

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses



The Ridgeway, London, NW7 1RN Telephone: 020 8906 2211

October 21, 2013

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Public witnessing

Dear Brothers:

As in the first century, brothers and sisters are busy preaching the good news of the Kingdom “publicly and from house to house.” (Acts 20:20) Recently, we have received many fine experiences from congregations who have established arrangements for public witnessing using a table or mobile literature carts. You brothers are to be commended for following through on the direction received in the letter to all bodies of elders dated November 24, 2012, regarding witnessing in public places, and the subsequent insert in the July, 2013 *Our Kingdom Ministry*. The purpose of this correspondence is to give further direction regarding the setting up and conducting of public witnessing.

In line with the above, we would ask that brothers responsible for public witnessing be mindful that we do not want to give any “cause for stumbling, so that no fault may be found with our ministry.” (2 Cor. 6:3) Please use discernment when choosing the location of any table or mobile literature cart. As already mentioned, a display should not be placed where it could be, or be perceived to be an obstruction to traffic or an inconvenience to passers-by. Also, in many areas of the country, congregations now share territory. For example, this occurs where there are foreign-language, or sign-language groups and congregations. If your congregation is in this situation, please ensure that there is good communication and cooperation between all groups and congregations participating. We would not want there to be numerous brothers and mobile literature carts all in close proximity to each other, as this may give rise to complaints from the public and/or the local authorities. Therefore, we would suggest that there are no more than two mobile literature carts in one area at any one time. As shown in photographs in our literature, and in video clips on our website, public witnessing should be simple and dignified, bringing praise and honour to our God, Jehovah.

In some locations, brothers have been approached by a person in authority requesting that they move on. Please ensure that brothers are always polite and comply promptly with such demands. (1 Pet. 2:13-17) Usually, it is sufficient to simply move to another area. However, if you find that the matter is becoming more serious, perhaps with warnings or threats of legal action, please contact the branch office immediately for guidance.

With regard to permissions, in our letter to all bodies of elders dated November 24, 2012, it stated: “Before setting up a witnessing table, permission should be obtained from the administrator or manager of the facility or from the appropriate secular authority.” To clarify, this directive specifically refers to setting up public witnessing on *private* property, not on a public highway. Our understanding of the law is that we do not require permission to carry out our work on public highways for the following reasons: We are not engaged in a commercial venture. Our mobile literature carts are always manned. We are careful to place them only where they do not cause an obstruction or inconvenience to passers-by, and if someone in authority has a complaint about where we have set up we respectfully move on. By following these simple guidelines, our brothers are successfully participating in public witnessing in many towns and cities around Britain and Ireland without any problems and enjoying fine results.

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Jehovah wants people to know the truth about him. Like our first-century brothers, we want to declare the good news zealously “without letup” wherever people are found. (Acts 5:42) We are confident that Jehovah will bless our efforts to accomplish his will “that all sorts of people should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth.” (1Tim. 2:4)

We convey our warm Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers,
*Christian Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses*

cc: Travelling overseers

PS to travelling overseers: The above principles should also be used by those engaging in the Special Metropolitan Public Witnessing Programme. Please make sure those organizing this are aware of the direction in this letter.