

Title: **Massacre victims, survivors celebrated**
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CHARLESTON CHURCH SHOOTING: FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

Massacre victims, survivors celebrated

Services mark anniversary with songs, prayers and tributes

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CHARLESTON — One year after a white gunman shot to death eight black parishioners and their pastor at a historic black church here, hundreds gathered Friday in multiple services to sing, pray and remember those who died.

At an ecumenical service at the TD Arena in downtown Charleston, officials including Gov. Nikki Haley and U.S. Sen. Tim Scott talked of the tragedy at Mother Emanuel AME Church nearby and celebrated the lives of the victims and the three survivors.

President Barack Obama, who last year came to the arena to deliver the eulogy for Sen. Clementa Pinckney, the pastor of Emanuel who lost his life in

the shootings, sent a message to those gathered for Friday's service.

"As a nation we are deeply moved by your boundless love and unshakable resilience," he and First Lady Michelle Obama said in the message, read to the audience. "The enduring hope that

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Shooting

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you've embodied is not only a profound expression of your faith but also a symbol of the courage that has guided America forward for generations."

At a later and smaller service at Emanuel, a multi-racial coalition, the Civilitas, joined Emanuel to honor the victims and call for forgiveness and racial reconciliation. The group also called for churches nationwide to join in the work of racial unity.

"All of us wish we didn't have to be here but we must," the Rev. Dr. Claude Alexander said.

The three-hour service at the TD Arena mixed messages of faith, reform and transformation.

Even the man accused in the shootings, Dylann Roof, was mentioned in the service, as one pastor prayed for God to show him mercy. State and federal prosecutors are seeking the death penalty in his case.

Haley talked of each of the nine victims and three survivors, who she calls the Emanuel

12, and reminded the state of the kindness, strength and faith South Carolinians have shown in the aftermath of the murders. She said the state remains great.

"When we were tested, we proved it," she said.

Other speakers used the occasion to talk of gun control, noting the recent deaths of 49 people killed in an Orlando nightclub by a gunman using an assault weapon.

"Can't we at least remove the availability of assault weapons from those who have broken the law?" Charleston Mayor John Tecklenburg asked to applause.

State Sen. Marlon Kimpson, a Charleston Democrat who has pushed a bill for expanded background checks, said in the wake of shootings in Charleston, San Bernardino and Orlando, "we must in Congress and state legislatures address gun reform."

Scott talked of the "unbelievable" grace shown by victims'

family members in telling Roof they forgave him and how the state's unity resulted in the lowering of the Confederate battle flag from the Statehouse grounds.

"Let us stand together," he said in closing.

Haley, who led the push to lower the flag after the murders, told the audience about the shootings that, "I feel like it happened yesterday."

She urged the state to remember both families of victims and the survivors and to be better people. She said she thinks of the victims each day and the lessons they have taught her.

"It is our job as a people to prove to them that June 17 was not in vain," she said.

Nine posters of the victims stood in front of the stage, each topped with "Still Speaking from Eternity."

The numbers of those attending were a fraction of the audience a year ago, when more

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than 5,000 packed the arena to pay their respects to Pinckney and listen to the president sing Amazing Grace.

"Love and support, that's why I'm here," said Odell Harris, 61, who drove a church van early Friday morning from Richland County.

Kerry Linen from Charleston said the memorial service helps with the healing process.

"I just needed to be here," she said. "Coming together is just something people need to do."

Eugenia Johnson, 85, of Charleston, a former librarian, said she came to the service in honor of Cynthia Hurd, one of the nine victims who worked as a librarian. She said mass shootings have left her afraid and unnerved.

"It's just such a tragedy to

think what is happening," she said. "I don't know which direction the world is going in."

Jestine Townsend Graham of North Myrtle Beach, said she knew all the victims, including one who was her cousin.

"I have to be here," she said. "They are all my sisters and brothers."

At Emanuel, a bell was tolled nine times for the victims while thunder stormed overhead.

The Rev. Dr. Greg Thompson of Charlottesville, Virginia, who is white, said he saw victims' family members tell Roof they forgive him on television and showed it to his children, saying, "this is one of the greatest moments of American history."

He said the history of America is a history of white supremacy that has benefited generations of whites, including him.

"There's no misery like this," he said. "We can be more than this."

As part of the service, those attending read a call to action written a year ago by black and white Christians nationwide, including a commitment to have a conversation in each person's

faith community about "the plague of racism in America."

In front of Emanuel, where piles of flowers have been left in honor of the victims, Jim Doyle of Charlotte brought his 7-year-old twins, who left roses at the fence.

"We just want our kids to understand the value of what's going on," he said. "We ought to have a lot of people out here to commemorate what happened, not only here, but throughout the country."



TRACY GLANTZ/TGLANTZ@THESTATE.COM

People worship during a service at T.D. Arena in Charleston on the anniversary of the massacre at Emanuel AME Church.

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CHUCK BURTON/AP

Anna Snyder of Charleston takes a photo as Dijon Profit, also of Charleston, watches in front of the Mother Emanuel AME Church on the one-year anniversary of the shooting deaths of nine black parishioners during a Bible study.

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CHUCK BURTON/AP

The Rev. Betty Deas Clark speaks to worshipers Friday during a memorial service at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston.

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Church shooting: A year of changes

Family, victims and community members find way since killings

Michael Burke and Ryan W Miller

USA TODAY

Friday marked the one-year anniversary of the Charleston church massacre, when nine black parishioners were shot and killed inside the historically black Emanuel AME Church.

Dylann Roof is charged with federal hate crimes in the shooting, and prosecutors will seek the death penalty when his trial begins Nov. 7.

Here's an update on what some of those affected by the massacre are saying a year later:

THE REV. BETTY DEAS CLARK

The Rev. Betty Deas Clark, pastor

of the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, told *The Greenville News* that the church is "healing and will heal," but there are still layers of pain and hurt "and some issues only time will heal." Clark took over as pastor for the Rev. Clementa Pinckney, who was among the nine killed in the shooting.

Clark said she believes the tragedy "has changed the world."

"We deal with people being

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Charleston works on making progress

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murdered, people being assassinated, even massacred," she said. "But to have it done in a church, during Bible study, by someone who was befriended by a group of loving people, I think it was a wake-up call, not only for the state but for the world. I think it asked the question, 'What have we come to?'"

CHARLESTON POLICE CHIEF GREGORY MULLEN

Reflecting on the past year, Charleston Police Department Chief Gregory Mullen said the

shooting and the aftermath drove him to reach out more to the community and develop stronger relationships. He believes the shooting made Charleston stronger but there is still work to be done in making progress on racial issues.

"We have the obligation to search out and try to find ways to make our community better for everyone," he said.

GOV. NIKKI HALEY

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley told *The Greenville News* that the Charleston community came to-

gether after the shooting. "It was love and forgiveness and grace and strength that I am so proud to have witnessed in my lifetime," she said.

"We didn't have violence, we had vigils," she said. "We didn't have protests, we had hugs. We had people stand across the state hold hands."

JENNIFER PINCKNEY

Jennifer Pinckney, the wife of the slain pastor, now chairs a foundation in honor of her husband, who was also a state senator, and serves on the Women's Coalition

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for Common Sense, which aims to prevent gun violence.

At an appearance at Duke University in February, Pinckney said she and others affected by the shooting were still in the process of healing, *Religion News Service* reported.

"I don't even want to turn my TV on," she said.

SURVIVORS FELICIA SANDERS AND POLLY SHEPPARD

Two survivors of the shooting, Felicia Sanders and Polly Sheppard, recently went on a 10-day civil rights pilgrimage to South Africa with other civil rights figures, *The Post and Courier* reported. The trip included stops at the prison island where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for 18 years.

The trip was organized in part by The Faith & Politics Institute, whose president Joan Mooney told *The Post and Courier* that the trip was "intended to be a healing journey."

AMBER ROOF

Shortly after the shooting, Amber Roof, Dylann's older sister, started a Go Fund Me page to cover the non-recoverable costs that she and her fiancé accrued when they canceled their wedding, which was to take place four days after the shooting, out of respect for the victims and their families.

"We know money cannot replace the wedding we lost and our perfect day. However, it will help us to create new memories and a new start with our new family," she wrote on the page. After receiving public backlash for start-

ing the page so soon after the attacks, Roof ended the fundraiser without an explanation. Roof pledged on the page to donate 10% of the funds raised to the Emmanuel AME Church.

JOEY MEEK

Dylann Roof's friend Joey Meek pleaded guilty to failing to tell law enforcement about the attack when he knew of it in advance and lying to investigators, according to *The Post and Courier*. Meek was informed that he was under investigation in September. Meek faces up to eight years in prison.

THE REV. DR. NORVEL GOFF

The Rev. Dr. Norvel Goff took over as interim pastor of the Emmanuel AME Church shortly after the shooting occurred. "Mother Emmanuel Church is a point of destination for the entire nation and for the state of South Carolina," Goff said in June 2015.

Although Goff faced allegations of mishandling donations to the church that poured in months after the massacre, *The New York Times* reported, he remained hopeful for the future of the parish.

"What I see is a cross-generational, cross-racial future for a church that is no longer restricted to its former self," he said, according to the *Times*.

FORMER MAYOR JOSEPH RILEY

Joseph Riley stepped down as mayor of Charleston in January after serving since 1975. Riley

spoke with *Garden & Gun* magazine and praised his citizens' compassion for each other in the aftermath of the shooting.

"They felt that there was love here," he said. "It's a word we use a lot, but I think certainly the African-American community knew that this was their city, and these are their neighborhoods, and I was their mayor and we were going to handle this together. We were going to take care of each other."

CHARLESTON MAYOR JOHN TECKLENBURG

Mayor John Tecklenburg had the challenging task of stepping into office after 40 years of Riley's service and serving a community still coming together after the tragedy. Tecklenburg noted that as the city moves forward, it is working to put into action the beliefs around justice that the victims of the shooting had.

"We are digging down, reaching in to think and act more in accord with a sense of unity and the aspirations of those who were killed, notably Reverend Pinckney, who had a profound sense of fairness, community service and concerns about injustice in both our community and the world," he said. "We are trying to move from just a showing of unity to a resolve to improve our community."

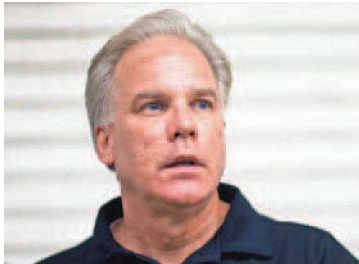
Tecklenburg praised members of the Emmanuel AME Church for setting an example for the world on how to address issues of race relations and injustice.



CHUCK BURTON, AP

The Rev. Betty Deas Clark now leads the church.

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DAVID GOLDMAN, AP

Gregory Mullen

CHIP SOMODEVILLA, GETTY IMAGES

Nikki Haley

PAUL ZOELLER, AP

Jennifer Pinckney

DIMITRIOS KAMBOURIS, GETTY IMAGES FOR GLAMOUR

Sheppard and Sanders

EMILY BROWN, GOFUNDME SCREENGRAB

Amber Roof and Michael Tyo

MARILYN AJAVANANDA, RICHARD ELLIS/EPA

Norvel Goff and Joseph Riley