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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE TO: Political, Health and Religion Editors

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH TO RECEIVE 'INTERNATIONAL MEDAL OF PEACE' ON 20TH WORLD AIDS DAY: Dr. Rick Warren Presents Award, Engages in Dialogue with the President at Saddleback Civil Forum on Global Health Dec. 1

WASHINGTON, Nov. 30, 2008 – President George W. Bush will be presented with the “International Medal of PEACE” by Dr. Rick Warren on behalf of the Global PEACE Coalition during the Saddleback Civil Forum on Global Health, to be held at the Newseum in Washington, on the 20th anniversary of World AIDS Day, Dec. 1. This award is in recognition of the President’s tireless efforts and unprecedented contribution to the fight against HIV/AIDS and other diseases.

“No world leader has done more for global health than President Bush,” Warren said. “The President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief [PEPFAR] has saved millions of lives in the past five years, so it is fitting that he be awarded the first ‘International Medal of PEACE.’”

“Through PEPFAR and other humanitarian programs, President and Mrs. Bush and their respective staffs have been instrumental in initiating and sustaining the largest humanitarian commitment to a single disease in history,” Warren added. “All around the world, lives have been saved and improved because of PEPFAR’s battle against AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis.”

The “International Medal of PEACE” is given to honor outstanding contribution toward alleviating the five “global goliaths” – giant problems negatively impacting society worldwide, including pandemic diseases, extreme poverty, illiteracy, corruption and injustice and spiritual emptiness. The PEACE Coalition is a network of churches, businesses and individuals cooperating together to solve humanitarian issues through the PEACE Plan, an effort to mobilize millions of Christians to Promote reconciliation, Equip servant leaders, Assist the poor, Care for the sick and Educate the next generation.

The Saddleback Civil Forum on Global Health will also feature video tributes from President-elect Barack Obama; United Nations General Secretary Ban Ki Moon; former British Prime Minister Tony Blair; His Excellency Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda; Bono, musical artist and humanitarian activist; philanthropists Bill and Melinda Gates; and Dr. Michael Kazatchkine, executive director of The Global Fund.

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Speaking from their own experiences and personal involvement with global health issues, each of these influential government, business and advocacy leaders will affirm the President for his leadership in global health through the success of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the President's Malaria Initiative. They also affirm the Warrens for the PEACE plan's success in engaging all three sectors of society -- public, profit, and faith -- in the battle against pandemic diseases, and commit to work together to maintain future momentum.

"Together, people of faith must create partnerships with other people of good will to team-tackle the five global giants," Warren said. "The battle is so enormous, we'll only win by mobilizing the talent, energy and resources of all Americans in all three sectors of our civil society."

Founded in 1980 by the Warrens, Saddleback Church is located in Lake Forest, Calif. With an average weekly attendance of 22,000, it is one of the largest churches in America. For additional information about the Saddleback HIV/AIDS Initiatives, visit www.HIVandTheChurch.com or www.RwandaHealthcare.com.

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EDITOR'S NOTES:

The event will be held at 10:30a.m. EST on Monday, Dec. 1, at the Newseum located at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and Sixth Street, N.W., in Washington. Representatives from the U.S. Congress; faith- and community-based organizations; non-governmental organizations; the diplomatic community; multilateral groups; foundations; local churches and representatives from other private sector entities have been invited to attend this invitation-only, ticketed event.

A live, five-camera switched feed of the entire program will be provided to any networks or outlets interested in downlinking or carrying video or audio of this program. It will also be live-streamed to www.SaddlebackCivilForum.com. Please contact Greg Flessing at 530.888.7676, or via e-mail at greg@freshairmedia.com.

Credentialing is being handled by The White House Press Office. Over the weekend, interested media representatives who have not yet signed up for the event are asked to e-mail Vicki Morgan at Vicki@alarryross.com or call 469.774.6377 by 5:00 p.m. EST, Sunday, Nov. 30 to get on the list. Credentials will be issued on-site the day of the event.

Future media alerts, updates and follow-up news releases about this event will be posted, as available, at www.RickWarrenNews.com.