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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW BOOK *BEYOND WORDS*, BY THE REVEREND CANON R. S. S. WHITMAN, NOW AVAILABLE

Author argues for Religion and Christianity beyond magic, superstition and contradiction towards Religion that is consistent with our experience of what works!

GUILFORD, CT, NOVEMBER 18, 2008 – The Reverend Canon R. S. S. Whitman's new book, *Beyond Words*, has been published and will be available in bookstores and on Amazon.com on November 18, 2008.

The book is a summation of Canon Whitman's unique view of Religion based less on magic and more on our real-world understanding of what works.

Whitman's central purpose for writing *Beyond Words* is to share his belief that we are in desperate need of a shift in the way we think about God and Religion.

In the work Whitman's stated goal is to "demystify and bring people closer to real Religion." He encourages readers to look past the magical shows presented in the Bible and think harder about how these stories may have really occurred or originated without supernatural intervention. Whitman argues that biblical miracles are very real but they are not magical. "God does not work in magical shows," Whitman said. On his view, God has not and does not "suspend the physical laws we are all bound by."

In this sense, the book reconciles rationality with reason. Whitman says to readers: "the nonsensical contradictions that drove you away from Religion are not a part of what real Religion is." To support his central claim Whitman shares stories and anecdotes from his life and over 50-years as a minister of the Church to explain how we might more meaningfully think about the Bible, biblical miracles and Christian doctrine. His purpose is to make it known that there is a simple way to understand Religion that compliments what we know about how our world really works.

One of the author's core beliefs is that the word God is often misunderstood. Whitman writes, in one instance, that there are still those who, no-doubt, continue clinging to the notion that God is "some sort of all-powerful being in the sky with a big gray beard looking down on us all and pulling the strings." The author states that the damage this view has done, or less cartoonish variations of it, are what he endeavors to lift from reader's minds.

Whitman's ultimate goal is to guide us towards knowing the great peace and empowerment we feel when we embrace a more meaningful understanding of what this word really

represents; but as Whitman believes, this will only occur with a more critical look at Christianity. It is the author's belief that this will only occur when we challenge ourselves to look beyond words.

Underpinning all this is Whitman's conviction that a devotion to God is little more than a commitment to a life long yearning to live in accordance with and struggle to understand more fully, the one, ultimate Truth.

Whitman's hope is that from this understanding readers of the book might learn to embrace "a more life-affirming, sensible relationship with God and begin to recognize the vital importance of Religion in all our lives."

About The Reverend Canon R. S. S. Whitman

Born July 27, 1915, in New York, NY, is a priest of the Episcopal Church currently residing with his wife, Eleanor English, in Guilford, Connecticut.

After spending his formative years in Manhattan, Whitman went on to study at Harvard University. His stay, however, was short-lived. In what was, at the time, a humiliating turn, he was kicked out after his first semester at the University for failing an advanced level history course. Disgraced and ashamed, he returned to New York and took humble posts, working as a messenger boy for a carpet company and a Wall Street bank.

It was at a party in New York that Whitman met the then secretary of labor, Frances Perkins. Despite their difference in age, the two became friends and Perkins wound up getting Whitman a job in D.C., at the Department of Labor. Though again, it was a small post as a messenger boy.

Perkins and Whitman stayed in contact while he was in Washington and it was after Whitman revealed his interest in the ministry to Perkins that she encouraged him to follow his heart and attend seminary. Whitman did, going on to graduate from the Berkeley Divinity School in New Haven, CT. Reflecting back on his life's work many years later Whitman is quoted as saying, "I guess when I think about it, I've been a messenger boy my entire life!"

From 1946-1949 Whitman served as a chaplain to the U.S. Army in the Philippines before taking a position as associate rector of Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg, Virginia, where he also served as chaplain to Episcopal students at the College of William and Mary.

The Massachusetts Berkshires served as the backdrop for Whitman's substantive ministry. He served as rector of Trinity Episcopal Church, Lenox, Mass., for thirty-one years before retiring on July 27, 1981. After a few years absence Whitman returned to the ministry as rector of St. Martin's Church in Pittsfield, Mass.

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