



Appendix Two

How-To Guide: Planning a Vigil

Why Host a Vigil?

A vigil is a powerful way for the sisters of the Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom, family members, friends and community members to stand together and to pray together in solidarity to inspire and remind us that we are not alone. Vigils show our sisters and our communities that we are united and that our love of one another is stronger than any hate that surrounds us.

Getting Organized: A quick how-to on planning your local vigil

Before planning any event, it's helpful to first define your goals.

- **Purpose:** Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom vigils are meant to affirm the harmony we see in one another. They are a call for prayer to offer courage and support to one another in the face of the hate that surrounds us. We make a strong statement to the greater community when we come together as women united to put an end to the hate, bigotry and prejudice that surrounds us.
- **Audience:** Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom members, their families, friends and community members. Invite local dignitaries, interfaith councils, faith leaders. We encourage Sisterhood member to personally bring colleagues, neighbors, and members from their religious communities to join us in solidarity.



What You Need to Know:

1. **Vigil length.** Keep the expected length and attendance of the vigil at a realistic level. Ideally, the vigil should not exceed one hour
2. **Vigil Location.** A vigil can be held indoors or outside. The location should be strategically determined based upon your community. Identify a location that will have reach the most people for maximum impact. Choose a location that is appropriate to the size of your event. You don't want to be in a room for 80 if your attendance is 10, or vice-versa. If you are outdoors, look for a site with maximum foot and road traffic. Be sure that you have microphones/sound system. This is particularly a challenge if you will be outside.
 - a. Ensure that you are in a location that will be a comfortable setting for all. If you are in a synagogue or mosque, have a welcoming committee to greet all participants and make them feel comfortable. For some, this may be their first time in visiting a synagogue or mosque.
 - b. Contact your local law enforcement to see if they recommend a security detail.
 - c. Make sure you have all the appropriate permissions to be at your desired location.
3. **Materials and equipment.**
 - a. Designate several people to take photos (high resolution photos are important), make banners and welcome signs (the SOSS logo is available). Decide if you want candles. If you are indoors, do you want a projector to show slides?
 - b. Decide whether you want to have a program printed for distribution.
 - c. Decide if you want refreshments. If so, can you get these donated?
 - d. Ensure you have chairs for those who require them.
4. **Leadership.**
 - a. Identify the Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom women who will be the designated leaders of the vigil.
 - b. Ensure that both a Jewish and Muslim sister share in prayer and invite your children to share a message.
 - c. Unless your vigil is silent, identify an emcee.



5. Recruitment—a successful event needs people!

- a. Invite all Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom members, your families, friends and community members to attend. Each member should commit to attending and bringing others.
- b. Identify what would prevent invitees from coming (think weather, time of day etc.). Have a plan in place to avoid any of these obstacles.
- c. Identify networks in your community or place of worship and ask them to email their constituents and post the details on their social media.
- d. Identify prominent public officials/faith leaders who should attend.

6. Publicity.

- a. Publicity is critical. Create a press release based upon the sample in this guide (See Appendix Four).
- b. Write a letter to the editor of your local paper to promote the vigil.
- c. Live feed on Facebook.
- d. Use the hashtag #Rise and Respond in all posts and tweets.

7. Day of event.

- a. Arrive early to check sound equipment, make sure there are chairs, etc.
- b. Create a sign-in sheet for any media and participants.
- c. Greet participants and ask them to sign up for future updates.
- d. Greet reporters/media personnel. Ask them to sign the press sheet and capture their name, media outlet, email address and phone number. We will need this for future events.

8. Follow-up

- a. Send pictures, video and audio recordings to officials and media.
- b. Collect blog posts, pictures and articles about the event.
- c. Post to the Sisterhood national Facebook page and your personal social media.
- d. Use the hashtag #riseandrespond in all posts and tweets.