

**Welcome** to Issue 30 of LEAF's newsletter and diary. Our lead article is written by **Phil Cole**, the Chairman of LEAF, and encourages us to think in a kingdom way, not in an individualistic or selfish way – both as individuals and as churches in the New Forest.

We can report a further addition to the LEAF Committee: **Rev Dominic Furness**, Vicar of All Saints, Milford on Sea has joined the committee, which now comprises Phil Cole (*Chairman*), Derek Copley (*Church Liaison*), Dave Gooderidge (*Chair of Forest Fire*), Sharon Prior (*Youth Work Liaison*), Peter Rawson (*Treasurer*), Helen Burch (*Prayer Co-ordinator*), Jonathan & Sylvia Wallis, Tim Lockwood, John Currin and Dominic Furness.

Do make a note in your diaries of our **ANNUAL LEAF CELEBRATION** on **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> November, 6.30 pm** at **Ashley Baptist Church** - for further details see overleaf.

*Jonathan Wallis, Editor#*



## KINGDOM THINKING

Over the last few years the idea of the Kingdom of God has been impacting the way I think and how I approach Christian ministry. It was great to hear John Smith speak on this subject at our last autumn celebration and I believe that the more we grasp this Kingdom mentality the stronger the church will become. Here are a few reasons why I say this.

### **Community need not be geographic**

First, in our culture 'community' has tended to shift away from the local geographic area and has become established in our workplaces, and in social and special interest networks. This has far reaching implications for the church, especially in the area of evangelism. For many of us the people we mix with and know live many miles away from the church we attend and it may not be practical to expect them to come along to activities we are putting on, especially when there is a church around the corner from where they live doing similar things. If we have a 'my church' mentality it would be easy to think, 'why bother with passing on my faith because they're not going to come to "my church"'. The Kingdom of God mentality would say, 'I'm going to pray for and encourage those I meet and try to help them explore a relationship with God even though 'my church' will not directly benefit.'

### **We are part of a larger thing**

Second, just as each individual is a part of the body of the local church and is there for the benefit of the whole fellowship, so each church is a part of the larger church and similarly is there for the benefit of the wider Christian communion. Each individual has specific gifts that would be missed if not used within the body, and in

the same way each one of our churches is specifically gifted in the purpose that God has for us. It is only when all individuals in a fellowship minister together that we see the full expression of the local church, and it is only when churches within a geographic area minister together that people will see the wonder of Christ's church. I believe that we not only need to swim against the tide of 'individualism' of individuals but also the 'individualism' of churches.

### **God's blessing flows from unity**

Third, where there is unity God commands a blessing. Many of us long to see the New Forest area won for Christ. Alan Vincent came to OK New Forest, spoke passionately about seeing revival coming to this area, and has offered to come to teach and train people in the things he has learnt in his 50+ years of ministry. In Reading I was involved in the Reading Christian Network, where over forty leaders met each Wednesday morning for prayer; through those meetings barriers were broken down, greater unity ensued and the wider church was blessed.

At our Vision Evening this spring, when most of our church leaders gave a two minute summary of the church they were leading, I was very encouraged. What was apparent was that we are all called to be a part of what God is doing in the area but in different and diverse ways. At the end of the evening I wanted to cry with some churches that were going through difficult times, rejoice with those that were seeing God's hand of blessing and to encourage everyone that we are in this together. God longs for unity within his Kingdom but not uniformity.

*(contd overleaf)*

LEAF is committed to the transformation of society and culture in the New Forest through evangelical Christians uniting together in prayer, worship, evangelistic activity, social action and speaking with a common voice to local government and media.

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## Kingdom Thinking (contd)

I believe that individuals are blessed when they take their eyes off themselves and focus on others and I believe the same is true of churches. As we become more united I look forward to seeing the Kingdom of God become an increasing reality in the New Forest.

*Phil Cole, Chairman*

## LEAF Annual Celebration

### “If my people...”

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2007 at 6.30 pm**

**At Ashley Baptist Church**

*(Lower Ashley Lane, New Milton, BH25 5AA)*

**with guest speaker Jane Holloway**

An evening that brings together Christians from all kinds of churches and backgrounds from across the New Forest area to worship together and to celebrate everything that unites us in Christ.

Jane Holloway is National Prayer Director of the World Prayer Centre in Birmingham. She is an inspiring speaker with many encouraging stories to tell of how God has worked through the prayers of his people. Jane was previously Prayer Coordinator for National EA and last visited LEAF in 2000.

Worship for this evening will be led by the worship team from Bransgore Community Church.

It will be an encouraging, inspiring, and challenging evening – **DON'T MISS IT!**

If you've wondered what goes on in one of the Prayer Houses in the New Forest then you would be very welcome to visit the **New Forest House of Prayer** the night before (**Saturday 17 Nov**) where Jane will also be speaking. For further info see the LEAF Diary or visit [www.nfhop.org](http://www.nfhop.org)

## Major Building Project Planned for New Hope Community Church

New Hope Community Church have submitted ambitious plans for planning approval to convert an industrial building on the Hardley Industrial State into a new church centre to include a 500 seat auditorium. See [www.newhopeco.uk](http://www.newhopeco.uk) for further details. It will be a great facility, so **please pray** that God will grant them favour with the planning authorities – and you can add your support to their application on the web.

## LEAF Youth Project.

We wrote to all LEAF members recently encouraging you to support our plans for the LEAF Youth Project, and giving you details of the work that **Sharon Prior** was undertaking to provide resources and support to Youth Leaders in the New Forest Churches.

Sharon is continuing to do an excellent job, building relationships with local youth leaders and putting together resources for them.

**We still need further regular support to finance this vital ministry, so please consider prayerfully whether you can help.**

## Forest Fire 2008

Forest Fire 2008 will be taking place on **Friday 9<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May** at Brockenhurst College, and our aim is to build on the success of the event in 2007.

Our guest speaker will be **Rev Steven Brady** – Principal of Moorlands College – and he will be building on the theme of Whole Life Discipleship which Mark Green brought to us this year.

## Visit of Alan Vincent in March 2008

In Phil Cole's article he mentioned the recent visit of Alan Vincent to the Forest. Alan gave an inspiring testimony of how God had led him in over 50 years of ministry and an introduction to the whole subject of Spiritual Warfare. CDs of this evening are available for anyone interested (*Cost £5, cheques payable to "OK New Forest", Rose Cottage, Back Lane, Sway, Lymington, SO41 6BU.*)

Alan is planning to come back to the Forest between 11<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> March 2008 to take a conference (probably over three days) in which he will open up the whole area of spiritual warfare from a Biblical and practical perspective. Further details of this event will be published in due course. It will be open to all, but especially relevant to those in positions of leadership within the church.

## LEAF Office has moved

The LEAF office has moved from the home of Jonathan & Sylvia Wallis to the offices of Lymington Baptist Church (see overleaf). This not a manned office but an accommodation address, and any administrative queries should be addressed to Sue Coles at this address or by phone on **01590 610316**.



*Pause for thought*

Are you building your life on what's **WRONG** with you or what's **RIGHT** with Him?