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Gospel Grammy Winner Hosts Sixth Annual International Gospel Benefit Concert

Event to Recognize Bishop Gilbert A. Thompson for his Outstanding Leadership and Community Contribution

BOSTON- Gospel music legend and Black Entertainment Television host Dr. Bobby Jones will be the guest host at the “Saving the Health of Our Community” gospel concert, benefiting the Whittier Street Health Center and recognizing Bishop Gilbert A. Thompson for his dedication to serving the Boston community and leadership in bringing economic, cultural, and musical rejuvenation to our community. The concert will be held on Saturday, December 6, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. at Berklee Performance Center, 136 Massachusetts Avenue. Past honorees include community health champions Elmer Freeman, the former Executive Director of Whittier; Massachusetts State Senator Dianne Wilkerson; Reverends Ray Hammond, MD and Gloria White-Hammond, MD, Dr. Judyann Bigby, Massachusetts Secretary of Health and Human Services; and community leader Reverend John M. Borders III.

“Whittier’s Saving the Health of Our Community concert is a wonderful opportunity to bring our community together to enjoy fantastic music and honor such a dynamic and inspiring community leader as Bishop Gilbert Thompson, all while benefiting a valuable community resource in Whittier Street Health Center,” says Whittier President and CEO Frederica M. Williams. “Through his Jubilee Christian Church, Bishop Thompson has shown exemplary commitment to the economic, spiritual and physical health of our community. All of these are important in building a true foundation of total health and well being for the community. We thank Bishop Thompson for his unequivocal commitment.”

The “Saving the Health of Our Community” concert will feature numerous outstanding gospel performers and choirs, including, but not limited to: The Gospel Angels, Elohim Musical Ministries, Ashmont Hill, Freda Battle and Spigospara. The range of groups includes Caribbean-style gospel, South African, West African, Hispanic, Youth and Teenage, and Traditional Gospel, mirroring the diversity of Boston and its neighboring communities.

Bishop Thompson has been a spiritual leader in Boston for over 35 years. In 1971, Bishop Thompson graduated from the Moody Bible Institute (Chicago, IL) with a BA in Bible Theology and continued with graduate studies at Northwestern University (Evanston, IL). After a short

time at Northwestern, Bishop moved to Boston to pastor the Shawmut Community Church of God in Boston's South End in May 1972. In 1982, Bishop Thompson founded New Covenant Christian Church, as a means to establish "a church without walls." Now called Jubilee Christian Church, it numbers over 4,000 in active membership and ministers to nearly 5,000 over three services on Sundays. Currently, Bishop Thompson is the president of the Black Ministerial Alliance of Greater Boston (BMA), the largest African-American clergy association in New England that serves over 30,000 people in the Boston area.

Dr. Bobby Jones is the host and executive producer of BET's "Bobby Jones Gospel," the first and only nationally syndicated black gospel television show. His show is also the longest running show in cable television history. The recipient of numerous awards, honors, and a Grammy award, Dr. Jones is also Ambassador-At-Large of Dominica, an island in the Caribbean.

Ticket prices are \$35 for general seating, \$40 for premium seating (\$35 group rates for premium seating), \$30 for seniors and \$15 for children under 10. There is also a special pre-reception at 5:30 p.m. at the Boston Back Bay Hilton with Dr. Bobby Jones, honoree Reverend Borders, and other distinguished guests. The price for the pre-reception, which includes premium concert seating, is \$75. Tickets may be purchased at the Berklee Performance Center, 136 Massachusetts Ave., Ticketmaster 617.931.2000, or by contacting Whittier Street Health Center at 617-989-3182.

About Whittier Street Health Center

All proceeds from the event will go to Whittier Street Health Center, 1125 Tremont Street Roxbury. Whittier Street Health Center is a private, non-profit, independently licensed community health center dedicated to providing high quality, reliable and accessible primary health care and support services for diverse populations to promote wellness and eliminate health and social disparities. Serving more than 12,000 clients and nearly 40,000 patient visits, Whittier has a patient base which is ethnically and racially diverse and includes significant numbers of individuals from Roxbury, Dorchester, Jamaica Plain, the South End and Greater Boston. Whittier provides a comprehensive array of 30 healthcare programs and services designed to meet the primary health care, behavioral health, and social needs of the community.

For more information about the event, contact Whittier Street Health Center at 617-989-3182.

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