



Communal Bible Study in Commemoration of
THE EMANUEL 9 MASSACRE
Thursday, June 17 at 7:00 PM



Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's Work. Our Hands.

**Welcome to a Gathering of Lament and Bible Study
Facilitated by the Metro D.C. Synod Racial Equity Team**

Confessional Litany and Lament Commemorating the Nine Who Were Slain at Mother Emanuel AME Church

They were doing
what we are called to
as they engaged in bible study.

It was Wednesday night—
a stranger walked in,
and these people welcomed him and prayed together:
the Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd, Susie Jackson, Ethel Lee Lance, the Rev. DePayne Middleton-Doctor, Tywanza Kibwe Diop Sanders, the Rev. Daniel Lee Simmons, the Rev. Myra Singleton Quarles Thompson, and the honorable state senator and pastor of the church, the Rev. Clementa C. Pinckney.

This stranger wanted to ignite a “race war,”
he said, after he shot and killed them,
denying them the very humanity he claimed for himself,
claiming rights and privileges associated with “whiteness.”
Now we are grieved, once again in pain,
burning and anguished, lamenting the horror of evil unleashed.
And so we cry out,
Have mercy, O God, have mercy on us.

Sorrow and heartache have come to us.
Death and mourning have visited us.
We feel far from you, O God, and distant from one another. And so we cry out,
Have mercy, O God, have mercy on us.

Evil besets us in our land.
We acknowledge that our nation is socialized in ways that promote and normalize colonialization.
We cry out against the horrors and agonies of racism. And so we cry out,
Have mercy, O God, have mercy on us.

The privileged of our nation have benefited from practices that dehumanize indigenous peoples. We have claimed as “discovery” lands that were not ours. These

lands have been stolen and the nations, that were the original occupants of these lands, slain. And so we cry out,
Have mercy, O God, have mercy on us.

In so many ways, O God, we deny your presence.
Present generations,
the children whose ancestors were kidnapped and sold into slavery,
those forced to labor not on their own behalf,
still suffer and struggle to live in freedom
while the children of colonizers,
live out of “white privilege,”
denying the fullness of your presence in all people. And so we cry out,
Have mercy, O God, have mercy on us.

Assaults born of greed and murder continue propping up
white privilege that is institutionalized in our church and nation,
preventing us from recognizing
the twin evils of racism and nationalism
still perpetuated among us. And so we cry out,
Have mercy, O God, have mercy on us.

Open our eyes, O God, open our hearts.
Open our ears, O God, open our minds.
Help us to behold one another as you behold us.
Help us to be more firmly rooted
in the practices of the gospel—so that, when we pray,
the way we live will make real the dream of your beloved community
within and among us. And so we cry out,
Have mercy, O God, have mercy on us.

With the help of your mercy and grace,
lead us to think, believe, and change.
May your gospel’s transforming power
by the working of the Holy Spirit
be present in us, in our churches,
in our nation and all the nations of the earth.
May it be so. And the people said, “Amen.”
Amen.

Scripture - Mark 4: 1-17

The focus of the Bible Study at Mother Emanuel AME on June 17, 2015 was Mark 4:16.

The Parable of the Sower

4 Again he began to teach beside the sea. Such a very large crowd gathered around him that he got into a boat on the sea and sat there, while the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. 2 He began to teach them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: 3 “Listen! A sower went out to sow. 4 And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5 Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and it sprang up quickly, since it had no depth of soil. 6 And when the sun rose, it was scorched; and since it had no root, it withered away. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. 8 Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.” 9 And he said, “Let anyone with ears to hear listen!”

The Purpose of the Parables

10 When he was alone, those who were around him along with the twelve asked him about the parables. 11 And he said to them, “To you has been given the secret[a] of the kingdom of God, but for those outside, everything comes in parables; 12 in order that

‘they may indeed look, but not perceive,
and may indeed listen, but not understand;
so that they may not turn again and be forgiven.’”

13 And he said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? Then how will you understand all the parables? 14 The sower sows the word. 15 These are the ones on the path where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. **16 And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: when they hear the word, they immediately receive it with joy.** 17 But they have no root, and endure only for a while; then, when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.

Bible Study Break Out Groups

Groups are being facilitated by members of the Metro D.C. Synod Racial Equity Team with additional help from Rostered Ministers and Lay Leaders from throughout the Metro D.C. Synod.

Discussion Questions

1. Given the information about the Emanuel Nine, how do you feel about the scripture knowing a little about the group context in which it was read 6 year ago?
2. If these scriptures were the last words you heard, what impact might they have upon you?
3. Mark 4, verse 17, reads: “But they have no root and endure only for a while; then, when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.” How does this describe Dylan Roof (the shooter), and the ways white supremacy culture influences faith formation – including your own?
4. Further, what seeds do you want to grow as part of your faith?
5. Has knowing that the shooter grew up Lutheran impacted your view of what it means to be Lutheran?
6. How can we approach racism from a more inclusive theology?

Return to Large Group

Bidding Prayers

Please place prayers in the chat as a way to lift up individual concerns during our bidding prayers.

For the church

God, our truth, through the ages you have spoken through prophets. Stir up in your church a passion for your word revealed in Jesus, that following the witness of the Emanuel Nine, your church studies the scriptures, shows hospitality, prays without ceasing, and embodies prophetic justice in community. Embolden church leaders and all the baptized to remember the lives of the Nine, repent of racism and white supremacy, and renew our commitment to your word revealed most fully in Jesus, our way, truth, and life. In your great mercy, **receive our prayer.**

For the nations

Mighty and loving God, we pray for our nation and the plague of racism that threatens, destroys, and kills. Root out white supremacy wherever it takes hold. Release its grip on those lured by its false promises. Bring to repentance all who continue to benefit from prejudice and hatred, both hidden and revealed. Plant in our hearts and nation a willing spirit open to truth-telling and healing. In your great mercy, **receive our prayer.**

For those who are oppressed and victimized

Immanuel, God with us, you embrace in love those who cry out to you. Lift up all whom hatred has cast down (*especially ...*); embolden those who need courage to speak and act against oppression (*especially ...*); sustain those who are weary from efforts that bring no end to injustice (*especially ...*). Comfort parents weeping for children, children who have been separated from parents, and families in crises of any kind. Restore hope where it has been lost, so that all may trust your love that reaches to the depths of pain and suffering. In your great mercy, **receive our prayer.**

For remembrance of enslaved people and in celebration of freedom

We give thanks this day for Juneteenth, a holiday that commemorates the end of chattel slavery in the United States and recalls the delay in which the states of Louisiana and Texas heard the news that President Abraham Lincoln had signed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. We acknowledge that the good news did not arrive in those two states for two and a half years, so chattel slavery continued until June 19, 1865. When freedom arrived, the responses of formally enslaved peoples was spontaneous celebration. Please God, allow this year's Juneteenth celebration to serve as a reminder of your ongoing love that sets us free and gives us the courage and energy to strive for freedom in our congregations and communities. In your great mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Thanksgiving for the saints

We give you thanks, Holy God, for the faithful life and witness of Clementa, Cynthia, Daniel, DePayne, Ethel, Myra, Sharonda, Susie, and Tywanza, the Emanuel Nine. May their faith and witness to your forgiving love in Jesus Christ inspire all people to pursue paths of justice, courage, and self-giving love. In your great mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Dismissal

L: Go in peace to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God.

All: **I will!**

Depart in silent reflection on the lives lost and how to keep their memory alive in your own ministry.



CYNTHIA GRAHAM HURD

For over three decades, Cynthia Graham Hurd helped her community and neighbors connect with the resources and opportunity found at the public library. Children, especially, knew she was always ready to help them – whether they needed homework assistance or a new book “just right” for a beginning reader.

A Charleston native, Hurd attended James Simmons Elementary School and the High School of Charleston. Graduating from Clark Atlanta University in 1984, she returned home and launched a 31-year career with the Charleston County Public Library. After earning a masters in library information sciences at the University of South Carolina, she became manager of the John L. Dart Library in 1990 in the Charleston neighborhood where she grew up. In 2011, Hurd was promoted to lead the St. Andrews Regional Library, one of the busiest branches in the county’s system.

Outside her professional work Hurd was active in her community, serving as a board member of the Charleston County Housing Authority for more than 20 years. She was also a board member of Septima P. Clark Corp., a nonprofit that gives small grants to resident programs for those in public housing. Hurd was a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority and spent time working part-time at the College of Charleston’s Addlestone Library. She was a life-long member of Emanuel AME Church.

After her death, the College of Charleston renamed its Colonial Scholarship, a full academic scholarship for in-state students, the Cynthia Graham Hurd Memorial Scholarship. In addition, the Charleston County Public Library changed the name of the St. Andrews Library branch she managed to the Cynthia Graham Hurd St. Andrews Regional Library.



SUSIE J. JACKSON

Susie J. Jackson, 87, lived a life full of energy and love for her family and fellow church members.

A member of Emanuel AME Church for many years, Jackson was a fixture at Sunday services and Wednesday night Bible studies. She served as a trustee and as an usher. She sang in the adult choir for many years and later enjoyed being a member of the church's senior citizens group.

Jackson attended Buist Elementary School and Burke High School in Charleston. She was one of six sisters and four brothers and married to the late Walter Jackson. She and her husband raised their son, Walter Jr., on Charleston's east side, and she later raised a daughter, Annette Jackson. When Walter Jr. moved out of the house, Jackson displayed her "good Samaritan" spirit and offered his room to two young people in her neighborhood who needed shelter.

Close friends and family recall that as an octogenarian Jackson was healthy, active and showed no signs of slowing down. She adored her three grandchildren and eight great grandchildren. She never missed a graduation because she was very passionate about education.

Jackson was kind-hearted, often giving of her time and resources. Her home was warm, inviting and always a popular place to have good food, fellowship, and fun.

Two weeks before her death, Jackson took a trip to see a cousin's graduation and visit her son and grandchildren in Cleveland, Ohio. This trip was a little different because she decided to leave cards with her great-grandchildren for their upcoming birthdays. She would normally have mailed them from her home in Charleston. It was as if she knew she would not see them again.

Jackson's legacy of love and service to others has touched many people who have come to appreciate her as a dedicated servant of God.



ETHEL LEE LANCE

The life of Ethel Lee Lance, 70, epitomized loyalty, consistency and dedication to serving others. Born in Charleston where she and her husband Nathaniel Lance raised their family, Lance was a lifelong member of Emanuel AME Church. She took great pride in her church, working as a custodian and helping keep its facilities clean for five years. Whether she was working, attending church services or studying her Bible, Lance was at Emanuel AME nearly seven days a week.

Lance was a hard worker, and in 1968 when Charleston's Gaillard Municipal Auditorium opened, she began working there as a custodian and worked there until she retired in 2002. She loved to take her family to see gospel performances at the auditorium when she had a night off. Two of Lance's daughters even had their wedding receptions at the Gaillard.

A matriarch by all accounts, she was devoted to her family's well-being. She led her family through despair when her husband died in 1988 and when her daughter, Terrie Washington, died in 2013. Brandon Risher, the oldest of Lance's grandchildren, remembers her as a symbol of love. Other grandchildren recall that she firmly encouraged them to succeed, and always served grits and bacon for breakfast. Lance's loving family includes five children, six grandchildren and four great grandchildren. She never had the opportunity to see her youngest great-grandchild, Jonquil Lance Jr., who was born just before the tragedy.

Her funeral at Royal Missionary Baptist Church in North Charleston was attended by Civil Rights leaders such as Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton, and by political leaders such as Gov. Nikki Haley, U.S. Rep. Mark Sanford and Charleston Mayor Joe Riley. The choir sang "One Day at a Time," Lance's favorite gospel song. Her daughter said the song gave her strength in difficult times.



THE REV. DEPAYNE VONTRESE MIDDLETON

The Rev. DePayne Vontrese Middleton, 49, of Hollywood was born into a family of faith and ministers. In addition to powerful oratory skills, she also had a talent for singing and shared this gift with many congregations and choirs in the Charleston area. When she decided to become a minister, she served at Mt. Mariah Missionary Baptist Church in North Charleston before she ministered at Emanuel AME, which she joined in March 2015.

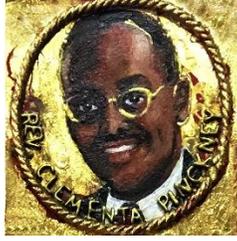
The queen of her high school, Middleton earned a bachelor's degree in biology from Columbia College in 1989, and a masters in organizational management from Southern Wesleyan University in 1994.

In 2005, she retired as the Charleston County director of the Community Development Block Grant program. In 2015, she began working for Southern Wesleyan University, her alma mater, as admissions coordinator for the school's Charleston learning center. An experienced grant writer, she also worked for local and state agencies in various roles and as data manager/analyst for the Medical University of South Carolina. She twice managed the Charleston's Census Bureau office.

She was the mother of four daughters: Gracyn, Kaylin, Hali and Czana. They were her life's priority, and she instilled in them a passion for education, adventure and individuality.

Middleton lived a life dedicated to her Christian faith and to helping others. A co-minister recalled that any time Middleton encountered someone asking for prayers, she would promptly stop and pray with them on the spot.

Gov. Nikki Haley, Charleston Mayor Joseph Riley and Civil Rights leader Jesse Jackson attended Middleton's funeral. The service concluded with clapping, praise and singing, the release of a flock of doves and the hymn, "When We All Get to Heaven."



THE REV. CLEMENTA CARLOS PINCKNEY

The Rev. Clementa C. Pinckney, 41, lived much of his life in Ridgeland, but he left a positive impact as a pastor and statesman far beyond rural Jasper County. As pastor, he served thousands of parishioners in many South Carolina churches, and he was a leading member of the South Carolina Senate.

Born into a family with a legacy of church leadership and civil rights activism, Pinckney graduated magna cum laude from Allen University, where he was elected president of the freshman class, senior class, and student body. He was named one of America's top college students by Ebony Magazine and received a Princeton University Woodrow Wilson Summer Research Fellowship in the fields of public policy and international affairs. He received a graduate fellowship to the University of South Carolina, where he earned a masters in public administration.

At age 13, Pinckney felt called to become a pastor and was ordained at age 18. After completing his studies at Allen and USC, he earned a Master of Divinity from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. He led churches across the state before becoming the senior pastor at Emanuel AME Church in 2010. At the time of his death, he was pursuing a doctorate at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington D.C., which was awarded posthumously.

Pinckney was the youngest African-American ever elected to the S.C. General Assembly, becoming a state representative at 23 and a senator at 27. He became known for quietly leading by example, advocating for health care and education issues, and passionately opposing gun violence.

A gifted orator, Pinckney was a humble public servant with a calm demeanor, a devoted husband to his wife, Jennifer, and loving father to his daughters, Eliana and Malana. President Barack Obama eulogized Pinckney at his funeral, attended By Vice President Joe Biden, Gov. Nikki Haley and numerous dignitaries and church leaders.



TYWANZA KIBWE DIOP SANDERS

Tywanza Sanders, 26, was a young, vibrant man with many talents and interests who was willing to give his life for another.

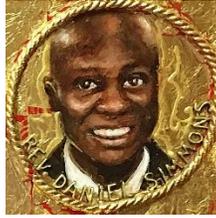
Born in Charleston, “Wanza” was known for his broad, ready smile and positive outlook on life.

Sanders graduated from James Island Charter High School in 2006, where he was a member of the Trojan football team, Future Business Leaders of America and other student organizations. Sanders also filmed home basketball games for the school’s broadcast journalism news team. After high school, he earned a degree in business administration from Allen University, where he was known as a serious student committed to his education. While at Allen, he balanced coursework, part-time jobs and membership in student organizations like the National Association of Black Accountants and the National Black MBA Association.

Upon graduation, Sanders returned to Charleston and, while holding two jobs, began making plans to attend graduate school. In his spare time, he enjoyed writing rap lyrics and poetry and participated in poetry slams. At the time of his death, he was in the process of publishing his own book of poetry titled “Tragedy,” addressing themes of violence, poverty and inequality. Sanders played the keyboard and other instruments and enjoyed skateboarding and acting.

When Sanders wasn’t studying or working, he could often be found at Emanuel AME Church studying the Bible with his tight-knit community of family and friends.

Sanders’ final act was one of selfless heroism. As gunshots rang out at Emanuel, he stepped in front of his great aunt, Susie Jackson, giving his life in an attempt to save hers. Fittingly, Sanders’ and Jackson’s lives were celebrated in a joint funeral, which was attended by hundreds of mourners including Gov. Nikki Haley.



THE REV. DANIEL L. SIMMONS SR.

The Rev. Daniel Simmons Sr. was a gentleman, a leader, an avid proponent of education and a servant of Christ. A fourth generation preacher who worked diligently to expand the AME Church, he was affectionately recognized as the spiritual heart of the Seventh Episcopal District, earning him the name “Super Simmons from the Super Seventh.”

Simmons and his wife Annie Graham Simmons had two children, Daniel L. Simmons Jr. and Rose Ann Simmons. He earned a bachelor’s in education administration from Allen University in Columbia, a masters in social work from the University of South Carolina and a Master of Divinity with a concentration in Leadership and Theology from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia.

Simmons was senior pastor at eight different AME churches over thirty years and dedicated his life to teaching the truth of God’s Word. He wanted everyone to experience a vibrant relationship with Christ and walk in God’s will. Simmons initiated new programs and outreach ministries, enhancing the communities he served as pastor. At Greater Zion AME Church in Awendaw, he launched the first hot meal program, open to all citizens. After serving his country honorably in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War, Simmons was dually employed by the S.C. Department of Corrections as a teacher and a counselor. Simmons also worked with Greyhound Bus Company as one of the first black drivers hired during the early 1970s, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, Department of Veterans Affairs and the Vocational Rehabilitation Center.

After retiring in 2013, he was asked by the Rev. Clementa Pinckney to join the ministerial staff of Emanuel Church, where he continued to teach and help develop the church’s leadership team. Simmons was a member of several organizations, including Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity and Capital City Lodge No. 47.

Simmons stressed the importance of education to his children, grandchildren and other young people. Simmons loved jazz music and the visual arts. He was a man of great intelligence, determination and responsibility, qualities that enabled him to leave a legacy of faith and compassion.



MYRA SINGLETON QUARLES THOMPSON

Charleston native Myra Singleton Quarles Thompson joined Emanuel AME Church as a young child, beginning a lifetime of devotion to the church and its members. Her deep faith and love for the church's members led her to study to become a minister, and just before her death, her preaching certificate was renewed.

One of 16 children, Thompson attended Livingstone College where she was a member of the marching band. She later transferred to Benedict College where she earned a bachelor's degree in English education and became a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority. She furthered her education at the Citadel Military College of Charleston where she earned a Master of Education in reading and a second degree of Master of Education in school counseling. Thompson was a retired Charleston County school counselor and teacher where she taught at Brentwood Middle School in North Charleston for many years.

She was married to the Rev. Anthony B. Thompson, vicar of Holy Trinity Reformed Episcopal Church in Charleston. Her two children, Kevin Singleton and Denise Quarles, and two grandchildren were her pride and joy.

Thompson was widely known among her fellow church members for her passionate devotion to the maintenance of the church in which she grew up. As a long-standing member of Emanuel's property committee, Thompson took a personal interest in caring for the church facilities. From replacing light bulbs in sanctuary chandeliers, to helping with the renovation of Emanuel's parsonage, Thompson was involved in helping ensure that Emanuel's physical condition reflected the spiritual condition of members.

Thompson's funeral service was held at Emanuel Church. Hundreds of people wrapped around the Calhoun Street block and crowded the sanctuary to pay their respects to the family. Among those in attendance were U.S. Sen. Tim Scott, Gov. Nikki Haley, Charleston Mayor Joe Riley, and David A. Swinton, president of Benedict College.



REV. SHARONDA COLEMAN-SINGLETON

Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, an assistant pastor at Mother Emanuel AME Church, spent her life making a lasting difference in the lives of young people.

A native of Newark, NJ, where she graduated from Vailsburg High School in 1987, Coleman-Singleton enrolled at S.C. State University to pursue a bachelor's degree in speech pathology and audiology. Outside the classroom, she was a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority and an award-winning hurdler. She helped propel the SCSU track-and-field team to a conference championship. After completing her undergraduate studies, she went on to attend Montclair State University and obtained a master's degree in speech language and pathology.

Coleman-Singleton began her professional career as a speech and language pathologist in schools in Georgia, before moving to Goose Creek High School in 2008. Her sports background and love of young people quickly led her to also become the head coach of the girls' track-and-field team. Over the next seven years she gained a school-wide reputation for encouraging, mentoring and determinedly advocating for the young women she coached.

A faithful Christian, Coleman-Singleton was a lay minister at Mother Emanuel, working with the youth and young adult ministries.

But Coleman-Singleton's greatest pride was her family, especially her sons and daughter: Christopher, Caleb and Camryn Singleton. A doting mother, she was involved in their education and enjoyed cheering on the Gators at Goose Creek events, as well as for the Buccaneers of Charleston Southern University, where Christopher went on to play baseball.

Thank you to all who gathered this evening

We give thanks to Bishop Ortiz for her support of the Racial Equity Team and the rostered ministers and lay leaders who served as additional facilitators in tonight's breakout rooms.

We invite you into further discussion through the Metro D.C. Synod Racial Equity Team Sacred Grounds initiative.

Learn more at: <http://metrodcclca.org/ministries-2/racialequity> and <http://metrodcclca.org/sacredground>.

Racial Equity Team Members

The Rev. Karen Brau, Co-Leader

The Rev. Franklin Morales, Co-Leader

The Rev. Lamar Bailey, Synod Staff Liaison

The Rev. Heidi Eickstadt

The Rev. Renata Eustis

The Rev. Tom Knoll

The Rev. Amy Reumann

The Rev. Angela Shannon

Jennifer Slagle-Peck

Shannon Spence

Ted Steege

Jon Summerlot

Duke Taylor

Biographies of the Emanuel 9

Grateful borrowed from <https://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/church-shooting-victims/4/>.

Pictures from <https://emanuelnine.org>.