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The Rt. Rev. William E. Swing to Attend Historic Event at New York's Temple of Understanding

URI leaders will join other interfaith visionaries for a summit on the ecological crisis

San Francisco, CA October 8, 2010 – In a rare historic moment, the Temple of Understanding in New York City will bring together sixty-six leaders of international interfaith organizations and other eminent visionaries, including URI Founder and President William E. Swing and URI Executive Director Charles P. Gibbs, to assess the challenges of the present ecological crisis and create a new narrative for relating to the earth and its resources.

Participants will issue a joint statement to Robert C. Orr, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations, and commit to taking action both within their communities and on a global scale. They will also be invited to form an advisory council for the Interfaith Consortium for an Ecological Civilization (ICEC), a new committee developed by the Temple of Understanding and other organizations in connection with the United Nations Environmental Programme.

Van Jones, prominent environmentalist and author of bestselling book, *The Green Collar Economy*, will give the keynote speech, setting the stage for a frank, penetrating and informative discussion among these visionary leaders.

“Our founder understood the power of a group for effective action,” said Alison Van Dyk, Executive Director. “She would be so proud to see the continuation of her lifelong work to bring people together to create positive change.”

URI is a leader in interfaith collaboration on environmental, social and economic issues. One of its earliest member organizations, California Interfaith Power and Light, co-founded by Episcopal priest Rev. Canon Sally Bingham, was the catalyst for what is now a national campaign in 30 states to bring the pulpit to bear on climate change.

The conference is being held in conjunction with the 50th anniversary celebration of the founding of The Temple of Understanding. The event will be held at the Pierre Hotel in New York City on October 19, 2010. Registration begins at 10 am, and the conference runs from 11 am – 5pm.

Press registration closes on October 10. For event inquiries, please contact caroline@templeofunderstanding.org.



About the Temple of Understanding:

The Temple of Understanding has led the way in interfaith education and advocacy for 50 years. We educate youth and adults both cross culturally and inter-religiously for global citizenship and peaceful coexistence; advocate for acceptance and respect for religious pluralism by the worlds governing bodies; and actively continue to promote justice and tolerance. The organization was founded in 1960 by a pioneering visionary, Juliet Hollister, with the support of a distinguished group of “Founding Friends,” which included Eleanor Roosevelt, Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Sir Zafrula Khan, H.H. Pope John XXIII, Anwar al-Sadat and H.H. the XIVth Dalai Lama, among others.

About URI:

URI is global network of 500 grassroots organizations dedicated to peace and justice through interfaith and cross-cultural cooperation. Its nearly half a million members are overcoming distrust and hostility every day for the good of their communities—mediating religiously motivated conflict; building schools, orphanages and health clinics; campaigning for citizenship rights and more in 75 countries. They touch the lives of an estimated 2.5 million people each year. The network is led by Executive Director Charles Gibbs, President William E. Swing, and Yoland Trevino, chair of an elected 29-member Global Council of Trustees from 19 countries.

Visit www.uri.org for further information on URI’s projects in:

Africa

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Middle East and North Africa

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