



A gathering for public witness can be large and complex or small and simple. It can involve thousands or a group of three or more. It can be something that you plan or something that you join. Even a small group can make a big impact at an event like a budget hearing.

Public witness may be

- A silent vigil held in the area where lawmakers gather.
- A noisy rally held in a public place.
- A witness to a cause at a public hearing. Consider having your church support requests for funding of homeless shelters from your city or county at a budget hearing.

It can be as simple as a short ceremony in front of your church on Sunday remembering homeless people who have died in the past month.

Suggestion to make your gathering more successful:

- Start planning at least two weeks in advance to get the largest group possible.
- If signs are allowed, make some. Banners are even better.
- Have your group wear clothes of the same color, matching t-shirts, hats or large buttons so that you will be easily identified as members of a group who are present for a particular cause.
- If you are at a hearing, have someone sign up to speak for your group. Speakers will need to prepare for the most effective use of their 3-5 minutes. Someone in your group should arrive at the hearing early to sign up before all the speaking slots are taken.
- If you are planning a public event, limit the number of speakers and the time each speaker has to speak, about 5-10 minutes.
- Public gatherings are most successful when they involve a specific action such as a march, a ritual, a gathering of symbols (such as crosses for the number of homeless people who have died in the past year), or a gathering of letters for a representative.
- Invite the media. Contact local television & radio stations and other news outlets to let them know the time, place, and reason for your event (consider sending out a press release). Even a small event can have a big impact in the media.
- Have fun whenever appropriate.