

Rick Warren Hosting Live Forum for Presidential Hopefuls

In

a live forum, aired on Daystar, Rick Warren, senior pastor of Saddleback Church

in California, hosted presidential candidates Barack Obama and John McCain.



[] Rick Warren, founder and senior pastor of 22,000-member Saddleback Church in Orange County, Calif., hosted presidential candidates Barack Obama and John McCain at his church on Saturday, Aug. 16. The live broadcast was the first joint appearance the two candidates made before receiving their party's official nominations.

Warren, who says he's been friends with both Obama and McCain "for a long time," had the candidates onstage simultaneously only for a moment. He spent about one hour interviewing each one personally as part of a forum dubbed the Saddleback Civil Forum on Leadership and Compassion.

"This is a critical time for our nation and the American people deserve to hear both candidates speak from the heart—without interruption—in a civil and thoughtful format absent the partisan 'gotcha' questions that typically produce heat instead of light," Warren said.

Asked nearly identical questions, the candidates

discussed issues related to stewardship, leadership, worldview and America's role in the world. The forum was broadcast live on Daystar, CNN and FOX News and streamed online at:

"While debates typically focus primarily on the candidates' positions and only secondarily on how they'd lead and make decisions, this Saddleback Civil Forum [reversed] that ratio," Warren said.

"Since the oath of the President is a commitment to protect the Constitution, it's critical to know how each candidate interprets the nature of its principles," he said. "Leadership involves far more than promoting programs and making speeches, and since no one can predict what crises will happen over the next four years, it is vital to know the decision capacity and process of each man."