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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

45th Annual McAllen Mayor's Prayer Committee

McAllen – The McAllen Mayor's Prayer Committee would like to invite the community to the **45th Annual McAllen Mayor's Prayer Luncheon**. The event will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 6 at the McAllen Convention Center, Exhibit Hall B.

This year's keynote speaker is Don Piper. Piper has inspired more than 3,000 audiences around the globe since the release of his book, *90 Minutes in Heaven: A True Story of Death and Life*. Having sold more than 7 million copies in 46 languages, the book remained on the *New York Times* best-seller list for nearly four years after its release. It is widely considered one of the catalysts in the renaissance of books about Heaven. In 2015, the *90 Minutes in Heaven* film version premiered.

"We are truly excited about Mr. Piper and this story of miracles," stated Tomas Flores, the Mayor's Prayer Board President. "Mr. Piper was pronounced dead and has endured 34 surgical procedures, so this will indeed be a story of God's grace."

The Mayor's Prayer program will also include the **2016 Community Service Award**. Past President and current Board member of the Prayer Committee Carla M. Rodriguez shared, "The Community Service Award honors a local citizen who has gone above and beyond the parameters of their respective career path in providing a community service or have demonstrated an extraordinary commitment in their faith, or a combination of all." This is the Committee's way of acknowledging that service.

This year's recipient, Bill Stocker, continues to make an indelible impression across McAllen. Serving McAllen's citizens and business community for the last six decades, Mr. Stocker leads or is a member of over a dozen community organizations including the Rio Grande Council, Boy Scouts of America; Hidalgo County United Way, of which he is a founding member; and Tim's Coats, a community project that has collected more than 140,000 coats for needy individuals of all ages, of which he serves as a chairman and participant.

Past awardees have included Sister Norma Pimentel, Nedra S. Kinerk, and (Ret.) Col. Frank Plummer.

The McAllen Mayor's Prayer event began as a breakfast and was founded by former Mayor Jack Whetsel in 1973. The McAllen Mayor's Prayer Committee is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to promote greater understanding in our community and to ask for God's divine guidance in conducting the affairs of our City. Tickets are \$20 (meal included) and may be purchased at the McAllen Chamber of Commerce, McAllen City Hall – Grant Administration Office, and Viva Life Christian Bookstore. A limited amount of tickets will also be sold onsite at the McAllen Convention Center the day of the event. For tickets or sponsorship information, please contact Carla M. Rodriguez at (956) 681-1030.

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