



# University of Pittsburgh

*Division of Student Affairs*

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## **Message regarding planned protest by Westboro Baptist Church**

(PITTSBURGH, PA – September 29, 2017) The University is aware of Westboro Baptist Church members' plans to meet on public property near our campus. This group, which originated in Topeka, Kansas, has a history of rhetoric that aggressively targets LGBTQIA individuals, as well as members of the Catholic Church and the U.S. military, among other groups. WBC has staged demonstrations at funerals of veterans, high schools, and on campuses. Both the methods and message of WBC are at odds with our core values of inclusion and respect for all members of our university community.

Despite our disagreement with the group's tactics and messages, the University will respect the First Amendment rights of those who peacefully and legally protest. However, we also will take seriously our role in protecting the safety of our students, staff and faculty and we expect all demonstrators to do the same.