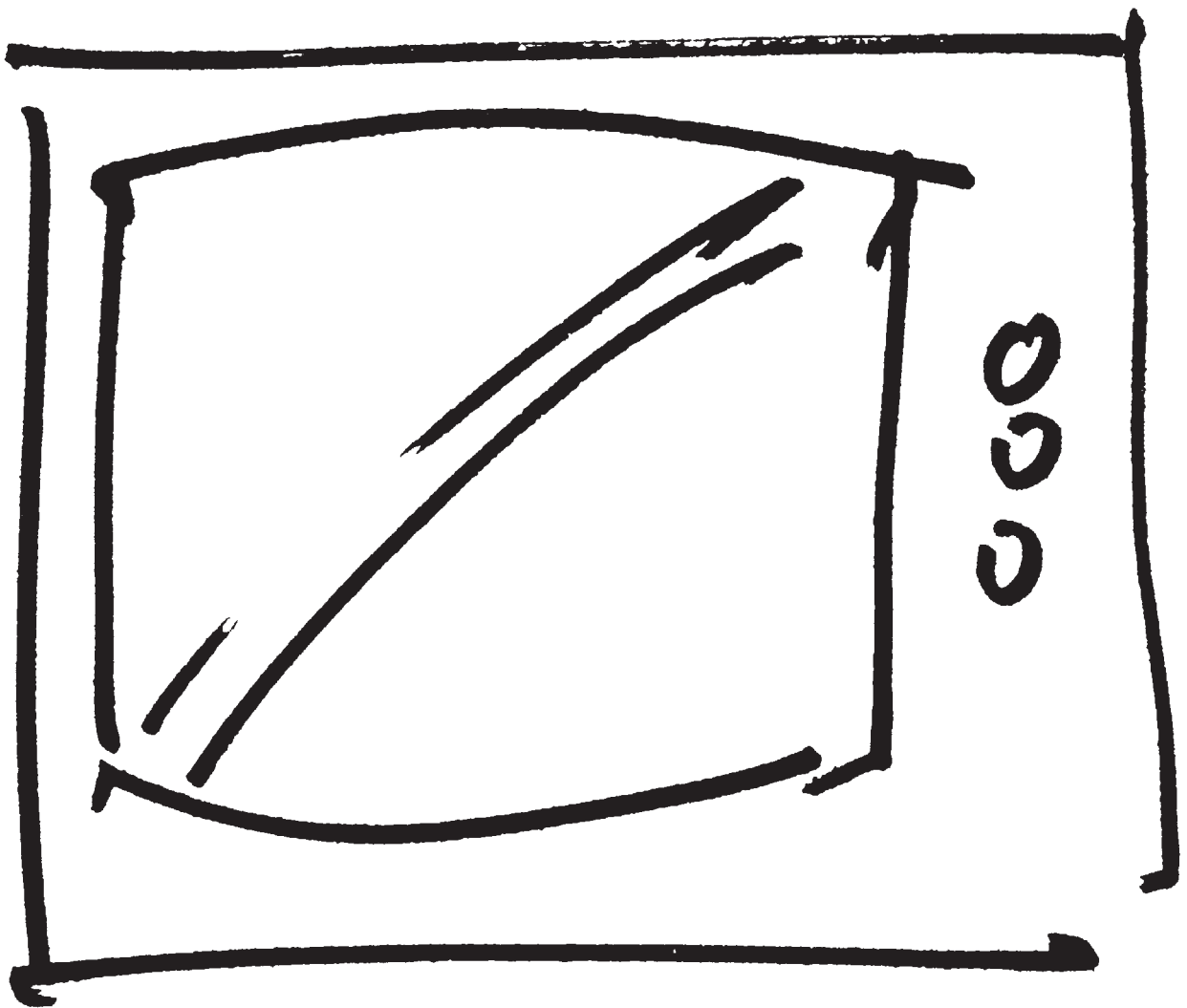


# insight

the magazine of Easthampstead Baptist Church

January/February 2010



## Vision

# Classifieds

At EBC we believe that everyone who comes regularly to the church should serve in some way in the life of the church. We want to do this for several reasons. We believe that it builds a sense of community as we serve together to achieve a common goal, we also believe that it is a great way to become involved with EBC and to get to know people better.

Listed below are a variety of roles that are available to you to serve in at the church. Some of these require more time

**Sound Team.** We could have the best musicians, the best preachers but if they can't be heard there would be no point. Our sound team are some of the most important people at our gatherings. We are looking for people to control the sound. You need to have some understanding of technical things but full training is available. Contact Chris Porter for more information.

**Refreshments Food** is very important in the life of our church! With our format of Sunday morning services it is very significant. Our refreshments times help people meet up, chat and build community. Would you help with this vitally important area. If you are a bit handy with a kettle and have a passion for doughnuts, come and cater for us. Contact Eileen Charlton for more information.

than others. However much time you feel able to give, we hope that there is something that interests you and we would encourage you to get in touch with us about what you might like to do. If you want to discuss any of these roles in more detail or would like to chat about what might fit you best, then please contact Chris Porter on 01344 487744 or email him at [chrisp@ebc-bracknell.org](mailto:chrisp@ebc-bracknell.org). Eileen Charlton is contactable on 01344 487744 or via email at [officestaff@ebc-bracknell.org](mailto:officestaff@ebc-bracknell.org).

**Lunch Club**  
On the fourth Thursday once a month we run a lunch club for older people. And we also run Midday Munch on the second Thursday of the month. We are looking for people to come and help on these days. You need a Food Hygiene Certificate (or be prepared to work with us to get one). Contact Eileen Charlton for more information.

**Remix Children's Helper/Leader** (2-11 year olds)  
There is never a dull moment in our children's work! Would you like to help out this dynamic area of our church life? You need to like children and have lots of energy and enthusiasm! Contact Ruth Porter on 01344 482162 or email her at [rej.porter@googlemail.com](mailto:rej.porter@googlemail.com) for more information.

**Drivers. Have space in your car?** Happy to give people a lift to church on a Sunday? It would be great if you could help those who can't get to church unless they have a lift. Contact Eileen Charlton for more information.

**Welcomers WANTED** people to make visitors feel at home, if you have interpersonal skills and possess a good handshake, come and join our welcoming team. Contact Eileen Charlton for more information.

**Coffee Break Helper**  
On Wednesday mornings during term time we run Coffee Break for parents/carers and their pre-school children. Could you come and be part of this amazing event that serves our local community so well. We need people to welcome, make teas and coffees and help setup and take down the equipment. Contact the church office for more information.

**Unity Youthwork Helper/Leader** (12 year olds and older)  
Unity is one of the fastest growing ministries in our church. Unity run Sunday morning work at our 9.15am gathering, a monthly club on a Friday evening and various social events and trips. If you would like to be involved with this dynamic work please contact Phil Darby via the church office.

**Office Staff Volunteer**  
On Monday to Friday mornings our church office is staffed by volunteers. They answer the phones; help people using the building find their way around and offer a great welcome to those using the building. If you have some free time during the day and would like to volunteer please contact Eileen Charlton who can provide you with lots more information.

**PC Operators**  
On a Sunday at each of our gatherings we use PCs to show song words, medias and film clips on our big screens. Would you be able to help operate a PC – its very simple and training is available. Contact Eileen Charlton for more information.

**Musicians and singers** wanted to play at our Sunday morning and evening gatherings. Need to be competent on your musical instrument or be able to sing in tune! Contact Chris Porter who can put you in touch with the band leaders.

**Multimedia creators** wanted to produce great looking medias for our Sunday morning and evening gatherings. You will need to be able to use a computer. We can provide the right editing software and training. Contact Chris Porter for more information.

## Dates for 2010

January 21st ..... Church meeting  
January 23rd..... New Wine Worship Conference  
February 7th ..... Pastoral Offering  
February 15th.....  
..... Storehouse at Crown Wood School  
March 4th..... Church meeting  
March 13th..... Barn Dance  
March 14th ..... Mothers Day  
April 1st ..... Agape meal  
April 2nd ..... Good Friday  
April 4th ..... Easter Sunday  
May 20th ..... Church meeting  
June 13th ..... Action Sunday  
June 17th ..... Church Meeting

June 20th ..... DadFest Joint Celebration at Crown Wood School  
July 3rd ..... Fox Hill Fun Day  
July 4th .....  
..... Ordination Service for Steph Littlejohn  
July 10th ..... Trip to Brankcome Dean  
July 11th ..... Pastoral Offering  
July 22nd ..... Church Meeting  
September 11th .... Crown Wood Fun Day  
September 23rd ..... Church Meeting  
October 21st ..... Church Meeting  
November 6th ..... Social Event  
November 14th ..... Remembrance Sunday  
November 18th ..... Church Meeting  
December 24th ..... Christingle Service

# Focusing the blur

Welcome to this edition of **Insight**, our Easthampstead Baptist Church (EBC) magazine.

We produce *Insight* every two months and it includes articles, updates, diaries, prayer pointers and news about our church. If you are part of the EBC community it is vital to update you on things that are going on across the church and if you are not yet part of our community we hope that it will help you understand a bit more about us. This is the eleventh edition of *Insight* and in this edition we are looking at our vision as a church – the things we believe God has called us to do and to be.

When I was 15 years old, the youth group I was a part of organised a week long canal boat holiday for us. There were 24 of us on two narrow boats. One day I was standing on top of one of the boats and one of the other young people pretended to slap me around the face. It was all a bit of a laugh until accidentally she caught my glasses and flicked them into the canal. Despite several attempts to locate them they were lost. A hasty phone call was made to my parents who rushed over to drop off a spare pair. However for several hours I had to survive without my glasses. I happen to need pretty strong lenses and without my glasses almost everything is a blur. Living



**Chris Porter**

without them for even a few hours was extremely difficult and made me appreciate the vital nature of the vision my glasses enabled me to have. Without a clear vision things that I would normally have done without thinking became very difficult.

In older translations of the Bible a verse in Proverbs reads “where there is no vision, the people perish.” In the same way that I found things difficult without my glasses, a church that has no God given vision or calling does not enable people to thrive. A church without vision causes people to perish. However a church with a clear view of what God is asking it to do enables people to thrive and grow. Those who don’t know God are helped to find him and those that do are helped to grow.

At Easthampstead Baptist Church we have a clear view of the vision that God has called us to. Our vision is made up of a set of values that define who we are, a mission statement that defines where we are seeking to go and a vision or dream statement that defines the kind of church we are seeking to become.

Vision is the theme of this edition of *Insight*. In the main article we have laid out our values and mission statement, together with the key things we will be working on together in 2010 to take a step closer to seeing this vision realised. In the Church News section you will see some information on a vision that is beginning to take shape to extend our building at South Hill Road to enable us to serve our community and each other more effectively. We have also interviewed Ralph Allen who is the architect we are using to help us with the plans for any extension we might consider.

I hope that as you read this edition you will catch sight of the vision that we believe God has called us to at EBC. I love this vision and it inspires and motivates me and my hope and prayer is that as you read more about it the same thing will happen to you.

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# Tuning in

In Alaska the Native American tribes erect enormous totem poles. They are hard to ignore with hand carved animals and symbols displayed in vibrant colours. Each symbol or animal embodies the things that tribe values and holds important. They symbolise what the tribe will need to survive and grow in that hostile land. "We must be wise as an owl, cunning as a fox, strong as a bear, resourceful as a badger and persevering as a salmon that swims up the river."<sup>1</sup> The totem pole is very significant to the tribe, it is a graphic reminder of who they are, what they value and what the ethos of the tribe is. The pole stands for generations to remind them of who they are.

Churches need a metaphorical totem to remind them of who they are in God and what God has asked them to do and be. Over the last few years we have worked to identify the ethos of EBC. We have identified values and a mission statement that state boldly – "this is who we are, this is what God is calling us to be."



<sup>1</sup> Taken from *Culture Shift* by Wayne Cordeiro and Robert Lewis

Our values come under five headings each beginning with the letter C...they are:

## Community



We want to invite seekers and believers to join us on a journey to discover more of God and his will for our lives.

We want to develop authentic relationships with each other and to support one another in grace and love, by sharing belongings, talents and gifts.

We want to be an inclusive, attractive community.

## Communication



We seek to be rooted in the Bible, filled with the Spirit and in touch with the realities of life today.

We desire to be culturally relevant in everything that we do and in particular to use the arts to effectively communicate the message of Christ.

Non Christian people matter to God and therefore matter to us and are our top priority.

## Commitment



We will be dedicated to serving using the gifts, talents, passions and resources God has given us.

We want to be 24 hours a day, 7 days a week Christians sold out for God.

## Caring



We will be compassionate to others and offer practical help in an imaginative and spiritual way.

We will be aware of and seek to support the needs of each other, the community around us, and those in the world at large.

## Celebrating



We want to celebrate excitedly the grace that God has shown us in worship, parties and social events.

You will hear us beginning to referring to the 5 Cs – our totem that indicate where we as a tribe, a movement of Jesus are moving.

We also have a mission statement that says clearly in a sentence that is easy to remember where we are going. Our mission statement is: "To love God, to love people and to grow together to become more like Jesus."

This is why we exist, this is what God is calling us to do.

In order to help us live out these values and mission statement we have identified a number of key things that we hope to do together in 2010. These objectives set out what we shall be working on together as a priority this year. These objectives are:

## Increase the effectiveness of our youth work:

Develop a new vision and strategy for youth work

Communicate this vision and strategy to the whole of the church

Ensure that the youth work is

fully staffed including paid and volunteer staff

**Ensure that we are caring through our World Mission activities in an effective and inspiring way:**

Review the world mission pillars to ensure that our financial, prayer and other support is having the greatest impact

Send a team of people on an overseas trip to inspire the church to care more fully for those living in desperate need

**Identify potential future leaders**

Run developing leaders course

**Develop plans to ensure that we have buildings that will facilitate our ministry for the next 5-7 years:**

Make a decision on the possible extension of the building and ensure that we are either beginning the building extension project by June or have identified other solutions to our building issues

Develop a permanent Community Care facility that includes Storehouse

Hold an initial gift day to fund any building project

**Review our Sunday gatherings:**

Conduct a review of our Sunday gatherings including times, locations and content to assess their effectiveness and helping people encounter and experience God

Implement any changes resulting from the review

**Increase our evangelistic effectiveness:**

Complete one Sunday teaching series on reaching non Christians

Encourage inviting so that by the end of 2010 our guest events have over 25 guests on each guest Sunday

**Ensure Church Membership is an effective way of growing and developing the core of the church:**

Grow the numbers in Church Membership to 150

Grow Church Meeting attendance to over 75 people

**Develop a culture of celebrating people's contributions to the life of the church:**

Run a volunteer thank you event  
Hold a Leadership Teams thank you dinner

At two services in the year talk and teach about the need to thank people

**Grow the importance and ethos of prayer in the life of the church**

Increase the number of people in our Sunday prayer ministry teams

Grow the use of words of knowledge, prophecy and prayers for healing in the life of the church

We are excited about the journey that God is taking us on. We hope that you will be excited too and will join with us to see this vision realised. It will take all of us working together with God's help to make it happen. On Sunday 31st January we are planning a special joint service where we shall covenant together to work and pray to see this dream realised. Please do plan to be there it will be an exciting time!

“**To love God, to love people and to grow together to become more like Jesus**”



# Church News

**Did you know in the last two months at EBC...?**

## **We celebrated Christmas together**

We have really enjoyed celebrating Christmas together. Events included our Thursday Fellowship carol service, our special Songs of Praise Christmas service, our 'Star of Wonder' special guest services and the Christingle service on Christmas Eve. We had lots of visitors to these different services and thoroughly enjoyed celebrating the birth of Jesus together.

## **We helped people in need**

On Saturday 7th November approximately 50 people enjoyed an evening of great food, great music and great questions all for a great cause. The excellent music was provided by Hannah Kerslake and Kathryn Curtis and Dan Curtis compared a quiz. Most importantly of all £500 was raised and sent to Toybox, a charity that work to relieve the plight of children living on the streets in Latin America.

There was a great atmosphere at each service on November 15<sup>th</sup> as people brought in their goods and worked together to make up shoe boxes full of toys for Operation Christmas child. 236 boxes were made up and have

been sent around the world to for children who will have nothing this Christmas. They will be very happy as they receive the box full of good things.

Just before Christmas 31 food boxes of varying sizes were made up and a number of small gifts wrapped to be given to help people have a treat over the Christmas period. We also gave three large boxes of toiletries to the After Care Team of Social Services to support their work with vulnerable young adults.

## **We had Remembrance Day guest services**

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November saw us remembering those who have given and are giving their lives in war. At South Hill Road the stage in the main hall was transformed to represent a bunker from the war years with poppies scattered around with the silhouette of a soldier lit up as we remembered those who gave their lives during the wars past and present. A number of guests came to each of our morning services.

## **We had a Baptism Service**

On Sunday November 29<sup>th</sup> we all joined together for a joint all age service at 10.15. This service included sharing with family and friends of Yinka Anderson and Sharon Brogden as they talked

how God has been working in their lives and were baptised.

## **Remix had a social event**

Our Remix children had a fantastic afternoon with entertainment from 'Fred in the Shed'. Over 100 children came to this social event and a great number were not children who regularly come to Remix.

## **Ministerial recognition**

We were absolutely delighted to hear that our Assistant Minister Steph Littlejohn had passed her selection conference and has been accepted by the Baptist Union to be a minister.

## **We continued to talk and pray about our possible building extension**

We have reached the point in the process where we need to make a decision about whether we move forward with Phase 1 of the project. After much prayer and thought and discussion our leaders team have now reached the point of believing that we should go ahead with Phase 1. At a really good Church Meeting in November, we looked together at how such an extension might be used and could sense a growing excitement about the possibilities of going ahead. We agreed to go on praying about this as we move to a decision in January. Before the meeting in January Chris Porter (our Senior Minister) will be visiting all of our small groups to talk further about the project. He will also run an extra session on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January for anyone who isn't a part of a small group.

## **We agreed our objectives for 2010**

At our Church Meeting in November we agreed together our objectives for 2010. These include increasing the effectiveness of our youth work, identifying potential future leaders, establishing a permanent base for our



*Shoe boxes in progress*



**The Food boxes made up and ready to go**

Storehouse work and growing the importance of prayer in the life of the church. A full list of our objectives can be found on our church website.

**We agreed to change our pattern of evening services**

From January we are going to be running a new pattern of Sunday evening services. On the first and third Sundays of the month our evening service will be at 4pm. On the second Sunday of the month we will be running our Prayer and Praise evening service at 6.30pm and on the last Sunday of the month there will be no evening service because we will have met together in the morning for a joint EBC service.



*Enjoying Fred in the Shed*

**Some of our young leaders went to the Youthwork conference**

In November some of our youth work leaders and some potential young leaders went to the Youthwork conference in Eastbourne. They had a great time. Two of our young leaders wrote these reports:

“YOUTHWORK the Conference taught me a lot, first it taught me that worship is enjoyable, the vibe with everyone singing, dancing and praising God etc is unbelievable and everyone is just so grateful. I learned a lot too. I learned that prayer doesn't have to be reading from a bible, you can relate to life stories with verses from the bible. The prayers and worship brings all sort of emotions; happiness, forgiveness and gratefulness.

On Saturday night at worship, people were called that felt that they needed to change and give their life to God, so me and Simon decided that we need to do this so we went up towards the stage and I really felt the need for change. I am really grateful for this experience and hopefully in the future I can become a youth leader.”

**Reported by Tom Jones – Helper**

“YOUTHWORK the Conference gave me an insight into what youth work is all about and I thought I would never like to be a youth worker but it has made me think about changing the world bit by bit and I want to help as much as possible. The Saturday night we had a good time of worship and the thought of change. When we got given a envelope with £10 in, at first I decided to take it but then I thought to myself do I need this more than the other people and put it back and I prayed on my own without anyone telling me to, so I prayed for the ones that need help. This whole experience has made me think about my religion and made my love for the world and my God a lot stronger.”

**Reported by Callum Brydges – Helper**

# Interview

**Ralph  
Allen**

**About a year ago we began to realise that if the vision that God has given us for EBC begins to become a reality our current building at South Hill Road will quickly become too small!**

We are already feeling the pressure on the space that we have at various times and events. In February 2009 we asked Ralph Allen from Allen Associates Architects to perform a feasibility study on the possibilities for extending the building. Over the next few months Ralph has presented various options to us, one of which forms the basis of the decision we will be making in January about whether or not we go ahead. We thought that it would be great to catch up with Ralph to find out a bit more about him, his faith and his work.

## **Tell us a bit about yourself.**

I was born in the Midlands, quite some time ago! However we moved to Rochdale when I was five years old and it was there that I grew up. At the age of eighteen I started a course in architecture at Aston University in Birmingham. The course lasted five years and before the start of the last year I married Lilian. Following completion of my time at university we returned to Lancashire and then moved to Bracknell in 1976. We have two boys Scott and Craig. Both are married and live in Bracknell. Scott is also an architect and part of the practice.

## **What do you do for a living?**

I had absolutely no idea what career I wished to pursue whilst at school. Our headmaster provided careers advice and when I explained I was interested in art, practical hobbies and maths, he soon came to the conclusion that architecture was for me - although at the time I hadn't really got the foggiest idea of what being an architect actually involved. I still very much enjoy my daily work - how easy it is in hindsight to

recognise God's hand on our lives.

## **How does God fit into your life?**

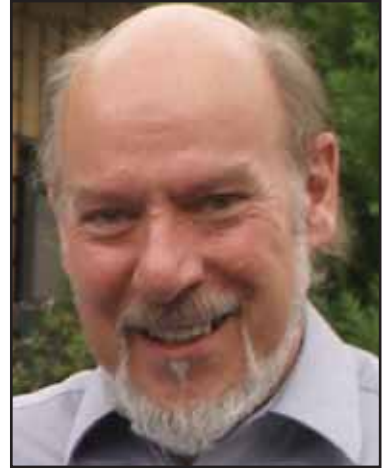
When I first came to Bracknell, we had been unable to sell our house in Lancashire, so I lived here on my own for four months, travelling back to Lancashire at weekends. During this time I met Ben Davies, the minister of what was then Bracknell Baptist Church, now Kerith Community Church. We got on really well, however our theology was poles apart. My understanding of the gospel was one of social action, whilst Ben's was and is an evangelical and I remember vividly going home the following weekend and telling Lilian that if there was one church in Bracknell we would not join it was Bracknell Baptist Church - I am sure God smiled.

We eventually all moved to Bracknell and after visiting a number of churches, much against my better judgement, we arrived one Sunday morning at Bracknell Baptist Church. At the end of the meeting we chatted with a guy who stated that he was sure that God had sent us here for a purpose and at that point I smiled. Over the following years God both challenged us and knitted us into the church.

## **What kinds of projects have you been involved with?**

Four years later I was a partner in a large London practice of architects and surveyors and then in 1987, the church made its first faltering steps in the building project that was to become the Kerith Centre. I was asked to be the architect. It became clear that this was to be God's call on my life for the next few years. I resigned the partnership and Allen Associates was born, consisting of just two - Lilian and I.

The practice has grown to a total staff of seven and we have been involved in a wide variety of projects, schools, garden centres, airport restaurants, hospices but most exciting has



been the privilege of an ongoing involvement in church building projects. We are currently working on projects for three Baptist Churches, two United Reformed Churches, an Anglican Church and a non-denominational church.

## **What excites you about the possibilities for a building project at EBC?**

It is exciting being involved in the Easthampstead Baptist Church project. My heart is to see the church grow in terms of its ministry and the number of people that you serve and I am sure that this can in part be enabled by improving and enlarging the current church building. I do recognise however that the project is not without challenge for both the church and for us as the architects. It would be fantastic to see the site that God has given you developed to its maximum potential to serve His purposes and I am increasingly encouraged to see projects that in human terms appear impossible come to fruition as part of His purposes.

On a personal note I am so pleased to live in a generation that is able to see God's church both spiritually alive and active in serving the community. It is a great joy and privilege to spend my working days doing what I enjoy and at the same time being presented with the opportunity to serve God and His church.