

Presidential Candidates Respond to Horrific AME Shooting

As authorities hunted a white gunman accused of killing nine people at a historic black church in Charleston, South Carolina, late on Wednesday, U.S. presidential candidates and politicians likely to enter the race used social media and other means to express condolences.

Here are comments from some of the candidates:

“There are bad people in this world who are motivated by hate ... Every decent person has been victimized by the hateful, callous disregard for human life shown by the individual who perpetrated these horrible acts. Our sense of security and well-being has been robbed and shaken.”

– Republican Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina in a statement

“Our thoughts and prayers are with the individuals and families affected by the tragic events in Charleston.”

– Republican Jeb Bush, on Twitter. The former Florida governor canceled an appearance scheduled for Thursday morning in Charleston

“Heartbreaking news from Charleston – my thoughts and prayers are with you all. -H”

– Democrat Hillary Clinton, former secretary of state who spoke in Charleston on Wednesday, on Twitter

“The Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC, became a scene of unspeakable carnage because an evil person violated the sanctuary where earth and heaven meet and turned it into a

place where earth and hell meet. No civilized person can react except with revulsion at such a senseless, cowardly, and despicable act ... The prayers that were interrupted by a mass murderer will be continued by a grieving nation."

– Former Republican Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee on Facebook

"Our prayers for the families & friends of loved ones killed in Charleston, S.C. – SKW"

– Republican Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker, who is expected to announce whether he will run next month, on Twitter

"Kelley and I are praying for everyone affected by this senseless tragedy in Charleston."

– Republican Senator Rand Paul and wife

"Saddened by the news from Charleston. The victims and their families are in my prayers today."

– Republican Senator Marco Rubio on Twitter

"My heart just breaks for the families ... I'm also outraged. This is evil ... this is beyond evil. This is horrific. This monster needs to be tracked down, needs to be brought to justice."

– Republican Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal, expected to announce his intentions next Wednesday, on CNN

"My heart and prayers go out to Charleston, the families who have lost loved ones, and everyone who is hurting because of this hateful crime ... Please join me in praying for these families and this community."

– Republican Ohio Governor John Kasich, who is expected to announce his candidacy soon, on Facebook

"My heart goes out to the victims of this tragedy & their

loved ones. Katie & I are keeping Charleston & the AME community in our prayers.”

– Former Maryland Democratic Governor Martin O’Malley on Twitter

“Last night, evil walked the streets of Charleston. My heart aches for the families of the victims. I pray for the families left behind. I pray for the community scared and hurting. I also pray you and I can conquer hatred.”

– Republican Ben Carson, a retired brain surgeon and political newcomer, on Facebook

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