

insight

the magazine of Easthampstead Baptist Church

March/April 2010



Community Care

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Dreams

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. In this edition of Insight we are looking at how we care for our local community and our dreams for expanding that in the future.

I am turning 40 this year and with this significant milestone in my life has come the growing realisation that I will never get to play rugby for England (my childhood dream!). As this dream has begun to fade I have turned my attention to other dreams. In January we looked together in our Sunday services at the dream that God has for our church. In the bible it says that "without a vision or dream we perish." The word used for dream in the original Hebrew that it was written in is 'Chazown.' We spent time in January reminding ourselves of the dream that God has for our church and how we might see it become a reality (see the whole church news section on page 3) for more details.

One of the significant parts of this dream is that we should be a centre or hub for our local community. The dream is that



Chris Porter

through Easthampstead Baptist Church many people in our area would be blessed and helped. We are already doing many things to enable that dream to become a reality and we hope to do many more. In this edition of Insight you will find lots of information about ways we are working on to see that dream grow and develop. These include our Storehouse ministry and the extension of our building (see centre pages). You will also find an interview on the with Eileen Charlton who leads our Storehouse ministry. You will also find an interview with Simon Lace who has just joined our staff team as our Older Persons Worker

This dream for our church to be a centre of our community is far more exciting than playing rugby for England and the more it begins to happen the more excited I get.

March and April also see us launching two new series. The first one is called 'Building Family in a New Reality.' We start this series with special Guest Events on Sunday 14th March to celebrate Mother's Day. These events will be particularly suitable for those who might not normally go to church. They will include great food, special children's activities, music, media presentations and a talk. They are all designed to help us celebrate mums. The rest of the series will then investigate how we can build great families in the new realities we are living in during the 21st Century.

We will also be holding special events on Good Friday (2nd

April) and on Easter Sunday (4th April) to remember the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Please do join us over the next few months, I look forward to seeing you.

Building Family in a New Reality



Church News

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

We have agreed to begin our building project

At our Church Meeting in January we agree together that we would proceed to apply for planning permission on our building extension project with a view to building phase one. This is a momentous decision and the whole project will also include providing a permanent base for our Storehouse ministry and taking on some people to help with our youth work. The cost of the whole project will be around £600,000.

Hundreds of people came to Storehouse

On Monday 15th February hundreds of people queued up at Crown Wood Primary School in preparation for the opening of our Storehouse event. We had an incredible amount of toys, furniture, clothes and household items given and many people were blessed as they found things that they needed. Thank you to Eileen Charlton and her team of volunteers who worked so hard to make it all possible.

We hosted a New Wine Worship conference

On Saturday 23rd January over 50 worship leaders, church leaders and musicians came to a Worship conference. We hosted the conference on behalf of our local New Wine Network. It was a fantastic day. Nick and Becky Drake were our key speakers. They lead music and the creative arts at St Paul's Church, Hammersmith and have produced their own worship albums. They were inspiring and helpful and we have invited them to come back in June to be with us at our Sunday services.

Over 120 people came to the festive meal

On Saturday 6th February over 120 people from our local

community came to the festive meal. They were fed an excellent lunch and had entertainment from Steve Legg an illusionist. Everyone had a good time and the feedback was great.

We completed our Chazown series

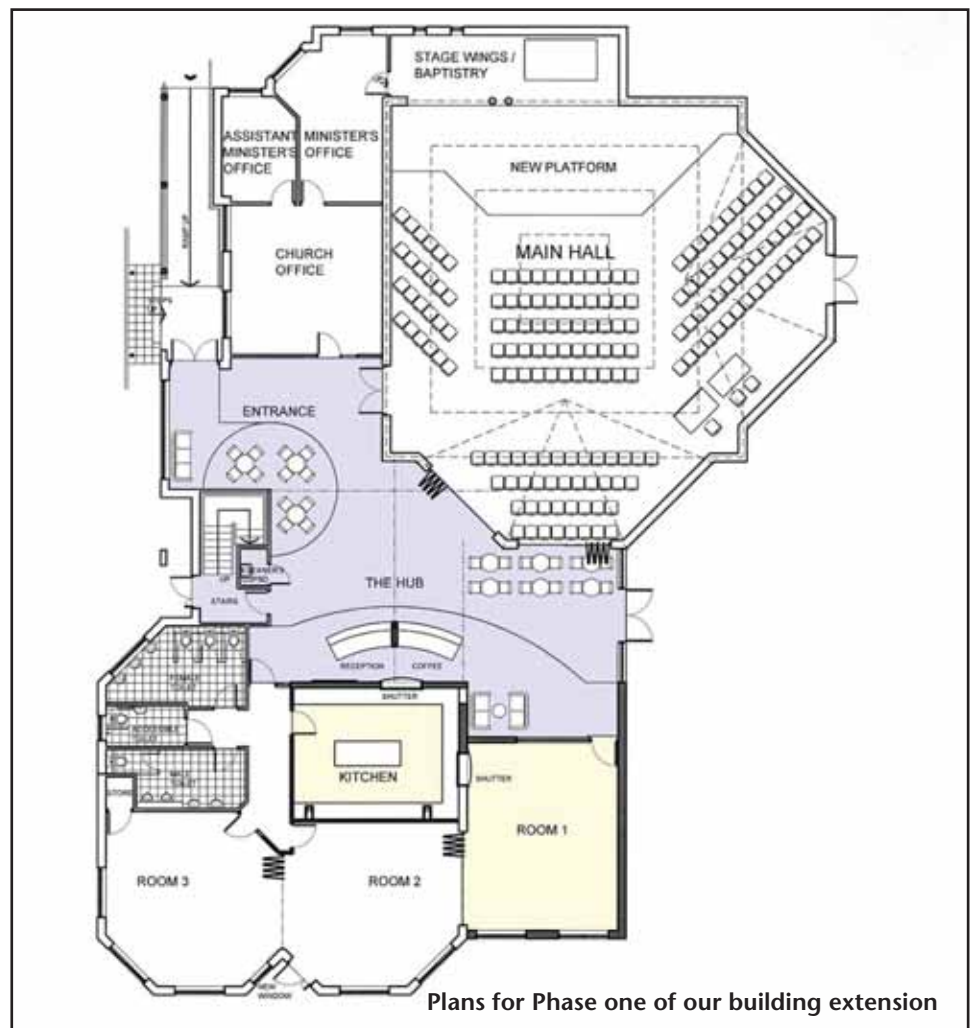
In January we did a two part series called Chazown. In the Hebrew language that the Old Testament was written in Chazown means vision or dream. One of the verses in the Old Testament says 'without vision, people perish' and we looked again at the vision God has given to us at EBC and how we can play a part in seeing it become a reality. Many of us committed to stepping up our involvement in the life of EBC.

Pastoral needs offering

On Sunday 7th February we had our latest pastoral needs offering at our Sunday services. Over £1,600 was given and that money will be used to help those in need in our church family and in our local community. Many people have been blessed as a result of the pastoral needs fund and this money will enable us to continue to expand that work.

We welcomed some new Church Members

At our Church Meeting in January we welcomed five new people into membership at the church. Church Members are the people who make the key decisions in the life of the church including who are our Ministers
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Into the

Recently it has been announced that Channel 4 are dropping their contract to show repeats of the hit US TV show Friends.

They have been broadcasting the show since 1994. Just in case you weren't aware of it Friends was a series about six 20-somethings living in New York. In its hayday in the late nineties and early noughties Friends regularly attracted six million viewers.

Friends was a classic representation of life in the 21st century, where family community had been replaced by friendship communities. These six people formed a community, caring for each other, sharing their lives with each other and helping each other through good times and bad. One of its great attractions was that people longed for the kind of community that was being portrayed. Where is that kind of community to be found? In our day of fragmented families and communities and people feeling increasingly isolated, where is the place where people can care for others and be cared for?

The answer in God's plans and dreams is the local church. Jesus said to his first followers who formed the very first church "love one another as I have loved you." At EBC we want to be a place where people can know that type of community care – and not just people who are part of our church. We offer different forms of care and in this edition of Insight we are highlighting some of the ways that we care for people in our local community.

Storehouse

For many years now we have run events called Storehouse. We invite people to bring good quality household items, furniture, toys, books and clothes to the church and for a morning we set them all out and allow people to come and take whatever they need. From relatively humble

beginnings Storehouse has grown and grown and now people from all over our local area bring and receive goods.

Storehouse has been featured on local radio and on television and continues to amaze all who come into contact with it. It is an amazing way to offer help and care to people in our community who need it. Eileen Charlton heads up our Storehouse ministry and we thought it would be a great idea to catch up with her and find out more about it.

Tell us a bit about yourself.

I am wife to Neil, mother to Nigel, Helen and Andy and grandma to Jonathon, Steph, Dani, Lauren, Amy, Millie and Mark. I have lived in Bracknell for 40 years and attended EBC for 39 of these. When I left school I worked in a bank and continued in this area until Helen was born. After this I changed direction and worked in various roles in the area of social care. In 1994 I began working for EBC as lettings administrator.

What kinds of things are you involved at EBC.

The main area of work in the church is the administration of the lettings. This has grown over the years and it is great to have contact with all the different people who use the rooms and to provide a service which is helpful

to them in different ways. I work with others to plan the songs of praise services and the teas and help with the administration of EBC.

Tell us about Storehouse.

Some years ago a couple were given a vision of a large warehouse, containing all manner of clothes and household goods and which through one door people came and gave, and through another door people came to collect and the words 'for free' were emblazoned across the building. Along with the vision they were also given the following words from the bible - 'Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food (and goods) in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it'. So Storehouse began and has grown ever since.

Twice a year good quality clothes, toys and house goods are collected and after the morning service on the Sunday prior to the Storehouse day we set out everything in either the main hall at South Hill Road or the hall at Crown Wood School and then at 10am on the day the doors are opened and anyone can come in and take whatever they want. As Storehouse has become known



Community

in the community more people come (even starting to queue from 7.30am) and more people donate goods throughout the year. We regularly get requests from Social Services asking if we can supply items.

How do you see God at work through it?

There have been a number of times when we have seen God at work, as requests have come in for furniture we have had phone calls saying that someone has goods to donate –just what was needed!!! We were able to help a family involved in domestic violence who were in need of furniture and a mattress for a bed was given just at the right time. On Storehouse days, even when I have had doubts, enough people have volunteered to get everything set up in good time.

What is your vision for the future of Storehouse?

The vision for Storehouse is to have a permanent place where clothes and goods can be set out in a way that people can come to see if they can get what they need and furniture can be advertised for anyone to see what is available. All this would be free. This would also be a centre where people can get food and advice and have a chat and cup of coffee. Most of all that people will be shown the love and care that only Jesus can give through people.

In the original vision God's promise was 'see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.' We have had great blessings with what we have done so far and I am sure there will be even greater blessings from a permanent Storehouse. Other ways we care for our community include:

Martha's Meals

A few years ago we realised that

people often find themselves in situations where having some meals prepared for them would be really helpful. Perhaps they have just come out of hospital, have a new baby, have just moved house or have run out of money for food. Someone turning up on the doorstep with meals to cover a few days is a gift from God!

Bill and Maggie Gilbert run Martha's Meals and regularly cook up lots of meals and freeze them to be available for us to deliver just when they are needed. Meals often include amazing deserts as well as the main courses.

Foodboxes

Two or three times a year we ask members of our congregations to bring to church services bags of non perishable food which we send out to people as gifts when they need it. At Christmas it is a special joy to be able to send out special Christmas food boxes full of necessities and luxuries to help people.

Work with Older People

At EBC we run lunch clubs and other events for older people. Very often older people are some of the loneliest people in our local community. They love coming to meet with other people and to be well fed! We also have Songs of Praise teas, Thursday fellowship and social events just for older people. We have just taken on Simon Lace (see interview on the back page) to oversee our work with older people. We have a passion to expand and grow what we are doing.

Refresh Coffee Shop

We run a coffee shop based at Crown Wood Primary School which is open three days a week for coffees, lunches and cakes! Lots of people from our local community use it and meet up with each other.

Our Building

We have just agreed that we shall apply for planning permission to extend our building at South Hill Road. One of the key parts of this extension will be the completion of a 'hub' space which can be used to welcome in people from our community. It will be a great place for people to gather before and after events and services and during the week for a coffee and a chat. It will also be great to be able to use the expanded space for growing Songs of Praise, lunch clubs, social events and children's and youth work.

We expect to have applied for planning permission by the beginning of March and if that goes smoothly to begin building early in 2011.

As part of the project we are also planning to create a permanent base for Storehouse on our current site, probably through the purchase or hire of a modular building. This would mean that we could bless a lot more people all through the year with Storehouse gifts and that people could bring goods to us all throughout the year.

Finally as part of the project we are hoping to take on more staff for our youth work to enable us to expand the work we are doing in our community with our young people.

The total cost for all of this is likely to be around £600,000. We have already been given a gift of £100,000 which we intend to use towards this cost and will be raising money in 2010 and beyond through gift days and grant applications. Watch this space!

For more information about any of these events and projects please do contact us.

Church News

Continued from page 3

and Church Leaders, what we do with our buildings and what our objectives are. We have around 140 Church Members and anyone who is a committed Christian and committed to EBC can be a Church Member. If you would

like to know more about it please contact Chris Porter.

Two new staff members started work

We are absolutely delighted to have two new staff members as part of our team. Steve King joined us from the beginning of January to be one of our two caretakers. Working with Neil

Charlton they set up the building for all of our events and lettings and take care of our facilities.

Simon Lacey joined us at the end of February as our Older Persons Worker. We are very excited to have him and he will be overseeing all of our work with older people. On the back page of this edition of Insight is an interview with Simon.

Interview

Continued from back page

and the rest of the band at this point for their encouragement and perseverance. When Peter first press-ganged, sorry, *talked* me into coming aboard little did he know that I could play and sing almost any song he cared to mention... as long as it was by Bruce Springsteen. Sadly, if we were to examine a Venn diagram depicting the group of "Songs of Worship" and the group of "Songs by Bruce Springsteen" we would see two circles not overlapping each other at all... Still, I'm having fun learning to play the Songs of Worship and just occasionally you may even hear me both play and sing loud enough for you to hear!

Tell us a bit about your new role?

Strange as it may sound, the more I have thought about this the more parallels I have found with my previous jobs running health clubs, where I found that people – and especially older people - can be nervous or sceptical about anything to do with the dreaded F word... Fitness. Especially if it's not something they have ever been involved with, or at least not for a long time (It's just not for me / I'm too old / I won't fit in / I hated it as a kid... delete as applicable). Similarly, we know that the idea of "going to Church" may not immediately be the most appealing prospect to many people – and perhaps for the same reasons. However, I found that in my health clubs, people were far more likely to come along and take part in something that they perceived as sociable, friendly and

fun. If along the way it happened to get them fitter... what a bonus! In essence then, I hope to help in getting more people involved, getting them coming to us more regularly and becoming more deeply engaged, and hopefully bringing more friends along to take part. If along the way they become spiritually enriched... become Christians... become Members of EBC... what a bonus! Initially, I need to get a really good understanding of all of the different strands of activity going on within the church that involve or affect older people. It's really important that I take the time to get to know who is involved, what their take on things is and how each strand fits into the overall strategy for older people. I also want to find ways to consult the older people who take part and find out what else they might like to see us provide, what barriers they might face that prevent them taking part in things more regularly and what we might do differently or additionally that would help them to become more involved with our Church. The trick is to provide, support, build upon and link together all of those things that are sociable, friendly and fun. I believe that communication and consultation are really important in this, not least because we're much more likely to provide what people want if we ask them – with the caveat that we might not always be able to deliver (but at least we care enough to ask). Of course, communication and consultation will also be hugely important with regard to all of the people leading

and helping in the older persons' work. Clearly, many of them have been a part of the Church far longer than I have and I must ask for their patience in bearing with me as I seek to be educated in all matters pertaining to older persons' work.

What are your hopes and dreams for our older persons work at EBC?

There is already wonderful older persons' work being done at EBC of course so I think that God would be pleased to see this continue and expand. I hope that we can attract more older people and more and more... and to see their lives changed for their coming here. I hope that the church building expansion enables us to accommodate this growth and that we can find imaginative ways to not only fund these building works but to provide many more exciting activities and services for people. I hope that all of the people involved in our older persons' work see their own numbers grow, and that they feel uplifted and refreshed, seeing the amazing results of their endeavours and feeling the Holy Spirit at work in them and through them. I also hope that the wisdom and the sheer enthusiasm of many of our older people will cascade down to the younger churchgoers and that there will be growing numbers of the next generation coming through the church to swell the ranks - and to seek and benefit from the perspective of people who have already experienced so much of life.

reviews



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Soul Survivor - Live 2008: Complete



The live recording from 2008's youth culture event produced by Paul Burton, this will undoubtedly sell both to those who journeyed to Somerset and those wanting a good worship resource. As a bonus the package also contains a DVD with Mike Pilavachi talking on Finding Jesus Throughout The Bible together with a headspinningly edited documentary of this year's event. But what of the worship here? The new wave of young worship leaders featured on this album show that they are well equipped to take over the mantle passed to them by Tim Hughes. Ben Cantelon, Beth Coulson, Andrea Arganda and Sam Parker all acquit themselves well while the new songs like Cantelon's "For Your Glory" and Phil Shaw's "My Soul Is Complete" (sung here by Arganda) are truly memorable. Musicianship is top rate and recording quality is as good as many a studio set. The only flaw is that there are too many covers of Hillsong United though even there it has to be said that Sam Parker, helped out by some MC interjections from The 29th Chapter, comes up with a better version of "One Way" than the Australian guys, enabling us to momentarily forget that the song is a rip off of an AC/DC oldie. Clearly Soul Survivor still retains its ability to connect with young church goers.

Reviewed by Tony Cummings

Book Review Craig Groeschel – Chazown



Craig Groeschel drew the title of his *Chazown – A Different Way to See Your Life* from the Hebrew word meaning a dream, revelation or vision (and pronounced khaw-ZONE). The word is found in Proverbs 29:18, "Where there is no vision (Chazown), the people perish," the key verse of the book.

Chazown's purpose is to inform everyone they were created with a unique Chazown and encourages readers to discover and pursue the life they were created to live. *Chazown* falls into the same category of Christian Living books as *Don't Waste Your Life* by John Piper and *Velvet Elvis* by Rob Bell, also inviting readers to live their life for something greater than themselves. *Chazown*, however, sets itself apart from those other books being very relevant to today's culture, easy to read and offering many laughs along the way.

Groeschel is an extraordinary pastor leading LifeChurch.tv, the fastest growing church in the US.

Craig's passion is to lead people to become fully devoted followers of Jesus. His passion can easily be spotted in the words of his book. Along with his passion, Craig reveals his humorous personality and his knowledge of

culture and the Bible, allowing the book to possess the perfect mix of entertainment and insightful information.

The book does an excellent job of leading the reader to discover his or her life's vision. Readers consider past experiences, spiritual gifts, and core values while searching for life's Chazown. Craig not only gives readers insight on how to discover their Chazown, but he takes the audience even further offering advice on what to do after they have discovered their vision.

The book points out five big areas in which the reader can live out their Chazown: your relationship with God, your relationship with people, your financial health, your physical health and your life's work.

The visual layout of the book is very pleasing, capturing the attention of readers. *Chazown* does not overwhelm the reader with pages of solid text, but instead includes several pictures and symbols that reflect the main theme of each chapter. The text in the book is not only black, but also green, a colour used throughout the book. Key thoughts and verses in the book are in bold larger text, which helps the reader understand the significance of the phrase.

Chapters are short. At several points the book asks the reader to be the author by offering questions for discussion and encouraging the reader to prayerfully consider answers and record them in a journal for future reference.

Anyone looking for purpose in life or encouragement to live life to the fullest will benefit from *Chazown*. Though, how much a person benefits is up to them. Because *Chazown* is an easy and quick read, many important topics can be overlooked. The more time and thought you put into grasping the concepts Groeschel presents in his book, the fuller understanding you will gain.

Taking advantage of all the extras in the book, such as the discussion questions, greatly enriches the reading experience. *Chazown* does what it promises, after reading you will see your life differently. But what you do with it is up to you.

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Interview

**Simon
Lace**

Tell us a bit about yourself.

I was born in the lovely city of Chester in 1968 (for the mathematically challenged, that makes me 23!!!) and I'm the youngest of seven children, with four brothers and two sisters. It was in many ways an idyllic childhood with a big house and gardens, back lane and nearby park and playing fields for us all to crash around in. Dad was kept tremendously busy keeping us provided for and trying to keep the house, gardens and car in good repair, whilst Mum was equally busy making sure we were all fed, watered and nurtured. A very traditional family model only on a large scale and as a father of just two boys I can report that I have absolutely no idea how Mum and Dad did it! Mum brought us up as Catholic and I went to Catholic infant, middle and high schools – I still like to go to Mass when I am visiting "home", although I had all but stopped going regularly by the time I'd finished at middle school (St Werburgh's Middle School, though due to the high walls, barbed wire and the deputy head's habit of lifting us up by our sideboards to bang our heads together, we all called it "Colditz"!).

Dad was always very sporty and my eldest brother got heavily into bodybuilding, passing on this interest to the rest of us. I started training at the YMCA "weights section" – a subterranean dungeon of a gym – when I was 15, and absolutely loved it. This eventually led me to study Sports Science at Chester College, and though we didn't know it at the time, my future wife, Claire, was starting her first year of the same course there as I was doing my last! Sadly I must report that we didn't meet in the library or in the gym but in that other regular haunt of any self-respecting sports student... the pub.

When Claire finished her

degree she duly returned home to Wokingham (and EBC) and I, thoroughly smitten, chased after her. We were married at South Hill Road on April 1st 2000 (no, it wasn't an April Fool's joke – it was also my Mum and Dad's anniversary and it was wonderful to have them here!). Now ten years on we have our two boys Samson (6) and Harry (3) keeping us on our toes – and here I should say a big thank you to the Remix team for allowing us an oasis of peace in which to enjoy the 9.15 services!

What kinds of things are you involved in at EBC?

First and foremost, being a regular part of the congregation at South Hill Road, learning and worshipping together, having

such strong role models and such a wealth of Christian knowledge and experience all around is truly a blessing. In the last year or so, I've also enjoyed helping out occasionally as a Mr Shifter, moving some of the larger Storehouse items from A to B. I particularly enjoy the comedic aspect of this, which would surely strike a chord with anyone who has enjoyed the short film "The Music Box" (depicting, as it does, the moving of a piano up a long flight of steps by Mr Laurel and Mr Hardy...)

Speaking of striking a chord, I also make guest appearances with the 9.15 Worship Group, playing guitar and singing – with tactical pauses if I don't know the chords/ words. Many thanks to Peter Roe
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