

PRESS RELEASE:

Contact – Renee Rallos
Email – rrallos@wfae.org
Phone – 704.926.9314



WFAE Produces 60-Minute Documentary About Charleston Shooting
Eyes Closed in Prayer explores how victims' families and others are trying to move forward

Charlotte, N.C. (Jan. 13, 2017) – “June 17th was a Wednesday. That night, as she always did, Cynthia Hurd went to Bible study. She was not alone. Among the familiar faces of the congregation, people she knew well, was a stranger. When he came to the fellowship hall he was greeted with kindness.

He sat and he listened. And he waited.

When the parishioners all closed their eyes in prayer, he pulled out a gun and opened fire. Nine, including Cynthia Hurd, were murdered that night.

We know now Dylann Roof will die for his crime. A jury unanimously sentenced him to death after just 3 hours of deliberation.

But while Dylann Roof started this story, his sentence or even his death will not end it.

Those touched by this tragedy are still coming to terms with their loss.”

That is an excerpt from the opening of *Eyes Closed in Prayer*, a special WFAE presentation that tells the story of the tragic events at Charleston's Emanuel AME Church and the complicated aftermath. Featuring the voices of family members of the victims and others, *Eyes Closed in Prayer* examines race in America, the power of symbols, and the power of love and hate.

Eyes Closed in Prayer includes interviews with former North Carolina state senator Malcolm Graham about his sister, Cynthia Graham Hurd; Charlotte resident Bethane Middleton-Brown about her sister, Rev. DePayne Middleton-Doctor; and Herb Frazier, co-author of the book *We Are Charleston*.

Eyes Closed In Prayer will air several times on WFAE:

- Friday, January 20, at 8 p.m.
- Saturday, January 21, 2 p.m.
- Sunday, January, 22, at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Photos of Glenn, interviewees and WFAE news coverage available upon request.

About the production team:

Host: Gwendolyn Glenn joined WFAE in 2015. Her reporting at WFAE has included the Randall Kerrick trial; the Dylann Roof trial in Charleston; and crime. She was a producer for NPR's *All Things Considered* and a reporter for the Baltimore Sun Media Group and *The Washington Post*.

(more)

WFAE

Eyes Closed in Prayer

Page Two

Producer: Tom Bullock is WFAE's political reporter. His reporting at WFAE has included the controversy surrounding House Bill Two; the North Carolina governor's race; and the heated debate in the South Carolina legislature over the Confederate flag. Bullock worked at NPR for 15 years before coming to WFAE in 2014.

Editor: Greg Collard has been WFAE's news director since 2008. During his tenure the station has won three national Edward R. Murrow Awards. Before coming to WFAE, Collard had roles as reporter, editor and producer at West Virginia Public Broadcasting.

About WFAE

Celebrating its 35th anniversary, WFAE 90.7 FM is a non-profit public radio station, licensed to the University Radio Foundation Inc. With 90.3 FM in Hickory, 106.1 FM in Laurinburg and 93.7 FM in Southern Pines, WFAE serves over 200,000 weekly listeners with an award-winning lineup of local, national and international news, and weekend entertainment programs from NPR®, American Public Media, Public Radio International and the Public Radio Exchange.

###