

Devin Kelley Attacked Sutherland Springs Church During Communion

They were following the command of Jesus, later described by Paul.

When He had given thanks, He broke [the bread] and said, "Take and eat. This is My body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner He took the cup after He had supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes (1 Cor. 11:24-26).

Likely, the parishioners in attendance at First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs were meditating on this passage as they received Communion—Mass, as described in the press conference.

It was 11:30 a.m. local time, and most reports indicate the service had not yet progressed to the preaching. Instead, the church was relishing in worship when Devin Kelley entered and opened a barrage on the small congregation.

The death toll stands at 26, with 20 more injured. Kelley reportedly killed himself after a brief car chase when he fled the scene. His in-laws attended the church, and local officials say the mass shooting may have been an extension of a domestic dispute.

"We were a very close family," Sherri Pomeroy, wife of pastor Frank Pomeroy, says. "We ate together. We laughed together. We cried together. And we worshipped together. Now, most of our church family is gone. Our building is probably beyond repair.

And the few of us left behind lost tragically yesterday.”

The couple was out of town as bullets rained down on their congregation, their 14-year-old daughter among the victims.

“As much tragedy as that entails for our family, we don’t want to overshadow the other lives lost [Sunday],” she says. “We lost more than Belle [Sunday]. And one thing that gives me a sliver of encouragement is the fact that Belle was surrounded yesterday by her church family that she loved fiercely and vice versa.”

The week before the attack, Frank Pomeroy took the pulpit to preach on Proverbs 3 in a message titled, “You Don’t Need Training Wheels, You Need Christ!”

“You’re going to have ups, you’re going to have downs, you’re going to have curves, you’re going to have speed, you’re going to have slow,” he told the congregation.

He continued: “Equilibrium in life ... is not the goal ... when the bends and the turns come, remember: God said, ‘I have prepared a place for you made with hands not of this world, so that where I go you may be also. My goal is trusting in Jesus and getting to the heavenly home one day.’”

Now, he and his remaining parishioners are left to pick up the pieces of a shattered church—and put his sermon into action.