



For immediate release

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Australian Baptists support Earth Hour 2009

Earth Hour 2009 is a great opportunity for Baptists all over Australia to demonstrate support for creation care and responsible energy consumption, national Baptist leaders said today.

This year the event, launched in Sydney in 2007, will be a truly global phenomenon with almost 1,700 cities and municipalities in more than 80 countries already committed to “vote Earth” as part of the world’s first global election between Earth and global warming.

A campaign of the World Wildlife Fund, Earth Hour 2009 aims to reach more than one billion people, asking communities, business and governments to switch off the lights at 8.30pm on March 28th, for one hour.

“It’s a small step for individuals, but by acting together we can be part of the largest climate event in history, and at the same time spread the word that we care deeply about God’s world,” Baptist Union of Australia National Director Brian Winslade said.

The Baptist Union of Australia and the Baptist Union of Victoria had made climate change declarations, and last year the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) passed a unanimous resolution on climate change at its annual meetings in Prague.

The BWA statement confessed that we have often denied or ignored our interdependence with creation and abrogated our stewardship of creation; recognised our failure as Baptists to engage with these issues in an adequate and timely manner; and called upon Baptist leaders to strongly support and encourage government, corporate and community initiatives to address the causes of human-induced climate change.

The statement also urged church support of renewable energy technologies; caps on “greenhouse gas” emissions; carbon trading; greater use of “green” architecture, town planning and transport; and encouragement to conserve, reuse and recycle goods.

“Australian Baptists have led the global Baptist community on cutting edge issues before,” Baptist ethicist and public theologian Rod Benson said. “We worked hard to launch the Micah Challenge which now enjoys enormous favour around the world, and we introduced the climate change resolution at the BWA meetings in 2008. But there is much more for us to do as we boldly follow Jesus in prophetic leadership and biblical social responsibility. Earth Hour 2009 deserves your support and involvement.”

You and your church or small group can be part of Earth Hour 2009. Wherever you are at 8.30 pm on Saturday 28 March, turn off the lights for one hour. You will be reducing your carbon footprint, and participating in an awesome global event on unprecedented scale. And, as a Christian, you’ll be making a statement in favour of more responsible energy consumption and government policy.

For more information on Earth Hour 2009, go to www.earthhourau.org

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