

Church shooting trial and after

Dylann Roof found guilty of killing nine black parishioners; death penalty on the table

CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP) — Dylann Roof was convicted Thursday of last year's grisly massacre at a historic black church that left nine parishioners slain at a Bible study. A federal jury found Roof guilty of all 33 counts, including hate crimes and obstruction of religion. Jurors took less than two hours to reach their verdict.

Here's what has happened and what to expect.

Life or death

After a break for the holidays, jurors will reconvene Jan. 3 to hear more testimony and decide whether Roof gets the death penalty or life in prison for the June 2015 slaughter at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church.

The defense put up no witnesses during the seven-day trial. They tried to present evidence about Roof's mental state, but U.S. District Judge Richard Gergel ruled that had nothing to do with Roof's guilt or innocence.

Roof told the judge again Thursday he wants to act as his own attorney during the penalty phase.

Roof's hatred

Prosecutors say Roof wanted to start a race war. His two-hour confession to the FBI, about 17 hours after the shootings, seemed key to jurors' deliberation. One hour in, they asked to rehear the videotaped confession.

Roof also documented his hate in his journal, found in his car when he was arrested.

Roof believed segregation needed to return to keep white people from falling to the level of blacks. It had other bogus claims that whites were naturally the superior race and that blacks liked slavery.

Testimony in the case opened and closed with two of the massacre's survivors.

Polly Sheppard said Roof told her he wanted to leave her alive to tell the world why he attacked a historic African-American church.

"I have to. I have to," Sheppard recalled Roof telling her. "You're raping our women and taking over the nation."

Her 911 call was the final evidence jurors heard.



A man walks past flowers and a wreath at a door of Emanuel A.M.E. Church on Thursday. Dylann Roof was convicted Thursday in the slaughter of nine black church members who had welcomed him to their Bible study.

Final arguments

In closing arguments, Assistant U.S. Attorney Nathan Williams mocked Roof for calling himself brave in his hate-filled journal and during his confession. Williams said the real bravery came from the victims who tried to stop him as he fired 77 bullets.

His 50-minute closing argument filled the court with tension. At times, the prosecutor raised his voice, saying Roof was a cold, calculated killer. Some family members of victims dabbed their eyes with tissues, and jurors appeared emotional when Williams, after apologizing to them, showed crime scene photos of each person killed alongside a small picture of them while alive.

Defense lawyer David Bruck conceded Roof committed the slayings, but he asked jurors to look into his head and see what caused him to become so full of hatred, calling him a suicidal loner who never grasped the gravity of what he did.

Roof was just imitating what he saw on the internet and believed he had to give his life to "a fight to the death between white people and black people that only he" could see and act on, Bruck said.

Emotional trial

The trial opened with testimony from Felicia Sanders, one of the three survivors, telling the jury she swished

her legs in the blood of her dead aunt and dying son so Roof would think she was dead.

Sanders' 11-year-old granddaughter also survived. Sanders said she held the girl so tight so she wouldn't scream that she thought she might suffocate her.

"He said he was going to kill himself," Sanders said. "I was counting on that. There's no place on Earth for him other than the pit of hell."

Testimony from survivor Polly Sheppard closed the prosecution's case. Sheppard called 911 shortly after Roof opened fire. The heart-wrenching call was played for jurors. It started with a prayer and a plea for help: "Please answer. Oh, God."

Meanwhile, Roof's mother was in the audience for opening statements. She collapsed as court adjourned for a break, and defense lawyers said she suffered a heart attack.

Another trial next year

Roof faces a second death-penalty trial early next year in state court, where he faces nine counts of murder. A state judge is ordering 600 prospective jurors to report to the Charleston County Courthouse on Jan. 17 for initial screening. His order says the trial will begin on or after Jan. 30. It's not clear when the federal case will wrap up. For now, Roof has attorneys representing him in the state case.

BOARDMAN'S LIMY PASTOR Above the snowline

You may have read about the pastor in a mall in Texas waiting to tell children in line to see Santa Claus that Santa did not exist. This is a pastor who has no decency, I'm afraid. Faith in things unseen is a mark of a Christian, and all of us know that LOVE (in capitals) does exist and we know it when we see it or even when we do not see it. Santa Claus is a saint dressed in red, symbolizing burning passion for the little ones' happiness. His only body is our common body, as we each sometimes become him for a while.



I can also vouch personally. There is a real embodied Santa Claus! I met Santa Claus about a decade and a few months ago, in Alaska. His name was Joseph Davis, at the time. Maybe there is another one now in the same place.

I met Joe in Anchorage when I was giving a talk there and he told me of his side job. For a number of years Joe had the job of helping gather toys with the Marines for the children's benefit in Alaska. Once he gathered the toys with the Marines he then had put on his Santa suit, loaded a sleigh with toys and had delivered the toys to the village of "North Pole" — which, I guess, would make him an official Santa. How could he not be the Number One Santa?

There are many Santas in the world, some secret Santas, some in suits who keep their own counsel, as well as those clothed in the flashy red elf suits. With sleighs and reindeer, with vans and airplanes, there are Santas who run around in hospitals as well as trudge knee-deep in snow in villages in deep winter in arctic night.

I often think how we should have a public office in each state that we could elect a Santa to serve for a year, and be an ombudsperson for the children. They would have the power to make state agencies act in the best interest of children and have very strong powers of arrest for those who abuse children. They would have a budget for children who have no special things to receive the toys they do not have: bears, bunnies, Star Wars characters, etc.

I remember meeting one young lady who had been abused in each of the foster families she had been in, and only escaped on her emancipation. When she went into an abusive adult relationship her children were taken from her. This is a darkness that can be alleviated by those who care, rather than by those who see things made of the darkness. God is just one human heart away from freeing sad children.

The snow has been falling this week, and while we think of Jesus' arrival as a child abused by others around him, uncaring innkeepers, etc., let us ask that we be given a mantle of Santa Claus ourselves that we can reach out to the children in darkness, in land without sun, where we can gather a harvest of happiness for just one child if we can.

The kingdom is built one human heart at a time. Be a Santa!

Colin Brown is the pastor of Boardman's Good Shepherd Lutheran Church on Locust Road.

Islamic State turned Mosul into city of terror, darkness

By LORI HINNANT Associated Press

MOSUL, Iraq — She survived the first stone that struck her, then the second.

One of the Islamic State group's fighters bent down and pressed his fingers to the side of her neck to check her pulse.

As her horrified neighbors watched, extremists threw a third stone at the young woman, who was accused of adultery. That one killed her.

It was, for those who witnessed it, the cruelest moment in Mosul's descent into fear, hunger and isolation under 2 1/2 years of IS rule. Before the militants' takeover, Iraq's second-largest city was arguably the most multicultural place in the country, with a Sunni Muslim Arab majority but also thriving communities of Kurds, Shiites, Christians and Yazidis. Together, they had created Mosul's distinct identity, with its own cuisine, intellectual life and economy.

But the Islamic State group turned Mosul into a place of literal and spiritual darkness.

It began with promises of order and of a religious utopia that appealed to some. But over time, the militants turned crueler, the economy crumbled under the weight of war and shortages set in. Those who resisted watched neighbors who joined IS turn prosperous and vindictive. Parents feared for the brainwashing of their children. By the end, as Iraqi troops besieged Mosul, the militants hanged suspected spies from lampposts, and residents were cut off from the world.

The woman's killing in Mosul's Samah district shook to the core those in the crowd who were forced to watch.

Several witnesses described to The Associated Press how the woman and her alleged lover were paraded blindfolded through the streets. The militants summoned everyone they could find to watch. It was in August, after the militants had lost strongholds in other parts of Iraq and Syria, prompting them to heighten their repression.

"Still not dead," Samira Hamid recalled the militant pronouncing after he checked the woman's pulse, before the lethal blow to her head. The man accused of being her lover was flogged 150 times and forced to go to Syria to fight in IS ranks.

Another witness, Sarmad Raad, found recalling the killing nearly unbearable.

"I shut down," the 26-year-old said, "I just lost my mind."

The AP interviewed dozens of residents who have left Mosul since Iraqi troops began retaking outlying districts last month. They described life in a city that has been virtually sealed off from the outside under the rule of the Islamic State group. They spoke from Mosul's edges and from the refugee camps that are their homes for the foreseeable future, even as smoke rose and artillery boomed from nearby front lines.

For many among Mosul's Sunni Arabs, rule by the Sunni militants of IS initially seemed a respite from what they considered the heavy hand of Iraq's Shiite-led central government in Baghdad.

As Iraqi soldiers vanished in those first few weeks, people were simply happy to see hated security checkpoints pulled down and traffic moving smoothly along streets lined with low, pale buildings. Sunni insurgents have long been active in Mosul, and Baghdad's clampdowns against them usually only fueled residents' distrust.

But even as families strolled in the parks and shops stayed open, signs emerged that this group of fighters was unlike past insurgents who had worked strictly underground. They were staying put: Trucks began hauling office furniture to various government buildings, according to a blog called "Mosul Eye," written by a resident who took on the role of city historian.

Several weeks later, the group declared its "caliphate" stretching across its territory in Syria and Iraq.

Within a month, the homes of Christians and other minorities were tagged with official stickers — for "statistical purposes," IS officials said, according to Mosul Eye. Christians and Shiites soon fled, leaving their marked homes and belongings behind.

Kurds were soon targeted as well.

"If you turned in a Kurdish family, they gave you a car," said Hassan Ali Mustapha, a retired prison guard. He said he moved into a home deserted by a Kurdish family, after the family asked him through a mutual friend to do so to keep Islamic State from taking it over.

Worship Community

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
(Disciples of Christ)
215 N Main • Pendleton, OR 97801

Behind These Stone Walls
Beat the Hearts of Some of the Warmest
Most Sincere, Most Caring People in Pendleton!
We Invite You to Come Get Acquainted!

Sunday Worship: 10:40am
Sunday School: 9:30am
Office: 276-5358 M-F, 8:30-12:30
www.fccpendleton.org

The Salvation Army
Center for Worship & Service

Sunday Worship Service
9:30 - Sunday School
10:30 - Worship Service

Wednesday Bible Study
5:30 Family Fellowship Meal 6:00 Bible Study

COME AS YOU ARE
150 SE EMIGRANT
(541)276-3369

Faith Center Church

Worshiping God Loving People
108 S. Main • 276-9569
Sunday Worship 10:30 am
Sr. Pastor,
Ray O'Grady
pendletonfaithcenter.org

Community Presbyterian Church

14 Martin Drive,
Umatilla, OR
922-3250

Worship: 10 AM
Sunday School at 11:30

Seventh-Day Adventist Church

Saturday Services
Pendleton
1401 SW Goodwin Place
276-0882
Sabbath School 9:20 am
Worship Service 10:45 am

PILOT ROCK BAPTIST CHURCH

585 SW Birch
Pilot Rock, OR 97786
(541) 443-2500
prbcnline.blogspot.com

Sunday School: 9:30 am
Worship Service: 10:45 am
Kids' Club: 6:00 pm
Wednesday Services:
Youth Group: 7:00 pm

Grace Baptist Church

555 SW 11th, Hermiston
567-9497
Nursery provided for all services

Sunday School - 9:30 AM
Worship - 10:45 AM
6:00 pm
Wed Prayer & Worship -
7:00 PM
"Proclaiming God's word,
growing in God's grace"

GRACE AND MERCY LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

OPEN HEARTS - OPEN DOOR
www.graceandmercyelca.org
Sunday Worship 8:45 a.m.
Sunday School 10:00 a.m.
(Nursery Provided)
Fellowship, Refreshments & Sunday School
Check Out our Facebook Page or Website
For More Information

541-289-4535
Tom Lynch, Pastor
Grace and Mercy Lutheran Church, ELCA
191 Gladys Ave. • P.O. Box 1108
Hermiston, Oregon 97838

St. Johns Episcopal Church

Join Us
On Our Journey
With Jesus.

Scripture, Tradition and Reason
Family service 9am Sunday
N.E. Gladys Ave. & 7th, Hermiston
Fr. Dan Ledgard, Priest, PH: 567-6672
We are an all inclusive Church who welcomes all.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

-Presbyterian Church (USA)-
201 SW Dorion Ave.
Pendleton

Service of Worship - 10:00 am
Children's Sunday School -
10:20 am
Fellowship - 11:00 am
www.pendletonpresbyterian.com

**Open Hearted...
Open Minded**

Redeemer Episcopal Church

241 SE Second St. Pendleton
(541)276-3809
www.pendtonepiscopa.org

Sunday Holy Communion 9:00 a.m.
Wednesday Holy Communion Noon
Weekly Adults Spiritual Life Group
All Are Welcome

Peace Lutheran Church ELCA

210 NW 9th, Pendleton
Join us Sundays

9:30 am Sunday Worship
10:30 am Fellowship
11:00 am Sunday School
& Adult Class

~Come and be at Peace~
on 1290 KUMA noon each Sunday

Come meet Jesus at PENDLETON BAPTIST CHURCH

3202 SW Nye Ave Pendleton, OR
541-276-7590

Sunday Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Sunday Bible Classes 9:45 AM
Sunday Youth Group 6:00 PM
Mon. Community Women's Study
9:30 AM & 6 PM
Awana Kids Club (K-6th grade)
Wed Men's Study 6 PM
MOPS meeting the 1st Thur of the Month 6 PM

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

in Mission for Christ LCMC

Bible Study.....9:00 AM
Sunday Worship.....10:30 AM

**Red Lion Hotel
(Oregon Trail Room)
www.faihtpendleton.org**

First United Methodist Church
Pendleton/Hermiston

352 SE 2nd Street, Pendleton
Sunday Worship 9am
541-276-2616

Worship Broadcast on KUMA 1290 @ 11am
191 E. Gladys Ave, Hermiston
Sunday Worship 11am
541-567-3002

Worship Livestream at herfumc.com
Open Hearts, Open Minds,
Open Doors
Rev. Dr. Jim Pierce, pastor

PENDLETON FIRST
CHURCH OF GOD

FIRST SERVICE 8:30 AM
SECOND SERVICE 10:30 AM

712 SW 27TH ST.
541-276-1894
www.fcogpendleton.com

Living Word Christian Center

Sunday Worship 10:00am

Wednesday Bible Study 6:00pm

Youth Classes:
Nursery - 5th grade Sun & Wed
Jr & Sr High Discipleship Program Wed

Overcomer's Outreach
Tuesday at 6:00pm - Annex
A Christ-centered, 12-Step
Recovery Support Group

Pastor Sharon Miller
401 Northgate, Pendleton
541-278-8082
www.livingwordcc.com

a place to belong
Pendleton First

INVITING ENRICHING
INVOLVING EMPOWERING

SUNDAY SERVICES
AM Celebration-10:00am
AM Kids Place -10:00am
The Connection--6:00pm
Groups for all ages:
Adults, Children, Youth, & College

Thursdays
Celebrate Recovery-6:00pm
Celebration Place-6:00pm
Other Groups Available Weekly

For more info visit
WWW.PENDLETONFIRST.COM
1911 SE Court Ave
541-276-6417
Assembly of God Church

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church LCMC

Sunday worship at
11:00 AM

420 Locust St. • Boardman, OR
541-481-6132
Colin Brown, Pastor



To share your worship times call Terri Briggs 541-278-2678