Curran, rebutted Bruck’s arguments, saying Roof explained many times why he did it: He hated. And Roof was not delusional, Curran said, as proved by his two-hour-long confession.

“Don’t be distracted by the defense ... suggesting that there’s some deeper meaning. He told you why,” Curran said.

As he had throughout the trial, Roof sat motionless during closing arguments and as Gergel gave instructions to the jury on the charges.

He said in his confession that while the internet made him see that white people were victims, a black person had never done anything to him or his family personally.

As the 12 jurors were separated from the six alternates, the public got to see for the first time who the 12 were. All 18 had been sitting together in the jury box, and the alternates were never identified.

The jury that will meet again on Jan. 3 is comprised of eight white women, two black women, one black man and one white man. The alternates did not deliberate with the jury.

THE NINE VICTIMS LOST AT EMANUEL

Title: **Jurorshave a longholiday**
Author: BYJOHN MONKAND CYNTHIA ROLDÁN
Size: 149.42 column inches
Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



Hurd



Lance



Sanders



Coleman-Singleton



Middleton Doctor



Jackson



Pinckney



Simmons



Thompson

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Size: 149.42 column inches
Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



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Felicia Sanders, who watched her son and her aunt die at the hands of Dylann Roof, smiles after Roof was found guilty Thursday of murdering nine parishioners at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston.

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Author: BYJOHN MONKAND CYNTHIA ROLDÁN
Size: 149.42 column inches
Columbia, SC Circulation: 128564



MATT WALSH mwalsh@thestate.com

Passersby stop Thursday at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, which was decorated for Christmas. Dylann Roof was found guilty of murdering nine parishoners there.

Title: **Roof convicted of all counts**
 Author: BY JEFFREY COLLINS AND MEG KINNARD Associated Press
 Size: 71.45 column inches
 Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688



CHARLESTON CHURCH SHOOTING

Roof convicted of all counts

BY JEFFREY COLLINS
AND MEG KINNARD

Associated Press

CHARLESTON

Dylann Roof was convicted Thursday in the chilling slaughter of nine black church members who had welcomed him to their Bible study, a devastating crime in a country that was already deeply embroiled in racial tension.

The same federal jury that found Roof guilty of all 33 counts will reconvene next month to hear more testimony and weigh whether to sentence him to death. As the verdict was read, Roof just stared ahead, much as he did the entire trial.

Family members of victims held hands and squeezed one another's arms. One woman nodded

her head every time the clerk said "guilty."

Roof, 22, told FBI agents he wanted to bring back segregation or perhaps start a race war with the slayings. Instead, the single biggest change to emerge

from the June 17, 2015, killings was the removal of the Confederate flag from the South Carolina Statehouse, where it had flown for 50 years over the Capitol or on the grounds. Roof appeared with the flag in several photos in a racist manifesto.

The shooting happened just

months after Walter Scott, an unarmed black man, was killed by white police officer Michael Slager when he fled a traffic stop in North Charleston. Police shootings around the county have heightened tensions between black communities and the law enforcement agencies that patrol them, sometimes resulting in protests and riots.

In Roof's confession to the FBI, the gunman said he carried out the killings after researching "black on white crime" on the internet.

Roof told the judge again

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ROOF

Thursday that he wanted to act as his own attorney during the penalty phase. He will also face a death penalty trial in state court on nine murder charges.

In closing arguments, Assistant U.S. Attorney Nathan Williams mocked Roof for calling himself brave in his hate-filled journal and during his confession, saying the real bravery came from the victims who tried to stop him as he fired 77 bullets at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal church.

"Those people couldn't see the hatred in his heart any more than they could see the .45-caliber handgun and the eight magazines concealed around his waist," Williams said.

County: York

Defense lawyer David Bruck conceded Roof committed the slayings, but he asked jurors to look into his head and see what caused him to become so full of hatred, calling him a suicidal loner who never grasped the gravity of what he did.

The defense put up no witnesses during the seven-day trial. They tried to present evidence about his mental state, but the judge ruled that it did not have anything to do with Roof's guilt or innocence.

Roof was just imitating what he saw on the internet and believed he had to give his life to "a fight to the death between white people and black people that only he" could

see and act on, Bruck said.

The prosecutor's 50-minute closing argument filled the court with tension. At times, the prosecutor raised his voice, saying Roof was a cold, calculated killer. Some family members of victims dabbed their eyes with tissues, and jurors appeared emotional when Williams, after apologizing to them, showed crime scene photos of each person killed alongside a small picture of them while alive.

Those pictures included the Rev. Clementa Pinckney, 41, Emanuel AME's pastor and a state senator; Myra Thompson, 59, who taught Bible study that night; Cynthia Hurd, 54, a librarian who stayed to

support Thompson; and Depayne Middleton-Doctor, 49, who friends said sang like an angel.

Also slain were Daniel "Dapper Dan" Simmons, 74, nicknamed for his shiny shoes and fine hats; Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, 45, a high school track coach; Ethel Lance, 70, the church sexton who kept the bathrooms and building immaculately clean; Susie Jackson, 87, who sang in the choir; and Tywanza Sanders, 26, Jackson's nephew and an aspiring poet.

Three people survived the shooting. One survivor, Felicia Sanders, wouldn't say if she wanted Roof put to death, but said he was a coward because

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Author: BY JEFFREY COLLINS AND MEG KINNARD Associated Press
Size: 71.45 column inches
Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688

he refused to look at her as she testified.

She plans a simple gesture to honor her friends the rest of her life. "I wear a smile, because if you look at the pictures of all nine, they're smiling," Sanders said.

The prosecutor said the good of all those faithful churchgoers prevailed over Roof's hatred.

"This defendant chose to take their lives. He chose to break their bod-

ies. But he does not get to choose who they were," Williams said.

In a lengthy recording played earlier at trial, Roof told FBI agents he picked Mother Emanuel because of its historic significance in the black community. The church is the oldest in the South and one of its founders, Denmark Vesey, led a failed 1822 slave rebellion that drove the church underground.

Roof, who was convict-

ed of federal hate crimes and obstruction of religion, said he had felt compelled to act because of the way blacks treated whites and said the shootings were "minuscule" in comparison.

The prosecutor recounted other evidence, like how Roof sat in the church parking lot for 28 minutes in his car, likely loading the 88 bullets - a number embraced symbolically by white supremacists - into

eight magazines.

After the shootings, South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley threw her support behind removing the Confederate flag from the Statehouse. She had spent years in office calling it a settled issue.

"It is my hope that the survivors, the families, and the people of South Carolina can find some peace in the fact that justice has been served," she said in a statement.



Roof



MICHAEL PRONZATO AP

A man walks past flowers and a wreath at Emanuel A.M.E. Church on Thursday, the site of the slaughter of nine black churchgoers.

Title: **Jury finds Dylann Roof guilty**
 Author: BY KEVINSACK ANDALAN BLINDER New YorkTimes
 Size: 36.89 column inches
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015



CHARLESTON CHURCH SHOOTING

Jury finds Dylann Roof guilty

BY KEVIN SACK AND ALAN BLINDER

New York Times

CHARLESTON, S.C.

Dylann Roof, a self-radicalized young white supremacist who killed nine black parishioners last year when he opened fire during a long-planned assault on Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, was found guilty by a federal jury Thursday.

The jury convicted Roof of nine counts of hate crimes resulting in death, three counts of hate crimes involving an attempt to kill (three people survived), nine counts of obstructing the exercise of religion resulting in death, three counts of that charge with an attempt to kill, and nine counts of using a firearm to commit murder during a crime of violence.

Roof, 22, stood, his hands at his side and his face emotionless, as a clerk read the verdict aloud in court.



Roof

He will face the same jurors next month when they gather Jan. 3 to begin a second and more suspenseful phase of his trial to decide whether he will be sentenced to death or life in prison without parole.

As the first verdicts were read, a few women in the courtroom nodded with satisfaction. But as the clerk read the counts, a process that took about 12 minutes, the women eventually drew still. After the court adjourned, the two adult survivors of the attack, Felicia Sanders and Polly Sheppard, shared a long embrace.

Reaction was swift. "It is my hope that the survivors, the families and the people of South Carolina can find some peace in the fact that justice has been served," S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley said in a statement.

The jury reached its verdict hours after hearing closing arguments in the case. The outcome seemed a foregone conclusion from the first minutes of the trial, which began Dec. 7 and included a swift acknowledgment from the chief defense lawyer, David Bruck, that Roof was responsible for the "astonishing, horrible attack" on June 17, 2015.

Roof, who lived in the Columbia area, had chillingly confessed to investigators nearly 18 months earlier and revealed his purpose in a blatantly racist manifesto that he published online. His choice of targets seemed intensely premeditated - he scouted the church half a dozen times - although he also researched other black churches and a festival elsewhere in South Carolina before settling on Charleston because, he wrote, it is the "most historic city in my state."

In his 53-minute closing statement to the jury, Assistant U.S. Attorney Nathan Williams, depicted Roof as "a man of hatred, a man who's proven to be a coward and a man of immense racial ignorance." Repeatedly using

the word "hatred" to connect Roof to the hate-crime counts, Williams said the defendant had "executed them because he believes that they are nothing more than animals."

The prosecutor's voice often rose in outrage, and the jurors were again shown photographs of the carnage Roof left behind.

"He must be held accountable for each and every action he took in that church," Williams urged.

As he has throughout the trial, Bruck responded by planting suggestions that Roof was mentally unstable, and thus not fully accountable. He peppered his closing statement with words like "abnormal," "irrationality," "senselessness," "illogical," "obsessive," "delusional" and "suicidal." Roof told the FBI in a confession shortly after being arrested that he had saved ammunition to kill himself if, as he expected, he confronted police when he left the church.

Title: **Victims, officials react to Roof's conviction**
 Author: TIM SMITH TCSMITH@GREENVILLENEWS.COM
 Size: 39.21 column inches
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



Victims, officials react to Roof's conviction

TIM SMITH

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CHARLESTON - Felicia Sanders, who survived the shootings that killed nine of her fellow parishioners at Emanuel AME Church, told a federal jury that she considered Dylann Roof "evil, evil, evil."

On Thursday, after a jury convicted him of all 33 counts against him, she said the verdict was "music to my ears."

"I wasn't expecting anything less," she said.

Victims, family members and officials in and out of Charleston reacted to the guilty verdicts Thursday saying they felt justice had been done.

The Rev. Eric Manning, pastor of Emanuel, told *The Greenville News* he was "elated with the verdict. That goes without saying."

He said family members of victims would have more to say next week.

Sanders, her husband Tyrone and Daniel Simons Jr., whose father was killed in the shootings, talked with reporters about the trial and its aftermath following the guilty verdicts Thursday.

Sanders, who said she expected to testify in the

sentencing phase, said she did not want to talk about Roof but her husband said he felt Roof was "pure evil." He said his idea of his punishment would be "medieval."

Sanders said if Roof had reached out to those with him at the Bible study that night instead of shooting them, he would have received friendship.

"He said he didn't have any friends," she said. "He had 12 friends sitting with him in the room that night. If he had only reached out, we would have reached back to him."

She said she wasn't prepared yet to say whether she thinks he should receive the death penalty. She said she smiles constantly to honor those who were killed by Roof.

Simons said he believes the system "has done a great job."

"I'm very pleased with the process," he said.

The Rev. Joseph Darby, a longtime pastor and official in the AME church and first vice president of the Charleston NAACP branch, said he was "relieved" by the verdicts.

"I'm relieved that jus-

tice was done," he said. "We hope things will go forward in a just way as well."

Gov. Nikki Haley, who asked lawmakers to remove the Confederate flag from the Statehouse grounds in response to the shootings, issued a statement following the verdicts saying she hoped they would bring some peace.

"It is my hope that the survivors, the families, and the people of South Carolina can find some peace in the fact that justice has been served," she said.

U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham said in a statement that the verdicts were a "significant step" toward justice for the victims.

"I know nothing can ever completely take away their pain, but I do hope the verdicts will provide some small measure of comfort to the families of the victims," he said. "If there was ever a justified guilty verdict, this was this case."

U.S. Sen. Tim Scott thanked the victims and their families following the verdicts.

"As the killer now awaits sentencing, I want

the families of those lost that day to know one thing: we are all still with you," he said in a statement. "While this chapter is now closed, the rest of this book has yet to be written. Your strength

and courage has changed Charleston, South Carolina, and our nation forever. We will not ever be able to fully thank you for showing us all the true meaning of righteousness, but what we can do is continue working every single day to ensure that the legacy of the Emanuel 9 lives on forever."

State Sen. Gerald Malloy, a Darlington County Democrat who was in Charleston Thursday, said he hoped the verdicts would help bring closure to the victims' families.

State Sen. Marlon Kimpson, a Charleston Democrat, said it would be difficult to say he was excited about the verdicts "because so many lives have been destroyed."

"But the jury did their job," he said. "I hope this will serve as a deterrent for future Dylann Roofs who would desire to copy this man's actions."

Title: **After two hours, jury delivers verdict on 33 charges against Roof in deaths of parishioners**
 Author: TONYA MAXWELL
 Size: 174.53 column inches
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473



After two hours, jury delivers verdict on 33 charges against Roof in deaths of parishioners

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CHARLESTON – A federal jury took a little less than two hours Thursday to find Dylann Roof, the self-admitted white supremacist who shot to death nine black parishioners at a Charleston church, guilty of all 33 counts lodged against him.

Roof stood silent and unmoving except for the fingers of his right hand, which fidgeted at times as a court official read each count. Several people in the courtroom who lost loved ones in the June 2015 attack at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church nodded silently with each “guilty.”

Among them was Felicia Sanders, a survivor of the attack, who held her 11-year-old granddaughter to near-suffocation to keep the child still in a hail of gunfire. The girl survived, but Roof murdered two others in Sanders’ family, her 26-year-old son, Tywanza Sanders, and her 87-year-old aunt, Susie Jackson.

Afterward, she called the verdict “music to my ears,” adding, “I wasn’t expecting anything less.”

A few shed tears as the word “guilty” was repeated again and again in a verdict that holds Roof responsible

Guilty

Continued from Page 1A

his decision, though Gergel said he would allow Roof to change his mind until jurors reconvene.

“I will do that up to January third,” said. “Whatever decision you made on that day, we are proceeding.”

The final day of the case began as jurors heard closings statements offered by prosecutors and Roof’s lead defense attorney, who spoke to the panel for the last time, absent a change of mind by his now-former client.

The men, prosecutor Nathan Williams and defense attorney David Bruck, agreed on the most

important point before jurors. Both said Roof is guilty of the attack at Mother Emanuel.

But otherwise, the men were a study in contrasts. Williams, at 43, was deliberate, his voice sometimes rising with fervor, pointing to Roof as he described the defendant’s racism and cowardice. Roof did not return the prosecutor’s gaze.

Throughout six days of testimony Roof has rarely, if ever, turned his head to look at a witness or evidence, instead staring straight ahead or at the table before him, a demeanor that raises questions

not only for the murders, but also for hate crimes and obstruction of religion.

The 22-year-old will next face a penalty phase, scheduled to begin in January, where the same panel will determine whether he should face life imprisonment or execution. Both prosecutors and defense attorneys have declined to comment.

Roof has elected to represent himself at sentencing, a move that strips his defense team of its decision-making powers. Court statements hint that the rift is over evidence Roof suffers from an unnamed mental defect, a position his attorneys have taken for months in court documents.

After jurors were dismissed, U.S. District Court Judge Richard Gergel, again called Roof’s desire to self-represent a “bad decision,” and asked him a series of questions confirming he wants to maintain that course.

Roof, answering only “yes” or “correct,” confirmed

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“I wasn’t expecting anything less.”

FELICIA SANDERS

A SURVIVOR OF THE ATTACK, WHO CALLED THE VERDICT “MUSIC TO MY EARS”

about what, if any, kind of case he will offer.

“What I am going to talk about is the vastness of this defendant’s hatred,” Williams told jurors, repeating that final word throughout his statement.

In 50 minutes, he offered a summary of the voluminous case against Roof, honing in on the months of planning that included purchasing a gun, stockpiling ammunition and writing a manifesto of racist vitriol.

He pointed out too, that Roof penned a list of predominantly black churches, Mother Emanuel listed at the top of one.

“When you see that list

of churches, you see the vastness of his hatred,”

Williams said, and offered a chilling video showing Roof shooting his Glock pistol, its aim angled down to a phonebook on the ground.

Roof’s attorney, the 67-year-old Bruck, perpetually described as soft-spoken, sometimes dropped into a quiet that, to spectators in the courtroom gallery, was swallowed by the rustle of notebook paper or a creaking wooden bench.

To William’s concrete motive of hatred, Bruck offered something more nebulous in an address

Inside

Victims, officials react to conviction, **13A**



Title: **After two hours, jury delivers verdict on 33 charges against Roof in deaths of parishioners**
 Author: TONYA MAXWELL
 Size: 174.53 column inches
 Greenville, SC Circulation: 113473

that coaxed jurors to consider the future, a sentencing phase where life imprisonment is an option.

Bruck walked and sometimes crossed a fine line of trial rules, bringing objections from prosecutors, in a closing intended to lead them to believe what he believes – evidenced by his failed attempts to offer mental health experts as witnesses – that Roof suffers from a mental impairment.

“He tells the FBI he’s not delusional,” Bruck said, also referencing the video-recorded confession. “If someone says that, common sense tells

you he might be delusional.”

He pointed to Roof’s confusion on that tape, one in which he was unsure of the month and the number of victims, as well as a racist paradigm that seemed to form suddenly with an internet search for “black on white crime.”

“What happened in that instant is he acquired a magic decoder ring to explain every bad thing on the Earth,” Bruck said.

Jurors seemed to at least consider Bruck’s statements. They asked a single question, one that came an hour into deliberation. They asked to see the video in which he was

surprised when FBI agents told him nine were dead. Roof thought the victims numbered five, maybe four.

Bruck concluded by asking jurors to “look beyond the surface,” asking, “Is there something more to the story?”

The shootings horrified South Carolinians and the nation, and President Barack Obama eulogized the victims, praising their families for their grace in forgiving Roof, as a few did during Roof’s bond hearing shortly after his capture.

The Mother Emanuel shootings prompted a dia-

logue about race relations, and Gov. Nikki Haley in a statement said, “It is my hope that the survivors, the families, and the people of South Carolina can find some peace in the fact that justice has been served.”

South Carolina voted to lower the Confederate flag from Statehouse grounds in response to the crime.

It was a flag that Roof had visited when it was flying at the Statehouse. It appeared among the many photos he took of historical sites around the state, many of them steeped in a history that harkens to slavery or racial tensions.



Cynthia Hurd, 54.



Rev. Clementa Pinckney, 41.



Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, 45.

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**Rev. DePayne
Middleton-Doctor, 49.**



**Rev. Daniel
Simmons Sr., 74.**



Susie Jackson, 87.



Myra Thompson, 59.



Tywanza Sanders, 26.



Ethel Lee Lance, 70.

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CHARLESTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE VIA GETTY IMAGES

Dylann Storm Roof was found guilty in the mass shooting at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church that killed nine people on June 18, 2015, in Charleston.

Title: **Jury finds Dylann Roof guilty**
 Author: BY KEVINSACK ANDALAN BLINDER New YorkTimes
 Size: 36.58 column inches
 Beaufort, SC Circulation: 11269



CHARLESTON CHURCH SHOOTING

Jury finds Dylann Roof guilty

BY KEVIN SACK AND ALAN BLINDER

New York Times

CHARLESTON, S.C.

Dylann Roof, a self-radicalized young white supremacist who killed nine black parishioners last year when he opened fire during a long-planned assault on Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, was found guilty by a federal jury Thursday.

The jury convicted Roof of nine counts of hate crimes resulting in death, three counts of hate crimes involving an attempt to kill (three people survived), nine counts of obstructing the exercise of religion resulting in death, three counts of that charge with an attempt to kill, and nine counts of

using a firearm to commit murder during a crime of violence.

Roof, 22, stood, his hands at his side and his face emotionless, as a clerk read the verdict aloud in court.



Roof

He will face the same jurors next month when they gather Jan. 3 to begin a second and more suspenseful phase of his trial to decide whether he will be sentenced to death or life in prison without parole.

As the first verdicts were read, a few women in the courtroom nodded with satisfaction. But as the clerk read the counts, a process that took about 12 minutes, the women eventually drew still. After the court adjourned, the two adult survivors of the attack, Felicia Sanders and Polly Sheppard, shared a long embrace.

Reaction was swift. "It is my hope that the survivors, the families and the people of South Carolina can find some peace in the fact that justice has been served," S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley said in a statement.

The jury reached its verdict hours after hearing closing arguments in the case. The outcome seemed a foregone conclusion from the first min-

utes of the trial, which began Dec. 7 and included a swift acknowledgment from the chief defense lawyer, David Bruck, that Roof was responsible for the "astonishing, horrible attack" on June 17, 2015.

Roof, who lived in the Columbia area, had chillingly confessed to investigators nearly 18 months earlier and revealed his purpose in a blatantly racist manifesto that he published online. His choice of targets seemed intensely premeditated - he scouted the church half a dozen times - although he also researched other black churches and a festival elsewhere in South Carolina before settling on Charleston because, he wrote, it is the "most historic city in my state."

In his 53-minute closing statement to the jury, Assistant U.S. Attorney Nathan Williams, depicted Roof as "a man of hatred, a man who's proven to be a coward and a man of immense racial ignorance." Repeatedly using

the word "hatred" to connect Roof to the hate-crime counts, Williams said the defendant had "executed them because he believes that they are nothing more than animals."

The prosecutor's voice often rose in outrage, and the jurors were again shown photographs of the carnage Roof left behind.

"He must be held accountable for each and every action he took in that church," Williams urged.

As he has throughout the trial, Bruck responded by planting suggestions that Roof was mentally unstable, and thus not fully accountable. He peppered his closing statement with words like "abnormal," "irrationality," "senselessness," "illogical," "obsessive," "delusional" and "suicidal." Roof told the FBI in a confession shortly after being arrested that he had saved ammunition to kill himself if, as he expected, he confronted police when he left the church.