



La Voz de Esperanza

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- Opinions expressed in La Voz are not necessarily those of the Esperanza Center.

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Articles due by the 8th of each month

Policy Statements

* We ask that articles be visionary, progressive, instructive & thoughtful. Submissions must be literate & critical; not sexist, racist, homophobic, violent, or oppressive & may be edited for length.

* All letters in response to Esperanza activities or articles in La Voz will be considered for publication. Letters with intent to slander individuals or groups will not be published.

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Guest Editorial: Rachel Jennings

The Struggle Against White Supremacy: The Murders at Emanuel AME Church

Today is Juneteenth, the date when slaves in Texas learned of the Emancipation Proclamation, which pronounced them to be free. On June 19, 2015, are African Americans free? Where is freedom for Rev. Clementa Pinckney, 41; Tywanza Sanders, 26; Cynthia Hurd, 54; Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, 45; Myra Thompson, 59; Ethel Lance, 70; Rev. Daniel Simmons, 74; Rev. DePayne Middleton-Doctor, 49; and Susie Jackson, 87? They were six women and three men, all African American. On June 17, Dylann Storm Roof murdered all of them inside Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina.



For an entire hour, Roof, a young white man whom they did not know, sat among the victims at Bible study before opening fire with a semi-automatic pistol he had received for his twenty-first birthday. June 17, the anniversary of an 1822 slave revolt led by Denmark Vesey, was the date of the premeditated murders. Roof must have knowingly chosen to murder church members on that date. Since teaching slaves to read had once been illegal, attacking a Bible study group contributed to Roof's heinous symbolism. As punishment for their failed revolt to free slaves, Vesey and five slave revolutionists were hanged. Since Vesey was a founding member of Emanuel AME Church, Charlestonians burned the historic church to the ground as further retribution.

Gov. Nikki Haley of South Carolina and Fox News commentators have refused to identify terrorism or white supremacist ideology as the motive for the murders. They



have made clear, too, their opposition to gun control. NRA boardmember Charles Cotton has blamed murder victim Rev. Clementa Pinckney, a South Carolina state senator, for his own death and the deaths of the other eight church members. Rev. Pinckney, according to Cotton, should have supported concealed carry laws and encouraged churchgoers to carry guns. Such obscene criticism of the dead, however, does not mean that conservatives have gone soft. Today, Gov. Haley has announced that she supports the death penalty for Roof. I am appalled and sickened. When will we in this country stop the bloodshed and mayhem? Killing Roof as Vesey was killed will not atone for America's sins. Each of us must ask what we can do to end racism, white supremacist violence, and carnage. ♦

Editor's note: The violence that we so often write about in La Voz goes unabated. Whether against communities of color, against women, against our homes, against Mother Earth or against our spirit—we must continue to fight violence in the most creative and loving ways possible so that we, ourselves, are not consumed by it. Liliانا Wilson, Chilean artist, has found a way to counter violence through her art. Having lived through the dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet and experienced violence, deaths and disappearances, Liliانا found a way to offer hope in the wake of violence by painting and drawing beautiful images filled with political messages—but that offer us hope. Join us at the Esperanza for Liliانا Wilson's Ofrenda, an offering of her artwork that exhibits a lifetime of work on Saturday, July 11th at 7pm. — G. Ramírez

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VOZ VISION STATEMENT: La Voz de Esperanza speaks for many individual, progressive voices who are gente-based, multi-visioned and milagro-bound. We are diverse survivors of materialism, racism, misogyny, homophobia, classism, violence, earth-damage, speciesism and cultural and political oppression. We are recapturing the powers of alliance, activism and healthy conflict in order to achieve interdependent economic/spiritual healing and fuerza. La Voz is a resource for peace, justice, and human rights, providing a forum for criticism, information, education, humor and other creative works. La Voz provokes bold actions in response to local and global problems, with the knowledge that the many risks we take for the earth, our body, and the dignity of all people will result in profound change for the seven generations to come.