

HEARING EYE

The voice of Open Ears

Hard of Hearing Christian Fellowship

No: 162

Autumn 2019



Welcome

Welcome to the autumn edition of Hearing Eye. It is a joy and a privilege for me to be guest editor for this, and the next edition, while Tracy is busy writing her new book.

As we enter the darker, colder months of the year I wonder, if you, like me, are looking forward to lighting a fire, or snuggling under a warm blanket to read a good book? I do enjoy the different seasons (but have to confess that summer is probably my favourite – I was born in June!) and find special reminders of God's grace and goodness in each one.

Recently, my husband, Steve, and I were able to go for a bike ride through two very beautiful parks just a stone's throw from our city home. The sun was shining, the sky was blue, and the trees were spectacular in their autumnal glory. We saw squirrels collecting nuts to store away for winter, ducks and geese enjoying bread brought to them and it made me think of all the good gifts that God gives to us so generously.

Last month, my daughter and son-in-law celebrated their wedding anniversary. Their three children, Abigail (7), Josiah (6) and Micah (4) decided to cook them a special anniversary meal. They planned

what they would make, (fish, oven chips and salad, followed by sticky toffee pudding and custard) and then asked to be taken to the shops. Mummy was told that she couldn't see what they were buying, although frequent trips were made to her to ask for help in accessing some of the ingredients! Suddenly, Josiah asked Abbie, "How will we pay?" Abbie's confident reply was, "Mummy will pay!" And, indeed, she did.

Once home, the children set to work. Again, Mummy was needed to oversee the making of the pudding and to reach serving bowls etc. The table was beautifully set, the meal ready, and Mummy and Daddy were invited to come to the table and all the family sat down to enjoy the feast and celebration together.



Isn't that just how it is with us and God? Everything that we do or give to Him comes first from His provision to us. We can have confidence that He will supply ALL our needs (Philippians 4:19). We can get real joy from serving Him, and He gets delight from our doing so. He always wants to sit down with us, to feast with us and celebrate our life with Him.



"Now, He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion." 2 Corinthians 9:10-11

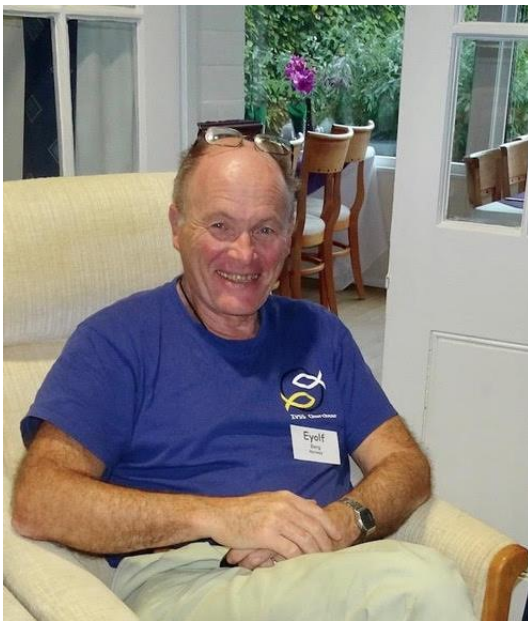
May the generous Lord of the Harvest be our joy and delight as we worship and serve Him.

Anthea Owen

Open Ears weekend, 11-13 October 2019

As Friday, 11 October dawned, a mixed group of people set out from different locations, all heading to Hurstpierpoint in Sussex for the Open Ears weekend. Some were looking forward to meeting friends from previous get-togethers, others, perhaps, were a little apprehensive, unsure as to what lay ahead. For others, the trip was tinged with sadness, as this is likely to be the final time that Open Ears will be able to meet at the lovely and relaxing Torch Holiday and Retreat Centre, where future changes are on the horizon.

For many, the journey was wet, but that didn't dampen spirits as people arrived and settled into the comfortable accommodation. Tea, coffee and biscuits were served and soon chatter and laughter filled the room.



It was a real privilege to have visitors from Europe join us. Eyolf Berg and Ingrid Stillström both serve on the international board of Churchear. Thankfully they both have excellent English – Eyolf is actually fluent in 11 languages!



Later in the weekend they were interviewed by Marilyn, our special 'in the spotlight' host for the weekend. We learned a lot about the work of Churchear and all it does in raising the profile and meeting the needs of deaf people and those with hearing loss. If you would like to meet them yourself and find out more about

Churchear, there are details of their biennial conference later in the magazine and all are warmly invited to attend. Marilyn will be going.

Tracy Williamson was the speaker for the weekend, and what lovely, gentle and encouraging ministry she gave. Her theme was 'The Father's Voice' and she led us through Biblical meditations based around the longing of our Heavenly Father to communicate with us, His people. We thought about Him spending time with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden; of how He is our Loving Shepherd who leads us beside still waters and restores our soul. Tracy demonstrated from her own personal walk with the Lord how it is possible to hear the Father's voice in everyday life – even for those of us with a hearing loss. She shared much of her own story, bearing witness to the healing that only the Heavenly Father can bring to the hurt of rejection and abuse, and how He restores and gifts us with fullness of joy.

Tracy gave many opportunities for the group to share their own testimonies of what God was speaking into their hearts as well as speaking prophetically into specific needs. We were wonderfully blessed with Marilyn Baker leading us in worship. No one could have left the weekend without having felt a kiss from the Father.

Induction loop users benefitted from an excellent system and all the sessions were interpreted with BSL and presented on screen with Speech to Text; many thanks to Averil and Susanne for their stalwart work making the weekend accessible to all.

The Centre has a beautiful, 100 year old, chapel. We were able to make use of this through private prayer throughout the day and immediately following the evening session. Prayer stations had been arranged around the chapel, inviting us to consider the state of our own hearts and to grow into our Father's love.

Each morning the day began (after a hearty breakfast!) with morning prayers. It was so good to come together and pray for the many needs in the world as well as for more personal concerns.



The weekend offered time for friendship, teaching, spiritual renewal and relaxation. Hand, foot and hand massages were available for those wanting a bit of pampering, and an optional Creative Prayer Workshop was enjoyed by all who participated.

On Sunday morning Tracy led us in a celebration service, remembering all that the Lord Jesus has done for each one of us.

All too soon we had finished another delicious meal and it was time to say our good-byes. We were well fed spiritually and physically and had strengthened our family ties within the love of God. Huge thanks to all who made such a wonderful weekend possible, not least the fabulous staff who looked after us so well. We can't wait for our next Open Ears holiday at Hothorpe Hall in October 2020.



“The Voice of the Father”

The following extract is taken from the Sunday morning talk given by Tracy Williamson at the Open Ears conference weekend, Torch Holiday and Retreat Centre, 11-13 October 2019.

As I prayed, God put into my heart that He wants us to be rooted and established in His love. His love is the foundation we are to stand upon. Ephesians 1 tells us that, before the universe was formed, we were in God’s mind and He created us in love, making each of us unique. In Jesus’ death, The Father took away everything we had done to grieve His heart. He also bore all the sorrow and struggle that we carry, so that we could know healing and peace.

He brings us into the place of being ‘His delightful children’, as the Passion Bible puts it. Full of unstained innocence; a most incredible thing. When we celebrate communion, we celebrate that gift of belonging, cleansing, forgiveness and innocence.

We shared in the other sessions how God speaks to us. We looked at David and how he heard God speak through creation. And we thought about how we hear Him in our lives. We talked about asking Him to bring Bible verses alive in our hearts.

I want to encourage you to keep on listening to God – He doesn’t just speak in a place like this! He is always speaking - in your home, or in difficult or busy situations your life contains. He speaks ongoingly to comfort, guide, affirm, build you up, so you become more rooted and established in love. Whatever your circumstances, His voice can overcome and be stronger and more powerful than any of these things.

Because of our varying degrees of hearing loss, we struggle to hear one another; but every one of us can hear God. In our deafness we

need to be intentional about listening. Make time, say to Him – “Speak, Lord”. Listen in your hearts.

If He is rooting and establishing us in that love, He also wants us to go out and give that love away. We can't just receive and receive and stay in that place; we need to overflow with it to those around us. It's through us that the world will know who Jesus is and how much God loves them.

So, I thought of this little story in Acts, chapter 9.

In Damascus, there was a disciple called Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, “Ananias” – just think there for a moment, at how God knows our names. He knows your name; He died for you. He knew Ananias' name, and called him by it.

“Yes, Lord”, he answered.

The Lord told him, “Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus called Saul, he is praying. In a vision he's seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight”.

“Lord”, Ananias answered, “I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he's done to your saints. Now he's here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name”.

But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go”.

Ananias feels overwhelmed at what God is saying, he knows God is asking him to confront a murderer, who wants to murder Christians and who hates them. So, Ananias is understandably terrified. God doesn't say, “There, there, it doesn't matter” – He says, “Go!”

There are times where He wants to tend us gently, and He always holds us in his love, but He also calls us to step out. When we hear Him and take those steps to obey what He puts in our hearts, to reach out to others with His love, it is then that His love goes deeper into our own hearts.

So, God called, and said to Ananias, “Go”.

‘Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands upon Saul, he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit”. Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes and he could see again. He got up, was baptised, and regained his strength.’

What I love about this is how deeply the voice of The Father went down into Ananias’ heart in that little conversation. He was afraid and overwhelmed, but he heard The Father and heard that He loved Saul; He wanted Saul to be part of the family. That went against everything Ananias felt, but he heard it.

There’s a place inside each one of us where we can hear The Father’s voice; the Voice that overrides our emotions, our fear, our comfort zones. And when we obey and follow those promptings, something changes within us and we become stronger and empowered as His ambassadors of love.

We see this in Ananias; when he arrived at the house he reached out and touched Saul and he said, “Brother Saul”. Isn’t that beautiful! He’s now reaching out to this man he’d been so afraid of and calling him brother. He was welcoming him into the family!

It was a miracle of God’s love in Ananias’s heart, flowing out from him to someone he wanted to avoid. And it’s through such love that this world will be changed.



Iris Fielder's story from the Open Ears weekend, 11-13 October 2019.

We all know the importance of having the loop system working, especially at a special occasion. Iris shared this funny story with us at the weekend; it is mainly in her own words – I hope you enjoy it as much as the weekend guests did!



“I'd like to share something that's very light-hearted. This happened to me about a year and a half ago at a family funeral at my sister's church. We'd been to the crematorium and come back to the church - a very big church with a high ceiling and very big windows – for the celebration of this person's life. I really wanted to hear what people would say about this person as they reflected on his life.

Everybody had gone into the church, but I am slow, and I have problems walking, so I was practically the last person to come in. The church had a very nice young, new vicar. I said to the vicar as I came in, something like, 'Please can you point me to where the loop is so I can use it?' He said 'Yes', took my hand, and started to walk out towards the front with me.

I thought, 'This will be good'. Then he took me down the side of the church and I thought, 'I wonder where we're going?' Then, he opened a door and I thought, 'Well, maybe there's an area at the side where the loop is.' As the vicar opened the door and ushered me in.....I saw a sign that said...."Ladies toilet"!

I had thought only people with hearing loss got the wrong end of the stick! This man had good hearing – I laughed so much that he'd misheard me. I said to him, "I don't normally go into a church and ask the vicar to take me to the toilet!"

Choices, Choices....by Emily Owen

I attended the recent Open Ears weekend conference. It was lovely to see people again, and to meet some for the first time.

During the weekend, I looked after Susanne and Vic's children, Nadine and Dominic, a couple of times. They're delightful children, and I was thrilled to have the opportunity to spend time with them.

We have a God who wants to spend time with us. Not because He has to, but because He'd like to. And that includes staying with us through hard times. I'd just like to share an excerpt from my book, 'The Power of Seven';

"The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need.

. . . Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me.' (NLT)

I wish the light wouldn't disappear sometimes.

But it does.

All is dark.

And I live in the shadows.

Shadows of things I cannot see.

Shadows of light extinguished.

Shadows of the unknown.

I live in the shadows.

And yet, as I gaze blindly into nothing,

reaching for something,

I am scared but unafraid.

I am nervous but

my reaching hands meet courage.

I realize,

and am comforted.

I hold on.

You are here.

I am.

Because you are.

I am the Light in your shadows.

***The Light which never disappears.
Darkness all around but not within.
Light of presence.
Light of courage.
Light of assurance.
Light of comfort.
Light of hope.
Light of love.
Your reaching hands meet mine.
They meet me.
I reach for you, my child.
I find you.
And I hold on.
Always.
I protect and comfort you.
You have all that you need.
I am your Shepherd.”***

Whatever happens in life, God is there, too.

‘For the LORD your God is living among you. He is a mighty saviour. He will take delight in you with gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs.’
Zephaniah 3:17 (NLT)

At the end of the Hurstpierpoint weekend, Nadine came up to me, crept onto my knee, and said; “You can look after us again.” I felt as though I’d been given a wonderful gift. I was honoured and touched by her generous heart. And it seemed she’d enjoyed our time together as much as I had. Why else would she have offered more? Realistically, it wasn’t up to Nadine to decide who looked after her, it was her parents’ decision. And they’d have made sure she had someone with her. Nadine’s choice was whether or not to take pleasure in that company.

Jesus said: ...”be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:20b

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we have Him with us. Always. He promised. He makes sure we are never alone. But do we choose to take pleasure in His presence with us? Or do we sometimes take it for granted?

In John 1:11, we're told 'He (Jesus) came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.'

We are His own, bought with a price (see 1 Corinthians 6:20); do we receive Him – with pleasure - when He comes to us? Do we recognise Him in our lives and days? Do we tell Him, 'You can look after me again' because we've enjoyed having Him caring for us?



To misquote this: Determining whether or not Jesus is with us every second is not dependent on us, or on things we do or don't do. He is with us; always.

It's up to us how we choose to respond to His presence.

Psalm 16:11 (ESV): "You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore."

Joy is there, in His presence. It really is. So let's find it. Let's choose joy; even when life is hard.

I have a hashtag - #everydayrainbows – which is basically about finding something good in every day, no matter how small.

Chocolate is an #everydayrainbow!

Having a child tell me 'you can look after me again' is an #everydayrainbow.

What #everydayrainbows will you see today?

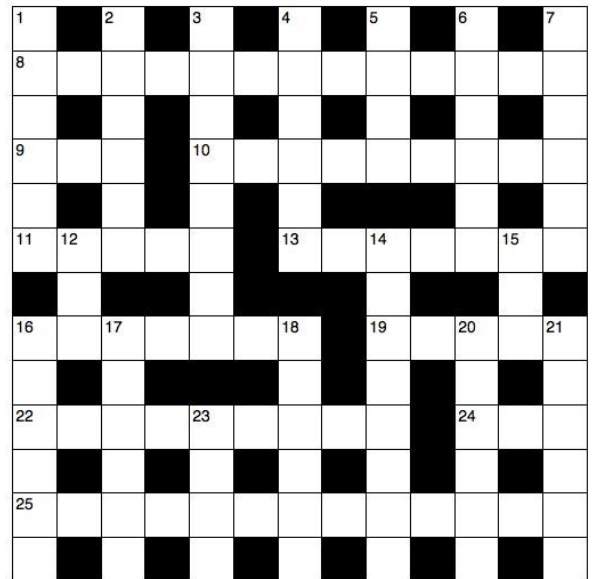
Choose to believe God delights in you.

Just as you are.

Because He does. 'You are precious and honoured in my sight, and...I love you.' Isaiah 43:4

Across

- 8 Laban complained he had not been allowed to kiss them (Genesis 31: 28) (13)
9 In favour of (3)
10 'The child's father and mother — at what was said about him' (Luke 2:33) (9)
11 Swagger (Psalm 12:8) (5)
13 'Terrors — him on every side and dog his every step' (Job 18:11) (7)
16 Bay bits (anag.) (7)
19 Preach, address an audience, speak in public (5)
22 Holy Communion (9)
24 'On their way to — out the land, Joshua instructed them, "Go and make a survey of the land"' (Joshua 18:8) (3)
25 Joseph advised Pharaoh to appoint these to administer his grain storage plan. (Genesis 41:34) (13)



Down

- 1 'Assyria's pride will be brought down and — sceptre will pass away' (Zechariah 10:11) (6)
2 'And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in — with God and men' (Luke 2:52) (6)
3 The descendants of Esau (Genesis 36:9) (8)
4 Components of the crown that Jesus wore before his crucifixion (John 19:2) (6)
5 Colour of cloth used to cover holy objects in the tabernacle when moving camp (Numbers 4:6–12) (4)
6 One of the gold articles plundered from the Midianites offered to the Lord by the Israelite army 'to make atonement' (Numbers 31:50) (6)
7 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set — —' (Jeremiah 31:29) (2,4)
12 Ate (anag.) (3)
14 'We ourselves... groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our — as sons' (Romans 8:23) (8)
15 Abram's nephew (Genesis 14:12) (3)
16 Rupture (Job 30:14) (6)
17 'Yet to all who received him... he gave the right to — children of God' (John 1:12) (6)
18 'I... asked him the true meaning of all — . — he told me and gave me the interpretation of these things' (Daniel 7:16) (4,2)
20 Military units (Exodus 14:20) (6)
21 'Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to — her to public disgrace' (Matthew 1:19) (6)
23 Diva (anag.) (4)

Autumnal thoughts from Beryl Cooper

During the apple harvest in Devon last year they decided to have an Apple Day for the children. The children came and picked apples off the trees and took them to be juiced.



Noah, aged 5, one of my grandchildren living in Devon, carefully carried a bottle of apple juice they were going to buy, and put it on the table - then - said to the man, "you won't have so much work to do now that we are all helping you"!

Answers to crossword on page 13



A suggested guide for 30 times of prayer.

<u>1</u>	Pray for your local schools; for teachers and students. Pray that the Word of God might be opened in the schools.
<u>2</u>	Pray for your neighbours. Ask God to show you ways of bringing His love to them.
<u>3</u>	Pray for Emergency Service Personnel, for their physical, mental and emotional protection.
<u>4</u>	Pray for your church leaders
<u>5</u>	Pray for prisoners, their families and those who visit. Pray for the prison staff and Chaplains.
<u>6</u>	Pray for those who are sick and dying; for doctors, nurses, hospice workers, carers and all who alleviate distress in illness.
<u>7</u>	Give thanks for all the good gifts that God has given you. Take time to 'count your blessings' and praise God.
<u>8</u>	Pray for the UK in the present time of uncertainty. Pray for wise and godly politicians who will stand up for what is honourable, just and true.
<u>9</u>	Pray for those countries in the world where there is war, hatred and unrest.
<u>10</u>	Pray for persecuted Christians in Eritrea, the second worst country in the world for Christian persecution, after North Korea
<u>11</u>	Pray for members of your family who do not yet know Jesus as their Saviour and Friend.
<u>12</u>	Pray for people suffering from abuse, whether sexual, physical, mental or emotional. Pray that they will find safe places of refuge.
<u>13</u>	Pray for all asylum seekers and those who assist them.
<u>14</u>	Praise God for Who He is. Take time to reflect on His character. Thank Him for what He means to you today.
<u>15</u>	Pray for your local shops and businesses. Pray for opportunities to speak God's love into the lives of your community.
<u>16</u>	Pray for Missionaries and those who risk their lives for the sake of the Gospel.
<u>17</u>	Pray for Bible translators, seeking to make the Word of God available to all people groups.

<u>18</u>	Pray for those under the power of addiction, pray for their families and support agencies.
<u>19</u>	Pray those who are homeless and for charities seeking to help them.
<u>20</u>	Pray for Christian parents seeking to bring their children up in the fear and admonition of the Lord.
<u>21</u>	Thank God for those people who especially bring joy into your life.
<u>22</u>	Pray for those struggling with mental health issues, and for all who care for them.
<u>23</u>	Pray that, as Christmas approaches, the real message of Christmas will be proclaimed and received.
<u>24</u>	Pray for those who feel lonely. Ask God to show you how you can help combat this modern epidemic.
<u>25</u>	Pray for those with dementia, for their families and support networks.
<u>26</u>	Pray for Ecumenical initiatives which bring Christians together.
<u>27</u>	Pray for young people who feel unheard, unnoticed, unwanted and angry.
<u>28</u>	Praise God for His amazing, beautiful world.
<u>29</u>	Pray for the work of Open Ears.
<u>30</u>	Pray for yourself, that the light of Christ will be evident in you.



Spring Harvest

Tuesday 14th to Saturday 18th April 2020

“Unleashed – The Acts Church Today”.

As you will know from the Summer edition of Hearing Eye, a group of us from Open Ears will be attending Spring Harvest 2020 at the Harrogate Convention Centre. Both Speech to Text and British Sign Language interpretation will be available. Our very own Susanne Willdig will be doing the STT service, so we know that this will be of a very high quality!

We have booked a **small** number of bed and breakfast rooms at **a very reduced price**, at the Crowne Plaza hotel, situated next door to the Convention Centre. If you would like to reserve a room through Open Ears, it is **essential** that you email Christine Pitts or call Roy Spiller on the OE phone **as soon as possible**, as numbers are limited (contact details on back page).

Of course, you can make your own alternative accommodation arrangements and still benefit from the STT and Open Ears fellowship at the conference!

You will need to book the actual Spring Harvest conference yourself and the easiest way to do this is online. The website address is <https://springharvest.org.harrogate/>. If this is a problem for you, or you don't have internet access, please let us know and we'll do all we can to help you.

The early bird price for a five-day conference pass is £105 per person until 29 November and £120 per person thereafter.

Important - do check that a room is available at the hotel **before** you book a place at the conference! Once confirmed, please fill in the hotel booking form (enclosed) and send this, with your deposit to, Christine Pitts at the address shown on the form, **to arrive before 30th November 2019**.

Looking forward to seeing you! Marilyn Kilsby

Churchear Conference **September 10th to September 14th 2020**

Churchear is a kind of European equivalent of Open Ears, run by a Board of five people from five different European countries with similar responsibilities to our committee. Their President is Ingrid Stillström who lives and works in Sweden.

Every two years Churchear holds an international conference within Europe. I went to the conference in Denmark in 2016, where I learned a lot about managing hearing loss in different countries, had wonderful fellowship and enjoyed it enormously. Next year's conference will be held at Eisenach in Germany. I'm planning to attend and am hoping to run a session on...maybe meditation using art or mime or... who knows?! Would you like to join me? It's a wonderful opportunity to meet deaf and hard of hearing people from many countries, using different communication methods.

There will be full communication support – an induction loop, sign language interpreting (in German, though!) and Speech to Text. You don't speak German? Don't worry! All presentations are given in German and English and are translated into both languages; the Speech to Text will also be shown in both languages.

More information will be available from November about conference costs, venue and accommodation. Open Ears may be able to help with travel costs and fees, especially if we are able to contribute to the conference itself or if we can go back to our own church or group and share with others what we have learnt at this conference.

If you would be interested in coming along, please contact me via Open Ears email address or mobile phone, details are on the back page of Hearing Eye. If you have access to the internet, why not visit Churchear's website at <http://www.churchear.org>

Marylin Kilsby

Volunteer Minute Secretary

Open Ears urgently requires someone to take, collate and distribute minutes for our committee meetings, which take place on Saturdays, four times a year, in Wokingham, Berkshire. Some experience would be beneficial and access to a computer and internet is essential.

Travel expenses will be covered.

Contact: openearsministry@hotmail.com

Looking to the Future – Can you help?

Our small, active and friendly committee would welcome two or three extra members to ensure the continued success of Open Ears. If you are interested in helping us, or know someone who might be interested, please get in touch. In the past several committee members have come to us from outside Open Ears membership.

Committee members do not have to be deaf or hearing impaired themselves, but do need to have an interest in, and some understanding of, hearing loss. A Speech to Text service is provided at all our committee meetings, which take place on Saturdays, four times a year, in Wokingham, Berkshire.

For more details, please contact:
openearsministry@hotmail.com

Open Ears - Mission Statement

Open Ears is a non-denominational Christian charity (Registered Charity 1181896) for people who have various degrees of impaired hearing, mainly (but not exclusively) those who communicate orally, assisted by hearing aids or cochlear implants and lip-reading. It aims to provide accessible fellowship, Bible teaching, prayer support and pastoral care, to produce informative literature and a quarterly magazine called Hearing Eye. We also support the Ear Hospital set up by the International Nepal Fellowship (INF) in Pokhara, Nepal.

**Hearing Eye is published by Open Ears
(formerly the Hard of Hearing Christian Fellowship).**

**‘Open Ears’ is a registered
Charitable Incorporated Organisation No 1181896.
led by a Committee formed of Trustees and Committee
Members who meet together quarterly.**

**Chairperson: Marylin Kilsby. Administrator: Christine Pitts.
Treasurer: Julia Chapman.**

**For all correspondence and enquiries, please contact:
The Administrator,
Open Ears, 11 York Avenue, New Milton, BH25 6BT.**

Tel: (New No): 07396 236214 - voice or text

Email: openearsministry@hotmail.com

Website: www.openears.org.uk

**Hearing Eye is printed by Smith & Son, Printers of New Milton
Email: office@smithprinters.co.uk**