

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 282

Commemorating June 17, 2025, as the tenth anniversary of the Mother Emanuel AME Church shooting.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 17, 2025

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mrs. BLACKBURN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Commemorating June 17, 2025, as the tenth anniversary of the Mother Emanuel AME Church shooting.

Whereas, on June 17, 2015, a peaceful Wednesday evening prayer meeting at the Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Charleston, South Carolina, ended in tragedy as an armed gunman killed 9 African-American parishioners;

Whereas the killer, Dylann Roof, a White supremacist, sat in the Mother Emanuel AME Church, the oldest African Methodist church in the South, for more than an hour before opening fire, shooting 12 people and killing 9 before escaping;

Whereas the “Emanuel Nine” includes the Reverend Clementa Pinckney, Cynthia Hurd, the Reverend

Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, Tywanza Sanders, Ethel Lance, Susie Jackson, the Reverend DePayne Middleton-Doctor, the Reverend Daniel Simmons, Sr., and Myra Thompson;

Whereas Reverend Clementa Pinckney, elected to the South Carolina General Assembly in 1996 at the age of 23, becoming the youngest African-American elected to the South Carolina State Legislature, was a 15-year member of the South Carolina Senate from the 45th District, a beloved husband of Jennifer Benjamin and father of Eliana and Malana, and was a recipient of a bachelor's degree from Allen University in 1995 and a master of public administration degree from the University of South Carolina in 1999;

Whereas Cynthia Hurd served as a librarian in the Charleston, South Carolina library system for 31 years, worked at the St. Andrews Regional Library since 2011, had previously worked as the branch manager of the John L. Dart Library in downtown Charleston, and after her death, was honored by the Charleston County Public Library system, which renamed St. Andrews Library the Cynthia Graham Hurd St. Andrews Regional Library;

Whereas Reverend Sharonda Coleman-Singleton was a member of the ministerial staff at Mother Emanuel AME Church, spent her life making a long-lasting difference in the lives of those around her, was a speech and language pathologist, and was a girls' track and field coach for Goose Creek High School;

Whereas Tywanza Sanders, who was only 26 years old when his young life was taken, earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Allen University, played instruments such as the keyboard and was in the process

of writing his own book of poetry, and in his last moment, stepped in front of Susie Jackson, giving his life in an attempt to save his great-aunt;

Whereas both Tywanza Sanders and Susie Jackson were celebrated in a joint funeral attended by hundreds of mourners;

Whereas Ethel Lance, whose favorite gospel song was “One Day at a Time”, was born in Charleston, where she and her husband, Nathaniel Lance, raised their family, and she was a lifelong member of Mother Emanuel AME Church, where she worked as a custodian to help keep the facilities clean for 5 years;

Whereas Susie Jackson, a longtime member of the Mother Emanuel AME Church, served as a trustee and an usher at her church, sang in the adult choir for many years, and was 87 years old when she was killed on that tragic day;

Whereas Reverend DePayne Middleton-Doctor earned a bachelor’s degree in biology from Columbia College in 1989, and a master’s degree in organizational management from Southern Wesleyan University in 1994, served as a minister at Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church in North Charleston before joining Mother Emanuel AME as a minister in March 2015, and was the loving mother of 4 daughters—Gracyn, Kaylin, Hali, and Czana;

Whereas Reverend Daniel Simmons, Sr. was a fourth-generation preacher who assisted Reverend Pinckney with pastoral duties, was nicknamed “Super Simmons from the Super Seventh”, earned a bachelor’s degree in education administration from Allen University, a master’s degree in social work from the University of South Carolina, and

a master of divinity degree with a concentration in leadership and theology from the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, was a loving husband to his wife, Annie Graham Simmons, and was a devoted father to his 2 children, Daniel L. Simmons, Jr. and Rose Ann Simmons;

Whereas Myra Thompson was a Charleston native and longtime member of the Mother Emanuel AME Church, earned a bachelor's degree in English education from Benedict College, received a master of education degree in reading and a second degree of master of education in school counseling from the Citadel Military College of Charleston, was married to Reverend Anthony B. Thompson, Vicar of Holy Trinity Reformed Episcopal Church in Charleston, and was a loving mother to her 2 children, Kevin and Denise, and her 2 grandchildren;

Whereas, on December 15, 2016, Roof was convicted in Federal court of all 33 Federal charges against him (including hate crimes) that stemmed from the shooting;

Whereas, on January 11, 2017, he was sentenced to death for those crimes;

Whereas, on March 31, 2017, Roof agreed to plead guilty in South Carolina State court to all state charges pending against him—9 counts of murder, 3 counts of attempted murder, and possession of a firearm during the commission of a felony—to avoid a second death sentence;

Whereas, as part of the plea agreement, Roof accepted a sentence of life in prison without the possibility of parole;

Whereas, on April 10, 2017, Roof was sentenced to 9 consecutive sentences of life without the possibility of parole after formally pleading guilty to the state charges; and

Whereas Roof is currently on death row at United States Penitentiary, Terre Haute, awaiting execution for the Federal convictions: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) commemorates June 17, 2025, as the tenth
3 anniversary of the Mother Emanuel AME Church
4 shooting;

5 (2) remembers that in the face of unimaginable
6 pain, the church stood firm in faith, a living re-
7 minder that—

8 (A) as Romans 8:28 says, “in all things
9 God works for the good of those who love him”;
10 and

11 (B) as Matthew 18:21–22 teaches, “Peter
12 came up and said to him, ‘Lord, how often will
13 my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?
14 As many as seven times?’ [and] Jesus said to
15 him, ‘I do not say to you seven times, but sev-
16 enty-seven times’”;

17 (3) honors the victims’ memory, their legacy,
18 and the enduring hope that evil never has the final
19 word; and

20 (4) remembers each victim of the shooting—

21 (A) Reverend Clementa Pinckney;

22 (B) Reverend Sharonda Coleman-Sin-
23 gleton;

- 1 (C) Cynthia Hurd;
- 2 (D) Susie Jackson;
- 3 (E) Ethel Lance;
- 4 (F) Reverend DePayne Middleton-Doctor;
- 5 (G) Tywanza Sanders;
- 6 (H) Reverend Daniel Simmons Sr.;
- 7 (I) Myra Thompson;
- 8 (J) Polly Sheppard;
- 9 (K) Jennifer Pinckney;
- 10 (L) Felicia Sanders; and
- 11 (M) two minor children.

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