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## Award-Winning Documentary 'The Believers' To Play at Cal Poly Feb. 25

SAN LUIS OBISPO – "The Believers," an award-winning documentary about the world's first transgender gospel choir, will be shown at Cal Poly at 7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 25 in the Graphic Arts Building, Room 106. Beth Burkhart, one of the film's producers, and director Todd Holland will discuss the film and the issues that it addresses.

"The Believers" documents the inspiring story of the formation of the Transcendence Gospel Choir and the dilemma the members faced in reconciling their gender identity with the widespread belief that changing one's gender goes against the word of God.

The documentary shows the transition of the choir as a cheerfully dissonant group unable to agree on much of anything into a polished, award-winning group and close-knit family.

The documentary follows the lives of its members through their transformation. They include Tom, once a radical lesbian feminist; Ashley, choir founder and professional sound engineer; and Bobby, a recovering drug addict and former sex worker. The film won an Outmusic Award in 2004 for the album Whosoever Believes.

"The Believers" has been called "challenging" and "inspiring," and "a thoughtful and illuminating look at the complex intersections between religious faith, gender identity, sexuality, and social justice."

The event is sponsored by Cal Poly's Religious Studies Program, Women's Studies Program, the Pride Center and the Philosophy Department. It is free and open to the public.

For more information, contact Andrea Nash of the Women's Studies Program at 756-1525.

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