

Abba's House's Ron Phillips on Chattanooga Shootings: This Is a War

After Mohammad Youssuf Abdulazeez, a 24-year-old Kuwaiti-born gunman, killed four marines and injured three other people, nearly 500 believers flocked to Abba's House to make intercession. Abba's House sits less than 10 minutes away from the site of the deadly Chattanooga, Tennessee, shooting.

"The perpetrator lived within a mile and a half from our church," says Ron Phillips, senior pastor of Abba's House, which is located in the Chattanooga suburb of Hixson, Tennessee. "I got a call from a leader in our police force. We knew way ahead that the four marines were dead. We knew they had been shot many times. We couldn't say anything about it so we began to pray."

Phillips' son, Ronnie, who serves as senior associate pastor at Abba's House, suggested the church open up for prayer to a grieving community. After the lockdown lifted, the doors opened.

People from across the region started trickling into the church at 3:30 p.m. Less than two hours later, over 450 people were crying out to God in the name of Jesus.

"We've never had anything like this happen in Chattanooga," says Ronnie. "We don't expect to have domestic terrorism here. We expect to hear about that in New York or Atlanta. We wanted an outlet for our people to pray, to mourn, to cry."

Abba's House didn't hold a service. No one preached. Light music played in the background. The American flag flew at half staff. There was a counseling team on site to help people process the shock, grief and anger.

"We were praying for the victims' families," Ronnie says. "This was just individual prayer. I was not out front leading it and we didn't want there to be a microphone. It was just a somber place for people to be with the Lord."

Meanwhile, the story of Abdulazeed is still unfolding.

Although *Fox News* tweeted that ISIS claimed responsibility for the shooting, the FBI on Thursday said its preliminary investigation could not tie Abdulazeed to any international terrorist organization.

The FBI is still searching for a motive for the attack, which saw Abdulazeed open fire at two military offices in Chattanooga in an attack officials said could be an act of terrorism. Abdulazeed was shot dead.

Phillips will host a tribute service Sunday morning at Abba's House to honor the fallen soldiers. You can watch it online at .

"This is a war and these soldiers are victims of the war. We will start the service with Taps," Phillips says. "We are going to sing some songs about how we believe our God is bigger. If America prays we can see our nation turn around."

Stay tuned to *Charisma News* for an exclusive follow-up story in which Phillips, author of *Everyone's Guide to Demons and Spiritual Warfare*, discusses the spiritual aspects of these attacks on American soil and where we go from here.

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