

# 8 Steps to Hold a Powerful Vigil



2023 AFSC Action Hour Resources

1

**MAKE A PLAN** Clarify within your group the purpose and the intended audience of your vigil. Try and choose a strategic location – highly visible to both the media and your intended audience. Ex. a Member of Congress's office, a religious site, a public event, or a community gathering space. Select a time at sunset or after dark so that any lighted signs or candles will make a visual impact. Check if permits or permissions are required for your chosen location.

2

**CHOOSE YOUR VISUAL** Determine the visual impact you want to create. You could provide candles or LED candles for people to hold or place in a shape on the ground (ex. heart, circle, or peace sign). Or you could create signage with the numbers of people killed, wounded, and displaced and place flowers around it. Make your plan with your chosen location in mind. Visualize where people will stand. Reach out to your networks and see what supplies could be donated to create the visual.

3

**GET YOUR MESSAGE OUT** Create a graphic for promotion through social media, local organizations, religious groups, and community message boards. Be sure to include the location, date, time of the event. Tell people what they should bring (ex. candles, signs, flowers).

4

**PLAN A DIVERSE PROGRAM** Plan a program that includes speeches, readings, prayers, poetry, and/or music. Invite speakers who can share insights from or stories about Gaza. Arrange for audio equipment if needed.

5

**KEEP FOLKS SAFE** Ensure the safety of participants by inviting a de-escalation team to surround the vigil. Plan for first-aid in case of emergencies.

6

**ATTRACT MEDIA ATTENTION** Appoint a media spokesperson. This person is responsible for contacting local media, sharing a press release, and following up with media contacts the day of the vigil. They should be comfortable conveying the message and tone of the vigil. Create action resources to share with the media.

7

**TAKE PHOTOS** During the vigil, appoint one or two people to take and post photos and information to social media. If no professional media attend, share photos and a press release with your media contacts after the event.

8

**CALL FOLKS TO ACTION** Always end your vigil with a call to action. Ask your participants and attendees to call Congress and ask for a cease-fire, attend a future event you are planning, or donate to a humanitarian relief effort.

