

## Charleston Church Shooter Facing the Death Penalty



**Summary:** *The Justice Department and the state of South Carolina are both planning on seeking the death penalty against Dylann Roof, the shooter that killed nine people in a Charleston church.*

The Justice Department is seeking the death penalty against the Charleston church shooter Dylann Roof. Attorney General Loretta Lynch said in a statement, "The nature of the alleged crime and the resulting harm compelled this decision." Roof is accused of killing nine black members of a church in Charleston, South Carolina a year ago.

Roof is currently facing federal hate crime charges for the June shooting at Emanuel AME Church. He has also been charged with nine counts of murder in South Carolina, which has already announced they will seek the death penalty. The state wants their case to go to trial first.

Read [Texas Reaches 500 Executions after Reviving Death Penalty](#).

The shooting made way for more open discussions about race and the removal of Confederate flags from public places. Roof, who is white, had photos of him waving the Confederate flag and also burning or disrespecting the American flag. Evidence against him also includes his writings for racial violence.

Lynch said when first announcing the hate charges a month after the shooting that, "To carry out these twin goals of fanning racial flames and exacting revenge, Roof further decided to seek out and murder African-Americans because of their race." Roof opened fire inside a church with mainly black members.

Read [Friend of Charleston Church Shooter Faces Multiple Charges](#) to learn more.

Despite the Justice Department seeking the death penalty, federal executions are rare. The last federal defendant to be put to death was in 2003. Roof's attorneys said their client will plead guilty if the death penalty is taken off the table. His friend Joey Meek, who plead guilty to lying to federal authorities, has agreed to help the prosecution against Roof.

Do you think Dylann Roof should be put to death? Tell us your feelings in the comments below.

To learn more about issues arising with death penalty cases, read [U.S. Supreme Court Rules Death Penalty Is Constitutional](#).

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/us/2016/05/24/justice-dept-seeking-death-penalty-in-charleston-church-massacre-case.html>

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