



NEWS RELEASE
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**U. S. Commission on Civil Rights Joins the Nation in Mourning the Deaths of Nine
Worshippers in the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church**

Washington, DC – The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights joins the Nation in expressing deep sorrow at the heartbreaking deaths of nine worshippers in the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, whose lives were violently cut short by a mass shooter. The Church is an historic institution that has throughout its history engaged in the struggle for freedom and equality of all people, but especially those who suffered the obstacles and indignities of segregation and discrimination.

The nine worshippers have been reported as the Rev. Clementa Pinckney, Tywanza Sanders, Cynthia Hurd, the Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, Myra Thompson, Ethel Lance, the Rev. Daniel Simmons, the Rev. DePayne Middleton-Doctor and Susie Jackson.

The Commission mourns their loss and joins with all who work for peace and understanding at this difficult time.

Chairman Castro states, “The murder of these innocent worshippers was a despicable act of hate and must be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. As we grieve this act of hate, we must also move forward in our nation with individual acts of love and understanding so that hate crimes such as this will one day become a thing of the past, as they should have been long ago.”

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The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is an independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights matters and issuing a federal civil rights enforcement report. For information about Commission's reports and meetings, visit <http://www.usccr.gov>.