

Not Ever Lacking for a Captioner

For over ten years now – a very impressive number of years -- captioning has been provided at a church in Texas and it's all thanks to three extraordinary people, Diane Humphrey; Sharon MacIntosh-Beatson, CSR, RMR, CRR; and Mark Kislingbury, RMR, CRR. The church? Second Baptist Church in Houston, Texas, with a large membership, located at Woodway and Voss, and their pastor is Dr. Ed Young.

This all began when Mark Kislingbury started captioning for this church around 1997, and ... well, let's get Mark to tell us how it all began.

"I started captioning for Second Baptist Church in Houston, Texas, around 1997. A television was provided by the church in one of the balconies for the deaf and hard-of-hearing. I captioned the second service, which started at 11 a.m. We did not caption the first service."

Mark did almost all of the captioning from the control room, which pretty much resembled a television news control room, captioning remotely only if he couldn't make it to the church, but 95% of the time he captioned on-site.

He wore headphones so that, Mark explains, "I could have a perfect audio feed coming to my ears. I was also provided the music that would be sung, ahead of time, so that I could have all the correct words. I would turn the pages on my own and write what I heard the choir singing. I never liked to use script files, so I was always captioning live."

Mark found church captioning very rewarding, because he knew even if it only helped one person, that it was worth it. Also, the sermons were always very interesting, and often Dr. Young, the pastor, said very challenging words, which Mark enjoyed.

Mark continues, "Fortunately, Sharon MacIntosh-Beatson began captioning around that time and substituted for me when I wasn't available, so the church never lacked for a captioner. Sharon, at first, was just substituting for me a few times, and that was on location. It was at least a year or two after her first subbing that she then took over responsibility for the whole job."

Sharon lives in Katy, Texas. Why and how did she get involved in captioning for a church? She tells us: My first real taste of captioning for a church began approximately 11 years ago after an extensive search for a career change and expressing an interest in closed captioning to just the right people who then eventually directed me to "Mad Skills" Mark Kislingbury.

"I contacted Mark and he graciously invited me to join him a handful of times in the media department where he captioned on-site. Mark took me under his wing

and showed me the captioning ropes, gave me advice on everything from A to Z, and then even cut me loose on several of his jobs after that.

“From there I approached my own very small church in Katy, 30 miles west of Houston, and offered my services on a trial basis just to see if we could maybe accommodate an unmet need out here in my community. This temporary exercise was a great start because it was on a very small scale and in the safety of my own church, allowing me to gain enough confidence to etch one more notch on my aspired-for goal of unshakable nerves of steel.

“When I captioned for my church years ago, I was on-site and used my Eclipse court reporting software on a notebook computer with a piece of equipment that took what was on my computer screen and shot it over to a large TV via cable.

“Years later, Mark generously plunked this blessing at Second Baptist in my lap. Since then, myself and another captioner from Colorado, Diane Humphrey, have been covering the 9:30 a.m. worship service every Sunday. Now both Diane Humphrey and I caption remotely from our homes, Diane using Eclipse’s captioning software and myself using RapidText’s captioning software.

What impresses me most about Pastor Ed Young is the passion for Christ he exudes in his sermons, how many teenagers he and his church have been able to reach and touch and change for Christ and the way he continually captivates his audience with his sage insight on the timeless stories of the Old and New Testaments. His ability to explain these stories and their significance in history along with the relevant message that God was trying to teach the people back then and still is today is quite fascinating.

“The worship services we caption are every Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m. and, yes, everything from beginning to end is captioned, including the songs. The choir director e-mails the sheet music straight to Diane now, as she covers most of the worship services these days. Diane e-mails the material to me when I’m covering for her. Sheet music and a cover sheet are included which outline the order in which the songs will be sung. This incorporates the title of the sermon for the day as well as the Bible verse that will be referenced. We then research that Bible verse for prep.”

Sunday morning begins by the captioner calling the people in the control room before the church service starts, and then sending a test of the captioning to ensure the captioner is connected to the church modem. The captioner also makes sure they can hear the service through the audio line.

When Sharon was asked if there have been any obstacles she’s had to face along the way, she answered: “Now that my dictionary is built up, the obstacle I encounter most frequently relates to the sheet music that is sent to us which sometimes encompasses 45 pages or more. Of course we don’t need the entire choir version; only the lyrics are necessary for our part. To get around this, I

scroll through all the pages and print out just those songs that are fully contained on one page. For all other songs, I jot down the name of the song and the artist. Then off to the Internet I go. Google does a fantastic job finding just the lyrics I need and I print it off on one piece of paper.

“As mentioned above, Diane Humphrey covers most services now so I can go to church services with my own family. I fill in for her when she is out of town.”

Diane captions from a mountain town outside of Denver, Colorado, called Conifer. She became interested in captioning after hearing about it, then reading an article about someone who captioned his church service, and she caught the bug! Although she didn't start captioning until a few years after that, she was very much inspired to caption for a church.

Diane adds to what Sharon told us, “I would add that I am really honored to be captioning for what I think is a very large, well-known congregation. My favorite moments are when scripture is quoted from the Old Testament and I haven't a clue to whom or where the pastors are referring, and I only cross my fingers that the captioning group is understanding most of the message! Remember, sins needs to be written in two strokes; otherwise, you have "since." Also, you have to get that extra "S" in "Jesus," or it's just "gees.”

Diane phones the people in the control room about 20 minutes before the service starts. She explains, “I am emailed the sheet music, and I used to print it all up, but found myself going through loads of printer ink because it's close to 40 pages, mostly sheet music. I have done what Sharon does and look up the lyrics on Google, and sometimes I open the file, which is in Adobe format, and scroll through and caption the music that way, live.

Diane was told that this particular service is "advertised" as closed-captioned. She sometimes hears the pastor refer to a passage as being displayed on a screen somewhere, “Which is good,” Diane says, “because these pastors sometimes read the passages very quickly!”

And so the captioning continues, all started at this church in Houston by Mark Kislingbury. For almost 11 years, they have not lacked for a captioner, and it's thanks to three remarkable captioners, Diane, Sharon, and Mark. Thank you to all three of you for sharing your story which, I'm sure, will motivate and inspire others to consider providing CART/captioning at a place of worship, perhaps either on-site in their home church as Mark did, or remotely like Diane and Sharon.

STENO BRIEFS by Sharon: The following are a few of my favorite brief forms:

Christ Jesus KRAOIJ
Dear Heavenly Father DAEFNL

God Almighty GAUMT
 Lord Almighty LAUMT
 Lord God Almighty LOMT
 God's GO*DZ
 gods GAUDZ
 Lord's LO*RDZ
 Holy Spirit HOIPS
 Power of the Holy Spirit POIPS
 Prince of Peace PROIPS
 Savior SA*FR
 Lord and Savior LA*FR
 Lord and Savior Jesus Christ LA*FRJ
 Lord Jesus LORJ
 Lord Jesus Christ LORJS
 in Jesus' name JA*IM
 in Jesus' name we pray JA*IP
 Jehovah (God) JO*EF(D)
 Christian KRIRB
 Christendom KRIRBD
 kingdom KINGD
 Kingdom of God KOGD
 O God O*IGD
 O Lord O*ILD
 Messiah SMAO*I
 Virgin Mary VIRM
 immaculate conception MAEPGS
 nativity NA*IFT
 nativity scene NA*IFTS
 Christmas KMAS
 Christmas Eve KMAOE*F
 Christmas Day KMAD
 wise men WAOIMS
 Golgotha GOLG
 Gethsemane GETSDZ
 crucify KROIF
 crucified KROIFD
 crucifies KROIFS
 crucifying KROIFG
 crucifix KROIFK
 crucifixion KROIFKS
 Easter Sunday AOERND
 Our Lady of Guadalupe GLA*UP
 guardian angel GAURNG(S)
 Pope John Paul II POEJ
 Pope Benedict POEPD
 Vatican VAKT

cardinal(s) KARND(Z)
 Cardinal Daniel DiNardo KA*RND
 archbishop(s) AFRB(S)
 archdiocese AFRBD
 rosary RO*ERS
 rosaries RO*ERSZ
 bishop(s) BIRB(S)
 John the Baptist JAUPT
 apostle(s) PAUFL(S)
 prophet(s) PRAUFT(S)
 Catholic(s) KL*IK(S)
 Catholicism KL*IFM
 Jehovah's Witness(es) JO*EFNS(Z)
 Baptist BAP
 Lutheran LAOUTSDZ
 Episcopal PIFK
 First Baptist Church FAO*UFRP
 Second Baptist Church SAO*URP
 candlelight vigil(s) KLIJ(S)
 prayer vigil(s) PRIJ(S)
 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego SHAD/SHAD
 spiritual SPAL
 spiritually SPAEL
 supernatural SAOURNL
 worship(s)(d)(g) WORP(S)(D)(G)
 Rosh Hashanah RORB/"
 Yom Kippur YOM/"
 Melchizedek MEKZ
 Methodist METSDZ
 Genesis JENSZ
 Exodus KP-DZ
 Leviticus VITS
 Deuteronomy DAOURT
 Chronicles KRONS
 Ezra ERZ
 Nehemiah NAO*IM
 Ecclesiastes KLAOEZ
 Solomon SLOM
 Isaiah SDAE
 Jeremiah GE*RM
 Lamentations LAEMTS
 Ezekiel SDAOEK
 Daniel DANL
 Hosea HAO*S
 Obadiah DAOIBD
 Habakkuk HAOUKD

Zephaniah	SDEFN	
Haggai	HAEG	
Zechariah	SDEK	
Malachi	MABLG	
Corinthians	KRINS	
Galatians	GLAIGSZ	
Ephesians	FAOEGSZ	
Philippians	FLIPSZ	
Colossians	KLOGSZ	
Thessalonians	THESZ	
Philemon	FLOIM	
Hebrew(s)	HAOEB(S))	
Revelation	RE*FLGS	
epiphany	PIF	
apocalypse	PLIPS	
rapture(s)	RURP(S)	
raptured	RURPD	
rapturing	RURPG	
Nebuchadnezzar	NEBZ	
Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego		SHA*D
Hezekiah	HEKZ	
Lazarus	LAZ	
Israel(i)	SDRA(E)L	
Jezebel	JEBZ	
Jezreel	JEZ	
sanctuary/ies	SWAERS/Z	
hallelujah	HA*UL	
hal-le-lu-jah	HA*UL/HA*UL	
alleluia	A*UL	
al-le-lu-ia	A*UL/A*UL	