

HOW SHALL THEY HEAR?

THANKED EVERY WEEK

- by Pat Gardiner

“Every single week I get a ‘thank you’,” says Kathy Smith of Springfield, Illinois, who has been providing CART for her church, Western Oaks Baptist Church, in Springfield, Illinois, for approximately one and a half years.

Kathy is a CSR in the State of Illinois. She graduated from Southern Illinois University with an Associate’s degree (court reporting). After working as an official for three years, freelancing on her own for eight years, she ran across an ad in her local newspaper for a court reporter for closed captioning of her local TV station.

Her immediate thought? “No way. Not in a million years. Not me. I could never be that good!” Well, she got the job, and calls it her “miracle from God job” in that she has been able to stay home with her children for 12 years and caption from home.

How did Kathy get started providing CART in a church? “I was in another church and I asked if I could do CART for them. No go. They said it would be too much of a distraction.” So, she switched churches!

Now at her “new” church, Kathy explains, “I had been doing a Bible study. There was a man across from me that could hardly hear anything in the class. After a few classes I said to his wife, ‘Can he hear anything?’ She said, ‘Not really.’ That’s when the idea surfaced, CART in church!

Kathy approached her pastor and he was all for it. She says, “I couldn’t believe it! I was so excited! I had been turned down before, and here this great servant of God thought it was a super idea! He said he would do anything he could to make it work.” Kathy did a

little research, and set it up in two weeks, using a court reporting program that she already had.

When asked if she wrote the whole service, Kathy answers, "I write what everyone says, using lots of parentheticals like 'all laughing' or whatever the situation warrants. You know, the usual CART stuff so they can really grasp the atmosphere of what is going on. They may say a joke and, when you read that, it sure is confusing, so I put exclamation marks or parentheticals (that was a joke!). I will write what people are singing unless the words are on the big screen above the altar."

Then she explains, "After church, I copy the service transcript to a disk and give it to some wonderful technical people in our church who edit it for me and put the sermon on the web."

She says, "I didn't know how popular 'reading' the sermon on the web was until last week an attorney told me he reads it in addition to being there! That made me nervous!" Kathy continues, "One of our pastor's daughters lives in Hawaii and wants to read her dad's work!" Families of church members, out of state or whatever, and people absent from the church service read it also."

With being so busy providing CART, do you get anything out of the service yourself? "At first I was so nervous. I didn't think I was really getting as much out of the service as I thought I should. But, I'll tell you what. One day I was so into what the pastor was saying I thought, "Oh, my gosh, am I still writing? Looked down. Yep, those fingers were flying!"

Well, Kathy is able to get something out of the service, and she is thanked and hugged every week by what she fondly calls her "customers". But what is the real reason she provides CART at her church? "I am so glad I can give back to God what he has blessed me with. He gave me the talent. I am bringing His Word to those who couldn't otherwise hear it, or in some cases might not even be there because they couldn't hear it."

You can contact Kathy at: www.westernoaks.org

For a package of information on captioning/providing CART for a church, e-mail:
plgardiner@hotmail.com

Suggested Outlines:

Daniel	TKAPBL
Hosea	HOEZ/KWRA
Joel	SKWROEL
Amos	AEU/PHOS
Obadiah	PW-D
Jonah	SKWROEPB/A
Micah	PHAOEUBG/A
Nahum	TPHAUPL
Habakkuk	H-K
Zephaniah	S*PB
Haggai	HAEUG/AOEU
Zechariah	S*BG
Malachi	PHAL/KAOEU