

Wilberforce Project Announces Launch of THE BETTER HOUR Activities, Plus Other Projects to Honor 200th Anniversary Year of William Wilberforce's Triumph Over the Slave Trade

- **Contest for high school students with awards from the John Templeton Foundation**
- **White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives to announce Compassion in Action Roundtable Series**
- **New television documentary film**
- **Floyd Flake's initiatives at Wilberforce University**

View Photos from the Press Conference

View Video from the Press Conference

WASH. D.C. Sponsors of a forthcoming national television documentary, *THE BETTER HOUR: William Wilberforce, A Man of Character Who Changed the World*, (www.thebetterhour.com) launched at the National Press Club today *THE BETTER HOUR CONTEST for High School Students*, offering a total of \$50,000 cash prize money from the John Templeton Foundation (www.templeton.org) to student winners who initiate and execute philanthropic projects, either local or global.

The press conference announced a series of activities for this year's 200th anniversary of the end of the 1807 Trans-Atlantic slave trade, inspired by the visionary leadership and character of activist William Wilberforce and his crusade to end slavery and transform culture, most notably highlighted in the recent feature film *Amazing Grace*. THE BETTER HOUR CONTEST for High School Students (www.thebetterhour.com/contest) is part of a larger effort to bring modern day effects from recognition of William Wilberforce's role to end the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, and eliminate suffering and injustice through efforts in the non-profit sector, volunteerism, civil service, and business. THE BETTER HOUR CONTEST runs this year, with final projects due March 1, 2008 and awards presented in Congress during May, 2008.

A forthcoming documentary film, THE BETTER HOUR, is scheduled to air on national television in October 2007. THE BETTER HOUR documentary, co-sponsored by John Templeton Foundation and the Wilberforce Project, will provide a more in-depth resource for the growing interest about the abolitionist movement of the early 19th century, said Wilberforce Project chairman and founder Chuck Stetson.

Jay Hein, director of The White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, announced a White House Compassion in Action Roundtable Series, whose October 2007 Roundtable will have a special focus on the lessons of Wilberforce to combat modern day slavery.

The Honorable Floyd Flake, president of Wilberforce University, addressed concerns of African Americans during this 200th anniversary year of the abolition of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, with a focus on the goals of Wilberforce University.

Zach Hunter, 9th-grade student spokesperson for THE BETTER HOUR, spoke about how his generation can engage to make "the better hour." He spoke about how his project "Loose Change for Loosened Chains" of slavery is an example of what kids can do. Alyce Loesch, professional educator who has taught history in public schools for the last 30 years, reported the lack of coverage about the British abolitionists and William Wilberforce in history books today. She reported THE BETTER HOUR is developing resources for schools.

Kimon Sargeant, Vice President of The John Templeton Foundation, explained the foundation's sponsorship of the documentary film and THE BETTER HOUR CONTEST. A first place prize of \$10,000 is offered from the John Templeton Foundation, with additional awards for runners up. High school student project areas will include: modern day forms of slavery, poverty, political or legislative action, education, and health. Students must enlist others to help, execute their plan, and document it online. Students are encouraged to start planning now and get details and guidelines by registering as soon as possible at www.thebetterhour.com.

William Wilberforce in particular was well known, even in America, in the early 1800s, after having led the 20 year effort, against all economic odds, that ended the Trans Atlantic Slave Trade, effective May, 1807 in England and January, 1808 in the United States. (British Royal Assent was given on March 25, 1807; U.S. legislation was signed by Thomas Jefferson on March 2, 1807 and made effective on January 1, 1808.)

A new 200-page book for church and small group studies, *Creating the Better Hour: Making Goodness Fashionable--The Lessons of William Wilberforce*, will be available in September. After broadcast in October, THE BETTER HOUR DVDs will be available. An additional program called THE BETTER HOUR Gatherings will mobilize groups of friends to bring changes in their community, inspired by Wilberforce's friends' collaboration in Clapham, England, where they initiated issue campaigning and led the founding of 69 societies in the early 1800s, transforming English society. Updates will be available on www.thebetterhour.com.

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THE BETTER HOUR

Documentary Film, Book, Gatherings, & High School Contest

www.TheBetterHour.com

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