

## 6<sup>th</sup> Ward Tragedy and Miracles

On June 6, 2017, an event was perpetrated upon the people of the Willow Creek area that has no equal or precedent. 6-6-17 will be forever etched in the minds of those involved and the caregivers, as life-ending for three people, and life changing for many.

Memorez Rackley, and her 6 -year old son Jase were killed by an enraged 32- year old man whose motive is unclear. He ostensibly had a relationship with the separated woman. Memorez and her husband Dustin were members of the sixth ward. They had been separated for about 4 months.

The event occurred at Alta Canyon Drive in Sandy, maybe 200 yards from Highland Drive and a quarter of a mile from Brookwood Elementary School.

A good Samaritan, who has not wanted to be identified in the media, but is known as Adrienne Miller to her Catholic and neighborhood community, happened along the scene and allowed Memorez and her two boys into her car as the shooter was loudly and angrily insulting Memorez. The shooter rammed Ms. Miller's car to stop it, got out of his truck and shot and killed Memorez and her young son Jase at close range. He also shot Myles in the neck and jaw. Myles was in the back seat with his brother. The shooter then walked around to the front of his truck and shot and killed himself. Before doing so he shot the daughter of Ms. Miller in the leg. She is recovering nicely.

Many children were walking home at the exact time, this being the next to last day of school before summer break. Kathy Peterson, a member of the sixth ward heard the commotion and panic and opened her door to several very frightened children. She said a prayer and sheltered them until help arrived, sometime later. She said she was about to leave her home but is thankful she is present to calm these young hearts and provide refuge. Several of the children were hiding in bushes and in yards and she beckoned them to her home. She is truly a guardian angel.

Then during this period another woman, Fernanda Rosevar, was walking by and immediately leaped into action by getting into the back seat of Ms. Miller's car and held up the body and head of Myles, who was bleeding heavily. An off-duty EMT or paramedic entered the scene and gave her instruction on how to best medically support injured Myles. Fernanda has deep spiritual beliefs and feels she was assigned by higher powers to be at the scene due to her strong nature and sensitive spirit. Like, Kathy Peterson, she was truly called upon to protect Father's children during a horrible and murderous episode. After the crisis was stabilized, neighbors and ward members rallied to begin crisis intervention to those traumatized.

Brent Wilhite and Scott Poelman of the bishopric quickly mobilized resources with the assistance of Bishop David Smith, Sarah Weaver and untold numerous members.

A crisis meeting was held at the Sublette chapel at 9:00pm where all identified needs of the Rackley family and others were addressed. Elder Becerra, an Area Authority, attended this meeting along with two members of the Stake Presidency and Bishop Alan Matheson, who had just returned from a trip.

It was later reported, through Sarah Weaver, that Elder Becerra had informed the Quorum of the Twelve what a high functioning council looked like.

Two days later on June 8, an interfaith meeting was held at the Sublette chapel, attended by Mayor Dolan of Sandy, police chief Thacker, and several pastors and ministers from other denominations, along

with leaders of the Willow Creek Stake, President Kimo Esplin and his counselors, and Bishop Alan Matheson and his counselors. Kent Griffiths of the high council spoke on trauma and grief. Hopeful messages were given by all.

As days pass by, people are healing, the deceased had memorial services, and Dustin Rackley cares for his two surviving sons. People of Willow Creek have supported one another, faith has grown, love for one another has deepened and healing is occurring. The resilience of a faithful and deep believing people serves to help one another and those injured or bereaved. Healing will take time.

In honor of the Rackley family:

Memorez 38 deceased

Jase 6 deceased

Myles 11 shot, but survived

Backlyn 14 not present at the scene

Dustin – father and husband -not present at the scene

And good Samaritan Adrienne Miller not injured, and daughter Mallory – shot in the leg – recovering.

## **COMMUNITY INTER-FAITH MEETING**

### **Visiting Dignitaries**

**June 8, 2017**

#### Sandy City:

1. Mayor Tom Dolan
2. Chief Kevin Thacker
3. Council Member Steve Fairbanks
4. Council member Kris Nicholl
5. Scott Bond, Chief Administrative Officer
6. Chris Edwards, Sandy City

#### Canyon School District:

1. Dr. Jim Briscoe, Canyon School District, Superintendent
2. Nancy Tingey, Canyon School Board, Vice President

We also understand several school principals are in attendance.

#### Interfaith Leaders:

1. Elder Jorge T. Becerra, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
2. President Kimo Esplin, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
3. Bishop Alan Matheson, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
4. Father John Evans, St. Thomas More Parish

5. Father Sam Dinsdale, Blessed Sacrament Parish
6. Pastor Jerod Lowry, Community of Grace Presbyterian Church
7. Pastor Dennis Shaw, Hilltop United Methodist Church
8. Pastor Derek Filley, Sandy Ridge Church

### **Community Inter-faith Meeting Program**

Welcome -- Bishop Alan Matheson (2 minutes)

Invocation – TBD

Remarks – Mayor Tom Dolan (3 minutes)

Remarks – Sarah Weaver (5 minutes)

Remarks – Chief Kevin Thacker (3 minutes)

Remarks – Kent Griffiths, LCSW (10 minutes)

Materials regarding dealing with grief are posted on the Canyon District Website and Sandy PD website.

Counselors will be available after this meeting in the cultural hall (the room behind the chapel)

Remarks – Father John Evans (5 minutes)

Remarks – TBD (2 minutes)

Remarks – TBD Jorge T. Becerra or President Kimo Esplin (5 minutes)

Benediction – TBD Elder Jorge T. Becerra or President Kimo Esplin