

On Deadline: Breaking news and must-read stories

Giffords' husband asks public to 'pray for those who are struggling'

Tom DeLay gets 3 years for role in money-laundering scheme

Jan 10, 2011

Anti-gay church group plans to picket Tucson funerals

10:39 AM

Share

1082

By Douglas Stanglin, USA TODAY

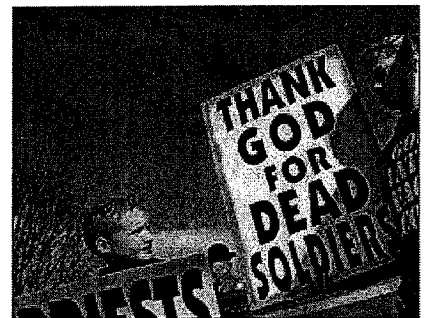
[Comment](#)

[Recommend](#)

Fred W. Phelps, leader of the anti-gay Westboro Baptist Church that regularly pickets the funerals of troops killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, is praising the killings in Tucson and says his group will picket the funerals.

A federal appeals court last year ruled that picketing by the church congregation at funerals is free speech protected by the Constitution. The issue is now before the Supreme Court.

Phelps, in a video on his group's web site, thanks God for the "marvelous work in Tucson," which he says is part of God's vengeance on America. He says his church prays for "more shooters ... more dead."



CAPTION

By Dylan Slagle, Carroll County Times, via AP

The Kansas-based group is made up largely of Phelps' family and has been denounced as a hate group by the Anti-Defamation League and the Southern Poverty Law Center.

More from our colleagues at Faith & Reason.

Its picketing of military funerals reflects a core, anti-gay philosophy that, among other things, links the killing of troops to God's revenge against the military, especially for its "don't ask, don't tell" policy.

(Posted by Doug Stanglin)

Tags:

Westboro Baptist Church

You might also be interested in:

Jurors upset over weak case against teen plan to give him their jury pay (USATODAY.com in On Deadline)

Ted Williams, 'man with golden voice,' bolts from Texas rehab (USATODAY.com in On Deadline)

Debate on free speech — Our view: Does First Amendment protect protests at military funerals? (USATODAY.com in News)

Phelps' Westboro church says funeral protests are protected (USATODAY.com in News)

Selected for you by a sponsor:

10 Things Not to Say to a Coworker (Man of the House)

FEB 25 2011

[Previous](#)[Giffords' husband asks public to 'pray for those who are struggling'](#)

[Next](#)[Tom DeLay gets 3 years for role in money-laundering scheme](#)

To report corrections and clarifications, contact Standards Editor **[Brent Jones](#)**. For publication consideration in the newspaper, send comments to letters@usatoday.com. Include name, phone number, city and state for verification. To view our corrections, go to corrections.usatoday.com.

Guidelines: You share in the USA TODAY community, so please keep your comments smart and civil. Don't attack other readers personally, and keep your language decent. Use the "Report Abuse" button to make a difference. [Read more](#).