

What the Charleston Church Massacre Says About American Culture

In a tragedy that's rocked the lives of more than those immediately involved, the nation is banding together.

The calls for prayer for Charleston began trending on Twitter soon after the attack on Emanuel AME Church in South Carolina hit the news.

Beyond social media, pastors and politicians alike are uniting to call for peace in a time of hurt.

"Our hearts go out to all the members of Charleston's Emanuel AME Church, the families of the victims, and the Charleston community in the wake of last night's shooting at their Wednesday night prayer meeting," says Franklin Graham. "Nine lives tragically lost, including their pastor and South Carolina State Senator, Reverend Clementa Pinckney. Join me in praying for them and that the person responsible will be brought to justice quickly."

Dylann Roof has confessed to the murder of nine African-Americans who were attending a Bible study at the church, proving racism is still alive and well in America.

According to National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference President Samuel Rodriguez, the shooting reveals much more about American culture, and humanity as a whole:

"The Charleston massacre once again proves that there exists a war between darkness and light. When hatred and violence emerge to silence peace and love, all Americans, all humanity suffers," Rodriguez says "Accordingly, we mourn for our brothers and sisters while we simultaneously stand up to

repudiate all vestiges of hatred and intolerance. Silence is not option. For at the end of the day this we know for certain; when light stands next to darkness, light always wins.”

Here’s what others are saying:

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

“All of us at American Family Association are shocked and horrified by this tragic shooting, and are praying for the congregation of Emanuel AME Church. This senseless and devastating tragedy is something no church family should ever have to endure. Hate crimes such as these are negatively impacting genuine attempts to unify the nation. We send our condolences and sympathies to the entire Charleston community,” Wildmon continued, “as well as to the family of this young, faithful and remarkable pastor and lawmaker. Our hearts also go out to the other eight victims and their families, including several active members of the church, a librarian, a recent college graduate, a high school coach and a retired pastor. These losses will be felt deeply.” –AFA President Tim Wildmon

“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