



An initiative of the the Hearing Loss Association of Albuquerque

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Telecoils Can Offer Hearing Impaired a Joyful Christmas

By [Stephen O. Frazier / Hearing Loss Support Specialist](#)

The Christmas Holidays can be especially trying for those of us with hearing loss. There's a little less Joy to the World at Christmas Eve church services when you can't hear the proceedings.

For those who have telecoil equipped hearing aids, though, they'll not only Hark the Herald Angels Sing, they'll hear and understand the entire service.

Telecoils are small copper coils contained in the majority of hearing aids and all new cochlear implants. They act sort of like a small radio and pick up otherwise silent signals from what are called hearing loops. These loops can be installed in a church, a meeting hall, a theater or even in a home TV room and allow the hard of hearing person to hear and understand where it was not previously possible.

A national study once indicated that over half of the nation's conscientious, diligent hearing care providers, audiologist and hearing aid specialists alike, told their clients about the technology and explained how it works — how it could double the functionality of their hearing aids by turning them into a complete personal listening system supplementing the new Bluetooth technology by providing communication access where Bluetooth cannot.

Unfortunately, over 40 percent of providers (possibly less conscientious or diligent) did not do so. That group sold their clients hearing aids that often contained telecoils but did not tell the clients they were there, what they were for, and didn't even activate them so they could be used.

Today there are more than four dozen New Mexico churches that have installed these hearing loops in their sanctuaries — most in Albuquerque but some in outlying cities — and when Christmas services are held, the hard of hearing won't suffer a Silent Night if they attend a service in one of those churches. All they need to do is turn on their telecoils and get in the loop.

For a list of churches that employ the loop system, call the Hearing Loss Association of Albuquerque at 881-8824.

For anyone who wears hearing aids, if you don't know if you have telecoils, call and ask your provider. If you're told "no," ask "Why not?"

Telecoils can often be added to those hearing aids not already equipped with them. If they are still under warranty it is usually done at no cost. If the warranty has expired, the fee could run around \$200.

If you're hard of hearing, get in the loop and hear for the holidays !

Steve Frazier is chair of the Loop New Mexico Committee of the Hearing Loss Association of Albuquerque, a local nonprofit support and advocacy group.

