

Love stronger than hate, Charleston victim's son says

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CHARLESTON, S.C. (BP)—Less than 24 hours after his mother was shot and killed during a church prayer meeting, Charleston Southern University sophomore Chris Singleton stood before television cameras and declared, “Love is always stronger than hate.”

Flanked by coaches and teammates, Singleton, who plays college baseball, recalled his mother's example of showing love to others.



A prayer vigil for the shooting victims at Emanuel A.M.E. Church in Charleston, S.C., conducted at the nearby Morris Brown African Methodist Episcopal Church. (Creative Commons Photo by Nomader) “If we just love the way my mom would, then hate won’t be anywhere close to what love is,” he said. “My mom was a God-fearing woman. She loved everybody with all her heart.”

Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, 45, was a speech therapist and women’s track-and-field coach at Goose Creek High School outside Charleston. She was one of nine people shot to death June 17 at Emanuel African Methodist

Episcopal Church in downtown Charleston.

Her son recalled a baseball game when he was standing in the on-deck circle. He caught his mother's eye, and she told him she was praying for him.

"Mom, don't you think I already did that?" he asked.

"You can never have too much prayer," she replied.

Answering reporters' questions

Answering reporters' questions, Singleton admitted his knees were "a little weak right now, but I'm trying to stay as strong as I can while I press on."

"I just think about her smile," he said.

Singleton described Emanuel AME Church as a place where he felt like "everybody's grandson."

"This church is such a family," he said. "It's tough times, but our church will get through it. Everybody will press on."

Following the news conference, Singleton's teammates and coaches surrounded him and placed their hands on him while a coach led the group in a prayer. Charleston Southern University is one of three colleges affiliated with the [South Carolina Baptist Convention](#).

Players 'hurting, praying' for Singleton and his family

Baseball Coach Stuart Lake said the players and coaches are hurting and are praying for Singleton and his family.

"Chris' mother was just that parent that, as a coach, you are proud to have as part of your program," he said. "What she brought to our team is immeasurable."

President Jairy Hunter said the university family is “praying for Chris and his family during this painful time. CSU coaches and campus ministers are assisting the Singleton family as they deal with this tragedy.”