



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Groundbreaking is Good News for Affordable Housing in Silver Spring!

Habitat for Humanity® International and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans® join together to increase affordable housing in Montgomery County. Community is invited to a Groundbreaking to celebrate.

Gaithersburg, Maryland (March 11, 2009) – Times are tough and the construction of new homes has slowed considerably across the country. But here in Montgomery County, Maryland, one family will mark an important milestone in the construction of their new home and the community is invited to join in on the fun! The celebration begins at 3:00 PM on March 15, 2009 at the construction site in Silver Spring.

Along with local Habitat for Humanity representatives and Thrivent Financial members, Pastor Theodore Schneider will speak during a short program. Pastor Schneider of Epiphany Lutheran Church was the second bishop of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America until 2007. This home rehabilitation is a result of an alliance between Habitat for Humanity International and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Called *Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity*, this alliance has resulted in thousands of decent, affordable homes across the country since 2005. Thanks to its 2.6 million members who own financial products with the organization, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is able to contribute to the improvement of communities like Silver Spring. The Thrivent Builds alliance also engages volunteer members of Thrivent Financial, members of area Lutheran churches and members of the community at large to work alongside the partner families to build these homes.

According to Gabe Hare and Dan Wingard, Thrivent Builds Chapter Specialists, Thrivent members are committed to helping build this home, and are looking for help from the community. The local Thrivent Chapter hopes others will consider joining together to help another family realize the American Dream of homeownership. The partner family will complete hundreds of hours of “sweat equity” helping to build the home, a basic tenet of Habitat for Humanity. They will also repay the no-interest mortgage, illustrating Habitat for Humanity’s objective to give families a “hand up” rather than a “hand out.”

“Being able to help provide a family with a home means so much to Thrivent members,” states Thrivent Builds Chapter Specialist Dan Wingard. “Volunteering is important to them, and this gives them a great way to personally support our community by helping families achieve financial security.”

To learn more, visit www.thriventbuilds.com.

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About Habitat for Humanity of Montgomery County, MD, Inc

Habitat for Humanity of Montgomery County is an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International; its goal is to reduce substandard housing in Montgomery County by providing a **hand up** rather than a **hand out** to help low-income families realize the dream of homeownership. Montgomery County is one of the most affluent, fastest growing communities in the nation; however thousands of its residents are living in poverty. Housing costs have sky-rocked, while income growth in many jobs has remained the same, making the dream of homeownership almost impossible for low-income families. Habitat's unique homeownership model provides a solution to this problem by offering low-income families the opportunity to purchase their own simple, decent, affordable home. Our vision is to create "a community with healthy, safe, and affordable housing for all".

About Habitat for Humanity International

Habitat for Humanity International is an ecumenical Christian ministry that welcomes to its work all people dedicated to the cause of eliminating poverty housing. Since its founding in 1976, Habitat has built more than 300,000 houses worldwide, providing simple, decent and affordable shelter for more than 1.5 million people. For more information, visit www.habitat.org.

About Thrivent Financial for Lutherans

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is a not-for-profit membership organization helping approximately 2.6 million members achieve their financial goals and give back to their communities. As a not-for-profit fraternal benefit society, Thrivent Financial sponsors national outreach programs and activities that support congregations, schools, charitable organizations and individuals in need. Thrivent Financial has main offices in Minneapolis, Minn., and Appleton, Wis. For more information, visit www.thrivent.com.

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