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**MATT MAHER SIGNS WITH ESSENTIAL RECORDS; DEBUT  
RELEASE *EMPTY & BEAUTIFUL* IN STORES APRIL 8, 2008**

(Nashville, Tenn.) December 13, 2007 – Singer/Songwriter/Worship Leader **Matt Maher** has signed with Provident Label Group’s Essential Records, and has announced the release of his 12-track, Essential Records debut album, *Empty & Beautiful*, which will hit stores **April 8, 2008**. On *Empty & Beautiful*, Maher breaks open the two simple words in the title, through songs that are both corporate and reflective; driving and soft; each one telling the story from a different perspective. *Empty & Beautiful* was co-produced by Matt Maher and Jeff Thomas, except for, “As It Is In Heaven,” which was produced by Ed Cash (Chris Tomlin, Bebo Norman, Bethany Dillon).

Maher describes the heart behind his Essential Records debut, “The realization of our own emptiness without God is both a moment of sadness, and a window to joy, which opens to something so much bigger and more beautiful than ourselves. To lay down one’s life for the Gospel in service of God and neighbor, is a reflection of the beauty of God. That is our charge as Christians, and that is where these songs came from.”

*Empty & Beautiful*, primarily written by Maher, comprises the following 12 tracks (track sequence subject to change): “Your Grace Is Enough,” “Look Like A Fool,” “As It Is In Heaven,” “I Rejoice,” “Great Things,” “Leave A Light On,” “Empty & Beautiful,” “For Your Glory,” “Shine Like the Sun,” “Unwavering,” “Lay It Down (co-written with worship leader / songwriter Brenton Brown)” and “Maranatha (Come Again).”

**About Matt Maher:**

Beyond serving with organizations like WorshipTogether.com, SpiritandSong.com, Passion, Youth Specialties, and Adore Ministries, Matt Maher is also a contributing artist for Life Teen, a high school youth movement that helped lead him to Jesus; his songs are being sung by the Church around the world. A number of Matt Maher-written songs have been recorded by other artists, including: “Your Grace is Enough,” Maher’s first radio single and a song for the church that was originally recorded by Maher’s good friend, Chris Tomlin; “Unwavering,” a reflection on the Beatitudes (recorded prior by Bethany Dillon); “For Your Glory,” a new testament response to the book of *Ecclesiastes* (recorded by Phillips, Craig and Dean).

With an incredible love for Jesus, and a heart to reach people for Christ, Maher seeks to meet people where they are, not where he wishes they would be. Often referring to himself as a “musical missionary,” Maher, who is still involved in local church ministry at St. Timothy Catholic Community, as well as helping out with the young adult ministry at All Saints Newman Center on the campus of Arizona State University, shares, “It’s so important to stay in community when you want to write for the church. That is where your songs come from; from your relationship with Christ, with your immediate family, and the family of believers.”

Born and raised in Newfoundland, Canada, Maher grew up in a strong culture comprised of two elements: music and tradition. Maher continues, “Music is part of the fabric of the culture there, similar to places like Louisiana or the Appalachian mountains; and over the years, not just Celtic music, but music of every kind.

I grew up listening to American Top 40 with Casey Kasem every Saturday, rain or shine. My dad would cook while listening to Willie Nelson or Frank Sinatra. My cousins, who lived next door, listened to everything from Broadway to British Rock, like the Beatles and The Who.” Early in his life, Maher’s parents realized his talent for music and started him in piano lessons. He quickly absorbed as many musical styles as possible, playing in concert and jazz ensembles, singing in choir, and even playing in a high school garage rock band. During his college years, Matt received a scholarship from the Jazz Department at Arizona State University, where he studied Jazz Piano.

For upcoming tour dates and additional information on Matt Maher, visit [www.mattmahermusic.com](http://www.mattmahermusic.com).

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