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INTERNATIONAL ARTIST MAKOTO FUJIMURA TO HAVE WORK UNVEILED AT LOCAL NEW HAVEN CHURCH

NEW HAVEN--Friday October 10, 2008 at 6:30 PM, *Αναβαίω*, a commissioned piece for permanent display by artist Makoto Fujimura, will be unveiled at a public dedication of Christ Presbyterian Church's recently completed sanctuary. The large 89"x198" piece, made of pure layered gold minerals on hand woven Japanese rag paper on canvas, will be prominently displayed in the chancel above the altar for the congregation of 200 members from the Yale and Greater New Haven communities. New York City-based artist Makoto Fujimura will be present to introduce his art as part of Christ Presbyterian Church's "Living the Vision: Celebrating Fifteen Years In The City" weekend October 10-12.

Αναβαίω is a piece within the Golden Fire series begun in 2002 and is created in large scale *Nihonga* (traditional Japanese style painting) technique. Hors d'oeuvres will be served before the ceremony and a wine and cheese reception will follow. Christ Presbyterian Church, New Haven is located at 135 Whitney Ave.

Makoto Fujimura is one of the most significant artists of our time. As the founder and director of the International Arts Movement, he is recognized for his visionary work towards restoring the Ground Zero community of New York through the TriBeCa project. Through his rising prominence in the New York art world and the National Endowment for the Arts, Fujimura has had over 140 solo and group exhibits in New York, Japan, Santa Fe, and elsewhere around the world. Educated in both Japan and the United States, Fujimura was the first outsider invited to study in a post-M.F.A program in the long-standing lineage of *Nihonga* tradition at Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, where he developed an extensive knowledge of Japanese art history and technique. Fujimura was also appointed to the National Council on the Arts in 2003, one of the most prestigious art leadership positions in the United States. He has become a major voice of bi-cultural authority on the nature and cultural assessment of beauty, by both creating it and exploring its forms. His works are represented by Dillon Gallery in Chelsea, New York City, Hong Kong and Tokyo, Japan. Public collections include The Saint Louis Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Tokyo, and the Time Warner/ AOL/ CNN building in Hong Kong.

The name *Αναβαίω* comes from the language of the New Testament (Koiné Greek) and means "I am ascending." Taken directly from Christ's encouragement to Mary after His resurrection in John's gospel (20:17), it speaks to the mystical reality of the church on earth that is united to Christ in the eternal city of God, whose presence is mediated in our midst in the power of His Spirit. The Golden Fire series deals with the theme of a journey via "Ground Zero" conditions of destruction but with the eye of faith looking toward the transformative experience of sanctification.

I am honored to participate in a journey of a local church and to serve as a visual artist in such a journey. The image is designed to be read in many ways: first as a holy fire, but also its organic shape will allude to the flowering of God's Kingdom via earthly materials and people. My prayer is that the work attests to the presence of Christ in our lives whose holy fire powerfully invades our broken lives, both now and in the future, turning our mortal earth into God's everlasting New Earth.
Makoto Fujimura

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