



Covenant Network of Presbyterians

2515 Fillmore St
San Francisco, CA 94115
www.covenantnetwork.org

For Immediate Release

Contact: Anitra Kitts Rasmussen
415-351-2196

***Turning Points* Honored by Religious Communicators Council**

The Religious Communicators Council has selected *Turning Points: Stories of Life and Change in the Church* to receive the 2005 DeRose-Hinkhouse Memorial Award as Best in Class for Educational/Documentary Video. The hour-long documentary was produced by the Covenant Network of Presbyterians in cooperation with Greenhouse Pictures in New York.

“We are honored that the Religion Communicators Council has chosen to recognize *Turning Points* this year,” Covenant Network Executive Director Pam Byers said. “We know this video is changing hearts and minds in congregations across the country, because we are hearing the stories. After viewing this film in community, gay and lesbian Presbyterians and their family members are finding the courage to speak of their life in their church. Straight Presbyterians are finding new energy to advocate for changing the church’s current standards for ordained leadership.”

Turning Points is a documentary about Presbyterians struggling with the denomination’s current barriers to ordination to the ministry for gay and lesbian Presbyterians. Each section focuses on a particular story and is surrounded by thoughtful theological comment by respected scholars including Walter Brueggemann, and Shirley Guthrie of Columbia Theological Seminary and Princeton Seminary’s Beverly Gaventa.

The DeRose-Hinkhouse Memorial Awards are given annually to active members of the Religion Communicators Council (RCC) who demonstrate excellence in religious communications and public relations. The awards are named to honor the late Victor DeRose and the late Paul M. Hinkhouse, leading lithographers in New York City, and longtime friends of the RCC. Both men shared a strong interest in, and concern for, excellence in communications.

The Religion Communicators Council is an interfaith association of more than 600 religion communicators working in print and electronic communication, marketing and public relations.

- more -

For a complete list of winners, please visit www.religioncommunicators.org.

Turning Points opens with the poignant visit of Susie Smith, now a minister in the United Church of Christ, to her former Presbyterian congregation in South Carolina. Congregation members speak to the camera and to Susie about how their lives were changed by her presence and her departure. The choice between one's son and one's church is the focus of the Calhoun family's story in the second segment. The third story recounts a tragic moment of misunderstanding in the life of a young minister and a daring act of reconciliation twenty years later. The fourth segment considers how a thriving congregation in the Midwest welcomes and includes gay and lesbian members.

The video was designed to be viewed by those who are still trying to discern the role God calls those who are Christian and gay or lesbian to take in Christ's church. The video also speaks to those who are not currently members of a Christian community yet who have questions about what Christian scripture and teachings really say on the issue of whom God loves and calls to ministry.

The Covenant Network of Presbyterians is a broad-based, national group of clergy and lay leaders working for a church that is simultaneously faithful, just, and whole. In the eight years since its founding, it has become the most influential of several groups working to change the ordination standards of the Presbyterian Church. It speaks from the church's historic, progressive vision and is committed to finding a way both to live out the graciously hospitable gospel message and to keep the church from dividing over this issue.

Turning Points is available in DVD and VHS format for \$10 each through the Covenant Network of Presbyterians. Contact the Covenant Network at 415 351 2196 or visit our website at www.covenantnetwork.org

###