



It's exciting to see the refurbishment of the Renew Centre underway, with Colin and the team creating a great community space. Already the work is generating much interest and offers of help from the community. As we talk to people about the centre, it's important to remember this is not about 'us and them' - we are not offering a care or counselling service, but making ourselves available for creating relationships. It's a place where it's 'ok not to be ok', where everyone is welcome and no one is judged. Underneath all of this is a foundation of daily prayer and the presence of the Lord. So, please be prayerful as this comes together.

During the refurbishment phase, we will also be forming the team that will help run the centre. Pam, Anne and Gill A will be hosts on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, overseeing each day, with Andrew and myself filling in where needed. In addition to hosts, we need a large team of helpers just to be there, make conversation, welcome people, make tea, engage in craft activities . . . and be the presence of Jesus -listening, caring, laughing together. If you can help or want to find out more, speak to one of the hosts and sign-up to let us know when you are available.

The Renew Centre is a big, exciting project, but it is not an end in itself. Our vision is community transformation: seeing individual lives changed to such an extent the community changes. As we see people meet Jesus and come to faith, the character of our church will change. We are looking to the Lord not to grow *our* Church but grow a Church or this community - something that will challenge our comfort and traditions.

As part of this process, we have been experimenting with the format of Sunday morning services. Some of this has been met with enthusiasm, some with concern, even distress. Later this month (24th October), we have our Church Members' Meeting, where I would like us to open up this subject properly, to listen to each other and seek wisdom from the Lord. Change is usually uncomfortable and we owe it to each other to listen with open hearts and respect for one another.

Speaking personally, getting this far has been a difficult and at times painful spiritual battle. The Bible tells us our struggle is against the principalities and powers of this dark world (Ephesians 6:10-18), and Jesus refers to Satan as the ruler of this world. Such powers rule our community and oppose us . . . but **Jesus came to destroy the works of the evil one** (1 John 3:8).

I am so glad to be part of this Church, at this time, full of such lovely people, committed to knowing and following Jesus as Lord, and committed to one another.

God bless,

David