



For Immediate Release

Contact: Evin J. Willman: 241-6309
Cell—655-7085; ewillman@willmanco.com

OneJax Plans Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Gratitude Service

Jacksonville, FL (October 31, 2008)—OneJax, the local, interfaith, nonprofit agency dedicated to promoting respect and understanding among people of different religions, races and cultures, will hold its annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Gratitude Service on Thursday, November 20th at The Temple—Congregation Ahavath Chesed, announced Bobbie O'Connor, Executive Director of the organization.

“This year marks the 90th observance of this service,” said O'Connor. “Each November since 1918, people representing many faith traditions have gathered for this event to express thanks in a manner which transcends our differences and promotes the unique gifts of our faiths. To mark this historic milestone, this year's service will be a joyful celebration of our differences and in those things that bring us together as a community.”

The service will include a processional of faith leaders & clergy. Expressions of thanks from the scriptures of each faith will follow, many presented in the native tongues of their faiths (English translations will be provided). Musical interpretations will also be included. The Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, and Native American faiths, will be among those participating in the service.

“This service has always been a rare opportunity for people to come together, educate each other and gain a better understanding about the different faiths that make us a stronger and more vibrant community” said Phil Mobley, Board Chair of OneJax. “With so much attention typically focused on the things that divide us, I can't think of a better way for the community to unite and express gratitude for all the things we share,” Mobley added.

As part of this year's event, those attending the service are encouraged to bring canned goods to support the Second Harvest Food Bank, which expects an increase in demand this Thanksgiving and holiday season.

Congregation Ahavath Chesed is located at 8727 San Jose Blvd. The service, which is free and open to the entire community, will begin at 6:00 PM and last about an hour. A fellowship reception will follow the service. For more information, call OneJax at 354-1JAX (1529) or visit www.onejax.org.

Through education, community building and advocacy, OneJax hopes to make Northeast Florida a better place for everyone by celebrating differences and identifying all we have in common. Its core programs include **Metrotown**, an intensive, week-long teen diversity program; **LOUD** (Leaders of United Diversity), where Metrotown graduates bring the message of respect and appreciation for religious, racial and cultural differences into their schools; **Interfaith and Community Forums**, periodic forums for public dialogue on diversity and tolerance issues; and **Advocacy**, working to promote issues of importance to the **OneJax** mission. In addition, OneJax is a partner, with the Jacksonville Human Rights Commission and the Community Foundation in Jacksonville, in **Project Breakthrough**, an initiative to change the story of race in Jacksonville.

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