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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Single and Pregnant in Church?

NAE poll suggests need for more practical conversation on abortion

WASHINGTON, D.C., Aug. 25, 2010 – Polling information released today by the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) reinforces the need for practical and productive dialogue at the national and local levels about reducing abortion. The full results of this poll are available at <http://www.naegeneration.com>.

The poll, conducted by Gallup, Inc, shows:

- 76 percent of evangelicals believe sex between an unmarried man and woman is morally wrong.
- 77 percent of evangelicals believe abortion is morally wrong.
- 79 percent of evangelicals believe having a baby outside of marriage is morally wrong.

These figures suggest that an unmarried evangelical who unexpectedly becomes pregnant may face a challenging situation in relation to her church community.

“We need to encourage couples to courageously and responsibly honor the gifts of sex and life,” said Aaron Mercer, NAE Generation Forum Project Director. “The Bible’s standard for sex is very clear: abstinence outside of marriage and fidelity within it. But when unmarried individuals do have sex and end up conceiving, might they fear rejection from their church family whether or not they carry the baby to term? Whether or not this fear is warranted, we need to consider its possible consequences.”

The poll results underscore the confidence evangelicals place in their local church leaders and the importance of them engaging the challenges of unplanned pregnancy and abortion:

- 89 percent said they would go to their pastors or other leaders in their church for advice or counseling if they were having problems in a relationship or marriage.
- More than three times as many evangelicals thought their own church’s leaders were doing a very good job addressing the issue of unplanned pregnancies versus national religious leaders.
- More than four times as many said the same about local versus national religious leaders on the issue of abortion.

“This data should be a call to action for national religious leaders to more productively engage on this country’s terrible abortion problem,” Mercer said. “It is also a reminder to local pastors that they are on the front lines. They have the confidence of their congregations and the relationships with their neighbors needed for real success in lowering the abortion rate in their local communities.”

Significant majorities of survey respondents showed support for a wide range of possible methods for decreasing the abortion rate – from parental consent and waiting periods before abortions to efforts at making adoption, pre- and post-natal care, and contraceptive services more accessible. Regarding birth control for adults, 90/91 percent of evangelicals hold hormonal/barrier methods of contraception to be morally acceptable, 74 percent approve fertility awareness methods and 66 percent approve sterilization.

The NAE Generation Forum is exploring practical and realistic approaches to curtail the high abortion rate in the United States. Particular focus is being placed on young adults since they, not teenagers, have the majority of abortions. This initiative is hosting events across the country to create dialogue about how local churches can be involved in effectively decreasing the number of abortions in their congregations and communities. The next event, a local church leaders gathering, will be in Los Angeles on October 6, 2010.

The Generation Forum has also produced a document, titled “Theology of Sex,” to help evangelicals understand and cherish human sexuality, build strong families, respect human dignity and celebrate the precious gift of life.

The full polling results, the text of the “Theology of Sex” and more information about the NAE Generation Forum are available at <http://www.naegeneration.com>.

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Note to Editors: For more information about the Generation Forum please visit <http://www.alrcnewskitchen.com/nae>. To arrange an interview with a NAE spokesperson, please contact Julie Shutley at 972.267.1111 or via e-mail at jshutley@alarryross.com.

* Gallup conducted this national telephone survey of 1,000 Evangelicals, ages 18-95, from July 7 – Aug 1, 2009. Evangelicals were identified by denominational affiliation, church attendance at least once a month, accepting Jesus Christ as Savior and affirming the Bible as the written word of God and a guide for life. This poll has an overall margin of error of ±3.1%.