

In Memoriam



Bob Buckhorn, Mayor

WHEREAS, nationally, our hearts are in collective mourning as we gather across the country to recognize the tragedy and loss of lives on June 17, 2015, at Historic Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, and the citizens of Tampa, Florida join in unity and solidarity as we grieve for the loss of these precious and devoted individuals; and

WHEREAS, Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, known as *Mother Emanuel* was founded in 1816 by Reverend Morris Brown and Denmark Vesey, is the oldest African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in the Southern States, and in its early years suffered great discrimination including many members executed, the deliberate burning of the Church, and the congregation was forced to worship in secret until the end of the Civil War in 1865, and thereafter the Church was rebuilt under architect Robert Vesey, son of Denmark Vesey and it has been a vital part of the Charleston community for almost two centuries; and

WHEREAS, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, with the motto *God Our Father, Christ Our Redeemer, the Holy Spirit Our Comforter, Humankind Our Family*, grew from the Free African Society in 1787, and Emanuel AME Church is a solid and inspiring institution that has been committed to the mission of the AME Church Connectional Lay Organization of ministering to the social, and physical development of all people for almost two centuries; and

WHEREAS, the congregation of Emanuel AME Church is dedicated to seeking out and saving the lost, serving the needy through preaching the gospel and service, and the loss of these nine valued members who demonstrated their faith, devotion to the Church, love of others and their community will have a deep and profound impact on all who knew, respected and loved them; and

WHEREAS, the passing of these faithful, active followers of Christ, who lived their lives in a manner that touches each of us with their great example of love and acceptance, leaves a deep void and has created a communal sadness throughout the nation; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Tampa join with the Coalition of Clergy for a Prayer Vigil on Tuesday, June 23, 2015 at 7:00 P.M. at Allen Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church in Tampa, Florida, allowing the AME community and the Tampa community at-large to share their sorrow, receive comfort, and pray for the individuals who have been called home to God too soon, the city of Charleston and all mankind, and for peace, unity, acceptance and tolerance.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Buckhorn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Tampa, Florida, do hereby urge all citizens to join me in publicly expressing sorrow and heartfelt condolences to the Families of **The Honorable Reverend Clementa C. Pinckney**, South Carolina State Senator and Pastor of Emanuel AME Church, **Reverend Depayne Middleton-Doctor**, **Sharonda Coleman-Singleton**, **Cynthia Hurd**, **Susie Jackson**, **Ethel Lee Lance**, **Tywanza Sanders**, **Reverend Dr. Daniel L. Simmons, Sr.**, and **Myra Thompson**, and the congregation of Emanuel AME Church, and to express our hopes that they will take solace in their many cherished memories of these exceptional individuals and the impact of their lives on our nation.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 23rd day of June, 2015.



Mayor

