I
congregation, shared a tragic story of a teen
ed by the anti-gay Phelps group; and Rabbi
City Council member Carsten Hohnke;
room-only crowd heard from Ann Arbor
Round Table of Washtenaw County and the
was moderated by Chuck Warpehoski of the
Dearborn mosque.)

13, 2011. The imam
described incidents of harassment and
by Muslim congregations
around the country. (The presentation pre-
the arrest in late January of a Califor-
nia man suspected of planning to bomb a
mosque.)

One of several city-endorsed observances
Religious Freedom Day, the discussion
was moderated by Chuck Warpehoski of the
Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice; the
event was also co-sponsor by the Interfaith
Council for Peace and Justice; the
ship removed them.

Along with the imam, the standing-
room-only crowd heard from Ann Arbor
City Council member Carsten Hohnke;
Reverend Sue Sprolls, whose evangelical
Lord of Light Lutheran Church was target-
ed by the anti-gay Phelps group; and Rabbi
representing Beth Israel
Congregation. Reverend Robert Keefer of
Crossroads Tabernacle Church, a Wiccan
congregation, shared a tragic story of a teen
religious tolerance, respect, and freedom.

The event was disrupted by Blaine Cole-
man and his wife Mozhgan Savabieasfahani,
who loudly marched in late objecting to the
inclusion of a rabbi on the panel. “Don’t
dialogue with Zionists!” they shouted until
library security removed them.

In the audience was Thom Saffold, one
of the original and most persistent members
of the tiny group that targets the synagogue.
Formerly a Baptist minister, Saffold convert-
of the original and most persistent members
of the tiny group that targets the synagogue.

used to Islam at about the time the picketers
started showing up outside Sabbath services
and is now a teacher at the Michigan Islamic
Academy, and contributing columnist for the
national Muslim Observer. Another of the
picketers, Aimee Smith, who dresses as a
Muslim when protesting at the Jew-

Saffold is regarded as one of the more aggressive picketers. He
videotapes synagogue attendees. In 2006 his camerawork provoked
an altercation with an octogenarian visiting from out-of-town for his
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