

MOTHER EMANUEL REMEMBRANCE LITANY

By Reba H. Williams, 6th District (Georgia)

Leader: For the senseless attack against that fortress of the African Methodist Episcopal Church of Charleston, South Carolina, known as Mother Emanuel, brought on by white supremacist, Dylann Roof, during an evening Bible study,

People: We lift our tear-filled eyes toward heaven and ask "why"?

Leader: For the lives sacrificed in the senseless, brutal slaying of the Emanuel Nine,

People: We lift our tear-filled eyes toward heaven and ask "why"?

Leader: For the Rev. Clementa Pinckney, age 41, called by God as His chosen shepherd to lead and nurture the flock of Mother Emanuel,

People: We lift our tear-filled eyes toward heaven and ask "why"?

Leader: For Cynthia Hurd, age 54, dedicated to serving and improving the lives of others,

People: We lift our tear-filled eyes toward heaven and ask "why"?

Leader: For the Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, age 45, on the pastoral staff of Mother Emanuel and true professional who cared about her students and advocated for them,

People: We lift our tear-filled eyes toward heaven and ask "why"?

Leader: For Tywanza (Ty) Sanders, age 26, a quiet, well known student who was committed to his education. and who prepared himself as a role model for those who would've followed in his footsteps,

People: We lift our tear-filled eyes toward heaven and ask "why"?

Leader: For Ethel Lance, age 70, who attended Mother Emanuel most of her life and worked there as a custodian,

People: We lift our tear-filled eyes "why"? toward heaven and ask "why"?

Leader: For Susie Jackson, age 87, a lifelong member and cousin to Ethel Lance,

People: We lift our tear-filled eyes toward heaven and ask "why"?

Leader: For DePayne Middleton Doctor, age 49, a warm and enthusiastic leader who believed in helping students achieve their potential by connecting faith with learning,

People: We lift our tear-filled eyes toward heaven and ask "why"?

Leader: For the Rev. Daniel Simmons, age 74, who survived the initial attack but then died in a hospital operating room,

People: We lift our tear-filled eyes toward heaven and ask "why"?

Leader: For Myra Thompson, age 59, wife of a clergyman and leader in her own right,

People: We lift our tear-filled eyes toward heaven and ask "why"?

Leader: For the Emanuel Nine, an eclectic group of saints brought together for Bible study and for such a time as this.

People: We lift our tear-filled eyes toward heaven and ask "why"?

Leader: We praise God for the lives laid down for the sake of His word.

All: And we will understand it better by and by.

Council of Bishops of the AME Church (2019) *The Anvil Annual Resource Guide: Sankofa: Worshipping God Yesterday, Today and Forever*. AMEC Publishing House: Nashville, TN., p. 238-240.

LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

By Rev. Mashod Evans, 4th District (Michigan)

Leader: "I had rather be a doorkeeper the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Yes. But what happens when wickedness makes its way into God's house? Charleston... Mother Emanuel.

People: Lord, today we remember the Emanuel Nine who were tragically slain on June 17, 2015.

Leader: With open doors, and open hearts, they welcomed the stranger, just like the Bible encourages us to do. Then, suddenly, things took a horrific turn; intentions announced, weapon brandished, pleas offered, terror unleashed, horror ensued. In a matter of minutes, a holy space became the scene of a hate crime.

People: As we reflect on that night and relive those moments, our hearts are made heavy again. We cry aloud again, "Why, Dear Lord? Why?"

Leader: Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd, Susie Jackson, Ethel Lee Lance, Depayne Middleton-Doctor, Clementa C. Pinckney, Tywanza Sanders, Daniel Simmons, Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, Myra Thompson.

People: Lord, bless their memory, bless their families.

Leader: Immeasurable grief, YES. Righteous anger, DEFINITELY. Hate in response to hate: NEVER. In fact, the opposite was the outcome. Almost instantly forgiveness was offered, unity was demonstrated, steps toward reconciliation were made.

People: Evil will not win. Hate will not have the last word.

Leader: We are a resilient people, we are a redeemed people, a resurrection people. We know that in death, even horrible, inhuman, unjustified death, God can create opportunity for new life, just as He did in Jesus Christ.

People: Evil will not win. Hate will not have the last word.

Leader: As we reflect, and as we remember, we maintain our hope. A hope that is sustained by a belief that God is our Emmanuel, meaning, God with us, and if God, be with us, then God be for us, and if God be for us, who can be against us?

All: Evil will not win. Hate will not have the last word. AMEN.

Council of Bishops of the AME Church (2019) *The Anvil Annual Resource Guide: Sankofa: Worshipping God Yesterday, Today and Forever*. AMEC Publishing House: Nashville, TN., p. 241-242.

A LITANY FOR THE MOTHER EMANUEL NINE

By Amenti Sujai. Ph.D., 7th District (South Carolina)

Leader: In our pursuit of justice and quest for liberation,

People: We remember them in spirit and in truth.

Leader: In our call for righteousness and civility,

People: We remember them in spirit and in truth.

Leader: In our demand for respect and recognition,

People: We remember them in spirit and in truth.

Leader: In lifting our voices in divine and holy community.

People: We remember them in spirit and in truth.

We speak one word infused with the fire of the Holy Spirit, ENOUGH!

People: ENOUGH!

(Silence)

Leader: Long may they live, for they live on in our hearts and minds. We remember them: Rev. Clementa Pinckney, Mrs. Cynthia Hurd, Rev. Sharonda Coleman Singleton, Mr. Tywanza Sanders, Mrs. Ethel Lance, Ms. Susie Jackson, Mrs. Depayne Middleton Doctor, Daniel Simmons, Myra Thompson.

Council of Bishops of the AME Church (2019) *The Anvil Annual Resource Guide: Sankofa: Worshipping God Yesterday, Today and Forever*. AMEC Publishing House: Nashville, TN., p. 243.