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Capital Region Church, Campus, and Community Action Groups to Raise Voices Against Poverty

For Immediate Release

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In response to the movement to Make Poverty History, a coalition of area church, campus, and community action groups will host VOICES AGAINST POVERTY at Page Hall, SUNY Albany Downtown Campus on Sunday, November 4, 2007 at 6:00 pm.

Voices will be raised – with energy! – during a unique U2Charist Worship Service, featuring the spiritual lyrics and moving rhythms of the rock band U2. The innovative U2Charist format has received international attention for its ability to bring together all generations in meaningful worship, while educating and empowering people to take action in support of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and ONE.org.

In 2000, world leaders from 189 countries, including the United States, endorsed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)—a set of eight global targets to halve extreme poverty by 2015. ONE (www.ONE.org), a growing campaign of over 2.4 million people and over 100 of America's most well-known and respected non-profit, advocacy and humanitarian organizations, raises public awareness about the issues and encourages Americans to engage in advocacy on global poverty, hunger, and disease. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn how they can add their voices to this movement to bring about meaningful change.

Voices Against Poverty will also draw attention to community efforts. The event will include an Information Fair where people can learn what is being done locally to eliminate poverty and hunger and how they can participate. More than ten community action groups, such as Girls Inc., CWS/CROP Hunger Walk, and Capital District Community Gardens, will be featured.

“In planning this event, we wanted people of all ages and of all faiths to find music that grabs the heart, liturgy that grabs the soul, and places of service that grab the meaning of our lives,” explained Rev. John Knarvik, pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Loudonville. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is a ONE Lutheran Congregation, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's special designation for Lutheran Churches committed to the ONE Campaign and advocacy on aid, debt and trade.

Rev. Sandra Damhof of Cornerstone Campus Ministry at SUNY-Albany says college students are eager to participate. “But it's important for them to have an opportunity to make a difference. It's not just about the music.”

SUNY-Albany's Page Hall at 135 Western Ave., Albany, was chosen as the venue because "it can comfortably accommodate hundreds," said Rev. Paul Rees-Rohrbacher, pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church, Albany. "If we are truly going to address the realities of extreme poverty, we must step out of the ordinary. I'm excited by the opportunity to bring together people who, regardless of their age, beliefs, or place in life, have a common desire to make poverty history."

Event sponsors include Protestant Campus Ministry of the University at Albany, congregations of the Albany Lutheran Cluster, and Capital Area Council of Churches. All monetary donations will be given in their entirety to Bread for the World (www.Bread.org) and Gatumba Refugees Survivors Foundation (www.gatumbasurvivors.org).

The VOICES AGAINST POVERTY event is free and open to all.

For more information, visit www.VoicesAgainstPoverty.com