



FOR IMMEDIATE

THE BAPTIST TEMPLE RELEASE

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**LANDMARK TEMPLE BUILDING THAT HOSTED MLK JR., FDR AND HELEN KELLER
RE-OPENS AFTER 30 YEARS**

***The Baptist Temple at Temple University will serve as a new cultural center
for the campus and community***

PHILADELPHIA (March 3, 2010) – The Baptist Temple, built in 1891 as a home for Temple University founder Russell Conwell’s congregation, has hosted some of the country’s most prominent intellectual and political figures throughout its history, including Martin Luther King Jr., President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Margaret Mead, Anne Sullivan and Helen Keller. After sitting empty for the last 30 years, it will reopen to the public April 14, 2010, after undergoing an extensive renovation and restoration. The 36,000 square foot building will serve as a center for arts and cultural performances, as well as a setting for corporate and private meetings, symposia, and events.

“We are thrilled to breathe new life into The Baptist Temple, converting it to a fully equipped, state-of-the-art technical facility,” said Charles Bethea, Executive Director of The Baptist Temple at Temple University. “The Temple serves as a monument to the growing vitality of our community, offering the University and our neighbors opportunities for deeper engagement with an exciting new mix of arts and ideas.”

The area of North Broad Street around the University’s campus has been experiencing a revitalization, and the restoration and renovation of The Baptist Temple will now anchor the north end of the Avenue of the Arts with a calendar of dynamic events and concerts in a stunning, historic space.

HISTORY OF THE BAPTIST TEMPLE

Russell H. Conwell, the University’s founder, started teaching impromptu classes at night to young men who could not afford an education on their own. His pupils were dubbed the “night owls,” and the University’s classes were held at The Baptist Temple from 1891 to 1894, as well as the first Commencement in 1892.

Designated as a Landmark Building by the American Institute of Architects and certified as a Historical Building by the Philadelphia Historical Commission, the architecture firm RMJM worked to meticulously preserve the building’s historic features, from the iconic Rose Window to the Chapel of the Four Chaplains. Many of the aspects of the 119-year old building, empty

for the last three decades, had fallen into disrepair. For example, 140 windows were recreated and restored to their original condition.

PERFORMANCES AT THE BAPTIST TEMPLE

The Baptist Temple will offer a season of programming beginning in April 2010 including concerts, theatre, dance, education programming, and other dynamic events. With 1200 seats overlooking Lew Klein Hall, audiences will enjoy the “theater in the round” style, with vaulted ceilings and superior acoustics.

EVENT SPACE AT THE BAPTIST TEMPLE

With 36,000 square feet and four unique spaces, The Baptist Temple can be wonderfully used for receptions, corporate, community and University meetings, weddings, film screenings and graduations. The flexible, distinctive spaces feature restored historical elements, such as striking stained glass windows and original wood and iron work.

Lew Klein Hall is adaptable for a wide variety of events and performances, with high ceilings, state of the art technical support, and magnificent stained glass windows. The thrust stage extends into the theatre, bringing programs and performers closer to the audience seated on three sides.

The historic Chapel of the Four Chaplains, which can accommodate a seated event for up to 130 guests, also features a new separate street entrance. Dedicated by President Harry Truman in 1951, the Chapel is named for the four military chaplains who gave their lifejackets to save others on the *USS Dorchester*, torpedoed off the coast of Greenland during World War II.

The mezzanine and entry of The Baptist Temple may also be used for events. The Mezzanine offers guests striking views of both Lew Klein Hall and the building’s signature Rose Window. The majestic entry opens onto Broad Street.

The Baptist Temple is one of the projects in the plan to make Broad Street the focal point of Temple University, a part of the University’s recognition of its 125th anniversary.

About The Baptist Temple at Temple University

The Baptist Temple at Temple University will serve as a cultural center for the campus and community, offering arts and education programming, as well as a space for meetings, symposia and other events. For tickets and more information about The Baptist Temple, visit www.thebaptisttemple.org or call 1-800-298-4200. For rental inquiries, call the event coordinator at 215-204-9860.

About Temple University

Temple University is one of the nation's best comprehensive urban public research universities. With more than 38,000 students, Temple is the 28th largest university and fifth largest provider of professional education in America. Founded in 1884 by Russell Conwell, Temple became a member of the Pennsylvania Commonwealth System of Higher Education in 1965. Temple's

115-acre Main Campus and Health Sciences Center in North Philadelphia are currently the primary sites of more than \$500 million in construction and renovation, including new homes for the Fox School of Business, the School of Medicine and the Tyler School of Art. The university also maintains two locations in Center City Philadelphia; two in the city's suburbs; one in the state's capital, Harrisburg; and several abroad, including pioneering campuses in Tokyo and Rome. Temple's student population is widely recognized as one of the nation's most diverse. There are more than 285,000 alumni living in 50 states and more than 140 countries. About one of every eight residents in southeastern Pennsylvania with a college degree is a Temple graduate. The University celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2009 with the successful completion of its first comprehensive fundraising campaign.

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