



Talley, Kimble <kimble_talley@nps.gov>

Reflections on the tragic events in Charleston, South Carolina

1 message

Director, NPS <nps_director@nps.gov>
To: NPS All Employees <nps_all_employees@nps.gov>

Mon, Jun 22, 2015 at 11:25 AM

June 19, 2015

Memorandum

To: All Employees
From: Director /s/ Jonathan B. Jarvis
Subject: Reflections on the tragic events in Charleston, South Carolina

This week, another mass shooting in Charleston, South Carolina tragically took the lives of 9 people, rocking our nation and raising yet unanswered questions about gun violence, terrorism, and race in America.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims' families and with our NPS family affected by this vicious attack, particularly those at Fort Sumter National Monument and Charles Pinckney National Historic Site. While we are thankful that no NPS employees were killed or injured in this attack, some of our employees attended the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, which is only a half mile from Fort Sumter, and others have family and friends who worship there. For all of them, this is a devastating tragedy for their community.

As we have seen with other recent tragedies, national parks can be places of healing and reconciliation for communities torn apart by violence.

Last year, Michael Brown was killed on August 9th by a police officer in Ferguson, Missouri, and in response, hundreds of Americans found their way to the Gateway Arch at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis to revive our nation's civil rights debate through speeches, rallies and protests.

When the protests delayed the opening of schools for nine days in the Ferguson Florissant School District, park staff joined volunteers and educators in the area to provide educational opportunities for elementary through middle school students at the Ferguson Public Library. The programs, which included Dred Scott trials, one room school house programs, and various activities, allowed students to discuss citizenship and freedom.

Many of our NPS sites and programs are dedicated to telling the stories of our on-going struggle for freedom and equality. As we mourn this terrible act of violence in Charleston, I want to recognize this role that we play to help our nation heal. Thank you to every employee who has answered a challenging question about the history of civil rights as we share it or has facilitated an opportunity for community members to express their first amendment rights. This is an essential part of our

7/30/2015

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR Mail - Reflections on the tragic events in Charleston, South Carolina

responsibility to the special places in our care, and to the civic process that makes this nation great.

I hope you will join me in sending our love and support to the people of Charleston during this difficult time.