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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESUMED PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES MCCAIN & OBAMA TO MAKE FIRST JOINT APPEARANCE AT THE SADDLEBACK CIVIL FORUM:

**Nationally Broadcast Non-Debate Format Provides Opportunity
for Long-form Discussion on Leadership, Stewardship,
Worldview and Vision for America's Role**

LAKE FOREST, Calif., Aug. 15 – Sens. John McCain and Barack Obama, respective presumed Republican and Democratic presidential nominees, will end the primary season Aug. 16 by joining Dr. Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, Calif. and author of the bestselling “Purpose Driven Life,” at the Saddleback Civil Forum on the Presidency.

“As a pastor, I believe in the separation of church and state, but I don’t believe we can separate religion from politics, because one’s faith determines one’s worldview, which informs one’s decisions and determines how one would lead,” Warren said. “The reason we are hosting this historic event is to stake out common ground for the common good.”

The two hour event, held from 5-7 p.m. (PDT), will be uplinked in both HD and SD formats, and broadcast live – in real time across all zones starting 8 p.m. (EDT) – on CNN, FOX News Channel and Daystar Television Network, as well as Southern California’s KDOC-TV. America can also watch the event via live streaming at SaddlebackCivilForum.com, ReadersDigest.com and MySpace.com/Impact or listen on the FamilyLife, Moody and Pilgrim Radio Networks and select Salem Radio Network stations through Southern California affiliate, KKLA-Radio.

The Saddleback Civil Forum on the Presidency will be conducted in a non-debate format to provide opportunity for the candidates to engage in a long-form conversation about critical issues of interest to the faith community and the general public. At the candidates’ request, the questions will only be posed by Warren – not a panel or from the audience – and open to all media, rather than co-sponsored by one network or news outlet, as with many of the earlier primary events. As a result, more than 550 media representatives have requested credentials to cover the event as news.

Warren will question each candidate, beginning with Sen. Obama as determined by a coin toss, for approximately one hour on four different topics: stewardship, leadership, worldview and America’s role in the world.

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Unlike earlier debates, which often focused on short-term, hot-button issues – such as the war, price of oil and healthcare – Warren will be posing identical questions to the candidates to help show American voters each of these Senators' leadership style and decision-making process.

“Since announcing this event last month, I have seen concerns expressed from two groups about this Civil Forum and my role in it,” Warren said. “Some secularists think I am going to make this a Christian or religious litmus test for the Presidency; while many religious people assume I am going to wimp out and not ask about issues involving sanctity of life and the family – including abortion, stem cell research and traditional marriage. Neither is reflective of my position or purpose in this process.

“I am a pastor, not a pundit,” Warren clarified. “I will ask all the tough questions. But this is a conversation, not a confrontation, and I am going to be civil in our discussion. People know where I stand on the critical issues; however, this forum is not about me and what I believe, but to give a place for America to hear the candidates' hearts by going beyond moral issues and their virtues, to also share their values and vision for leadership.”

In addition to proclaiming the Gospel Truth of salvation in Jesus Christ, Warren further explained that this Civil Forum will enable him to fulfill three other life goals – helping individuals accept responsibility, helping the Church regain credibility and encouraging society to return to civility.

At approximately 6 p.m. (PDT), in the transition of candidate questioning, both Sens. McCain and Obama will appear briefly together on the stage with Warren for a handshake and photo opportunity. This will be the first and only appearance of the candidates together before each party's national conventions.

More than 5,000 Saddleback members will be joined by local and national religious, government and business leaders in attending this historic, invitation-only event in-person. In addition, Saddleback Church personally invited 22 inner-city students and two chaperones from the local Santa Ana School District, to learn more about the democratic process and the responsibility of citizenship to share with their family, friends and peers.

Following the Civil Forum on Sunday, Aug. 17, Warren will deliver a special sermon to the nation, “The Kind of Leader America Needs.” This message, which will also be uplinked and live-streamed at www.Saddleback.com at 9 and 11:15 a.m. (PDT), is based on biblical principles of leadership, emphasizing such key characteristics as integrity, humility, generosity and competence.

The Saddleback Civil Forum was established to promote civil discourse and the common good of all. The first forum, held this past April, featured five Jewish World War II Holocaust survivors sharing their stories. The next Saddleback Civil Forum in September will feature former British Prime Minister Tony Blair.