



Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses

2821 Route 22, Patterson, NY 12563-2237 Phone: (845) 306-1100

November 22, 2002

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS IN THE UNITED STATES

Dear Brothers:

Over the past few years, a number of municipal authorities made our public ministry more difficult by attempting to require that our brothers obtain a permit before going from door to door in their municipality. To counter this trend, the Governing Body and the Branch Committee authorized the Legal Department to take steps in court to affirm our right to engage in our ministry unfettered by those who would 'frame trouble by decree.' (Psalm 94:20) These efforts recently culminated in the victory Jehovah gave us before the United States Supreme Court in *Watchtower v. Stratton*. (1 Samuel 17:47) We now write to ensure that your congregation is not inadvertently submitting to some encroachment on our recently affirmed legal right to engage in our public ministry.

We ask that you meet within one week of receiving this letter to consider it as a body. Please inform the Legal Department immediately in writing if any municipality requires you to obtain a permit, fill out any forms, or provide any information prior to your engaging in the field ministry. In addition, please immediately inform the Legal Department if a municipality has any type of "No Solicitation" ordinance or law that it is attempting to apply to our ministry.

It is not necessary to contact the Legal Department if you are merely providing a courtesy telephone call to the police prior to going from door to door. A courtesy notification simply advises them of where you will be working from door to door and the number of publishers engaged in the ministry that day. However, if a municipality **requires** prior notification or demands any other additional information, that should be brought to the attention of the Legal Department.

If you do write in, please include the nature of the difficulty, the name of the municipality, the name and address of its mayor, the period of time the situation has existed, and a copy of any ordinance the municipality is applying to our work, if one is easily accessible.

We thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. We pray that Jehovah's spirit will be with you as you zealously preach the good news. (Matthew 24:14) Please accept this expression of our love and Christian greetings.

Your brothers,

*Christian Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses*