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news release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SADDLEBACK CHURCH OFFERS ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL CALIFORNIA WILDFIRE VICTIMS:

Dr. Rick Warren to Preach Message of Hope Sunday;
Public Invited to Watch Live Via the Internet

LAKE FOREST, Calif., Oct. 27, 2007 – Saddleback Valley Community Church led by Dr. Rick Warren, senior pastor and author of “The Purpose Driven Life,” is reaching out to neighboring California communities to provide food, care and comfort following last week’s destructive wildfires.

The church, which averages 22,000 attendees each week, will continue to offer hope Sunday as Dr. Warren delivers a timely message titled “How Can I Look Up When I’m Burned Out?” This uplifting service will also feature the testimony of Ken Blanchard, a best-selling author of “The One Minute Manager” and more than two dozen business and leadership books, who watched his Rancho Bernardo home burn to the ground this week. Services, which are held Sunday at 9 a.m., 11:15 a.m., 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. PDT, will also be available to watch live at www.saddleback.net.

The Saddleback Church campus, located in Lake Forest, Calif., was spared from the wildfires, but three fires were located in the nearby Saddleback Valley and affected a number of congregants and staff. Because of its location, the church has had the opportunity to be at the center of relief efforts.

During the height of the crisis this week, the 120-acre campus served as a fire evacuation center, caring for and feeding people and their animals that had to evacuate homes. The church also served as a staging area and relief and refreshment center for the fire fighters.

Congregants of the church helped throughout the week in various ways, mobilizing thousands of volunteers through its 3,500 small groups. The students of the college ministry, CRAVE, worked alongside firefighters on the fire lines. Saddleback’s ministry teams helped to place evacuated families into homes of members and sent out trained volunteer chaplains to many other evacuation sites, and Saturday morning, over 600 people from 120 small groups went into the community and hardest hit areas of San Diego to pray, clean up, and offer help to others.

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Serving as a clearinghouse for relief donations for victims, Saddleback Church has received donations and calls from many individuals, organizations and congregations from other states. While the church will continue to accept monetary donations, due to the overwhelming generosity, the Saddleback Relief Team is no longer able to accept or process gifts such as clothing, food or food, and has asked those who wish donate such items to do so through a local agency such as The Salvation Army or Goodwill.

Saddleback Church will continue to provide assistance as the community now works to recover and clean up, and invites the public to attend its services Nov. 3 and 4 as the church publicly honors all fire fighters, many of whom are members of Saddleback Church. For more information, visit www.saddleback.net.