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Racial Killing in South Carolina

Outrage, compassion, and prayers, all are reactions in the aftermath of the horrible hate crime perpetrated by a young white supremacist. He shot and killed nine innocent members in an African-American church.

The way it happened is sickening.

Dylann Roof, 21, attended a prayer group at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church. He was welcomed to participate, and did so for over an hour, at which time he took out a .45 caliber automatic and proceeded to kill nine, wonderful people. Each victim was making great contributions to others, or full of the potential of the young.

Hon. Rev. Clementa Pinckney - 41 - the pastor of the church and leader of the prayer service

Rev. DePayne - 49 - Middleton Doctor, mother of four daughters

Rev. Daniel L. Simmons Sr.- 74 -retired, Charleston County Community Development Block Grant Program

Ethel Lee Lance - 70 -Church staffer

Cynthia Hurd - 54 -librarian

Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton -45- a high school speech therapist, track and field coach

Tywanza Sanders - 26 -a recent college graduate looking for a job

Myra Thompson - 59

Susie Jackson -87

The press is filled with data and references to Dylann Roof. Conversely, finding just the names of the victims and something about their lives was more difficult. These were all good people. I would have enjoyed having them as neighbors and friends, and they represent the United States of America that I love.

Dylann Roof represents everything that I detest.

This was so senseless that tears have a problem getting past the anger. I can only pray for the families and my country, that we are not further divided by the actions of a bigoted, stupid, hate-monger and killer. Most of all, no-one should rise in defense of this person or his actions. There is simply no excuse.

It is a time of national mourning, examination of conscience, and contrition. All of these grieving families deserve better than this horror. Pray for them. Pray for America. Pray for each other.

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