

## **Wondering if Anyone is Watching?**

- by Pat Gardiner

Josephine only attended our captioned church services for a few short years, but her story is one we will never forget. She was an 80-year-old woman at the time and, whenever you would ask her if she was using the captioning we provide at New Life Church in Milton, she would vehemently deny it. Instead, after the church service, if she happened to see me out in the parking lot, she would grab my hand and squeeze it tight, or give me a big hug. Often, I wondered why at the time.

Then, this dear wonderful lady passed away and it all became clear. Our Pastor was asked to conduct Josephine's funeral service at a nearby funeral home, and it was her son who helped us understand. In his very moving eulogy he explained that his mother, through using the captioning at the church, had rediscovered her faith after years of being cut off from a church community as a result of adult hearing loss and the natural aging process.

Our Pastor realized even before the eulogy that she had been using the captioning, as, whenever he told a joke, she would laugh a split second later than most others in the congregation. That split second is exactly the length of time that the captions take to get from the captioner up onto the screens. And it meant that, yes, indeed, Josephine was using the captions! Those of us behind the captioning desk just did not realize this as we were always busy getting the captions on the screens, and we did not have a direct line of vision to the congregation.

We now realize what an honour it was to have been the "voice" of the Pastor for Josephine during the time she was with us, and what an encouragement her story is to those wondering whether anyone is actually using the CART/captioning being provided in more and more places of worship.

In North America there are 28 million Deaf and hard-of-hearing people. The number of hearing disabled people has grown dramatically over the past 10 years and, here in Canada, hearing impairment is the fastest growing disability in the country. It won't be long before almost 25% of the population will be over 65. Further, one third of individuals over 65 have a hearing loss that interferes with speech perception and effective communication, the prevalence of hearing loss increasing with age.

Statistics tell us that 98% of the people with a hearing loss do not have a church home. Perhaps that is due to the fact that there is not access for them in many of their local churches. Society is now beginning to understand that they are not reaching a percentage of the population if their programs and events are not captioned. There are many "Josephines" out there and you may be the one to help them rediscover their faith after years of not being able to hear what is being said in a church service.

Consider providing CART/captioning for your local church and you, too, may be pleasantly surprised to realize that people do use your CART/captioning and that you truly are making a difference in the lives of people.

*JCR Contributing Editor Pat Gardiner is from Milton, Ontario, Canada. She is coordinator of the captioning at New Life. For more information on church CART/captioning go to [www.captioningtheword.com](http://www.captioningtheword.com).*

OUTLINES:

Macedonia	PHAS/TKOPB/KWRA
Magdalene	PHAG/TKAL/HRAOEPB
maranatha	PHAR/TPHA/THA
Melchizadek	PHL/KEUZ/TKEBG
mourn	PHOURPB
Naomi	TPHAEU/OE/PHAOE
new covenant	TPH-FT
Rahab	RAEU/HAB
Sapphira	SAF/TPAOEUR/RA
Tarsus	TAR/SUS