

# waymark



unitarians in edinburgh

**Volume 51 Number 1**  
**February / March 2019**

Is it just me or have you ever wondered...  
What has brought each of us together?  
To meet each other  
at this place,  
at this time,  
at this point in our lives?  
To come face to face, head to head, heart to heart with one  
another.  
What threads, seen and unseen, have uniquely sewn us together?  
I've heard it said that we are each other's teacher, and each  
other's student.

Let us take a moment of time to look around...  
and let our eyes land with care upon the faces we see.  
For we are more than teacher and student,  
we are the awesome gift of our self to each other.

# A Very Warm Welcome to St Mark's

from Rev Peter Fairbrother



## Same, different

A very warm welcome to this, the first issue of Waymark in 2019. And, as you can see, we greet the new year with a brand new look.

Firstly, allow me to introduce to you the new editorial team for Waymark. Our beloved newsletter is now in the capable and caring hands of Kris Calder, responsible for layout and design, and Christina Hamilton, who brings her journalistic skills and experience to the publication. (Christina's input begins from next issue onwards.) In addition, our children's coordinator Sara Robertson will bring contributions from the children's programme to each issue. I'm sure you'll join me in wishing the new team well.

A few words to support orientation... You'll find key contact information for St Mark's contained at the foot of this page. Specific information on church officers, and church governance, is now contained on our website (in the 'about us' section). For those seeking the Sunday service rota information — the rota will continue to be displayed on the church noticeboard in the upper hall, and volunteers will continue to be contacted by email (or other means) the week before each service in which they're involved.

I know that an increasing number of you access our church website, Facebook page, and receive notices by email, and we'll be exploring new ways of using each of these to keep you fully connected between issues of Waymark. We'll also be using Facebook as a supplementary means of enabling community discussion. Of course, as always, notices will be read at church each Sunday. Moreover, I find that nothing beats a good catch-up over coffee after the Sunday service to keep abreast of what's going on!

Waymark will continue to be published every two months... at this time. This is not set in perpetuity. We'll see how we go. Waymark is your newsletter, and as ever we'll be guided by your enthusiasm and contributions in terms of future publication frequency and for that matter, page count. To the creative writers, artists and photographers reading this — indeed to all of you — the editorial team would love to receive and include your material in forthcoming issues, especially poems, provocations (the more provocative the better, I say!) and words from the heart. Some of you may recall that I opened the new year with a service on the power of introverts, and to fellow introverts I say this: may your power shine in these pages! For those less inclined to speak from the platform during Sunday services, perhaps you might like to share your thoughts and passions in these pages? All welcome.

Welcome to your new Waymark!

## Peter, and for the editorial team.

Contact the editorial team by email: [editor@edinburgh-unitarians.org.uk](mailto:editor@edinburgh-unitarians.org.uk)

# Future Sunday Services at St Mark's

Services are at 11am in the church, with coffee and conversation in the hall afterwards. Children sit with their parents for the opening part of the service, and then follow their own programme.

## **3 February - Celebrating Imbolc, the Beginning of Spring**

*Service led by Rev Peter Fairbrother*

Imbolc, in the Celtic calendar, marks the beginning of the lambing season and the stirrings of new life. The original word Imbolg means 'in the belly'. All is pregnant and expectant - and only just visible if at all, like the gentle curve of a 'just-showing' pregnancy. Today we celebrate the beginning of Spring with a service of Celtic worship.

## **10 February - The Good Samaritan**

*Service led by Rev Brian Cooper*

Brian will be analysing layers of meaning in this familiar Bible story.

## **17 February - A Class Act**

*Service led by Jon Bagust & Lesley Hartley*

The caste system in India prevents some children from receiving a proper education. We hear of the free after-school coaching classes for under privileged Dalit children (from the 'untouchable caste') in various parts of India and we learn how our own micro charity, 'The Chennai Fund', is making a difference providing children in Amanabakkum village with after-school coaching.

## **24 February - A Gentle Service of Blessings and Benedictions**

*Service led by Rev Peter Fairbrother*

Readings and reflections from John O'Donohue's beautiful collection of blessings 'Benedictus' and extracts from his other works. Including space for the Benedictine practice of Lectio Divina.

## **3 March - The Art of Falling Apart**

*Service led by Rev Peter Fairbrother*

How are we with 'letting go'?

## **10 March - International Women's Day**

*Service led by Katie Brown*

Today's Service invites you to join together to acknowledge International Women's Day 2019. The IWD campaign theme is #Balanceforbetter and this morning we will explore what this might mean for our own community.

## **17 March - Listening, Believing, Supporting & Empowering Survivors of Sexual Violence**

*Service led by Lesley Hartley*

We are pleased to welcome a speaker from the Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre to talk during our service.

## **24 March - The Divine Feminine, Redressing the Balance**

*Service led by Suzanne Dance*

Suzanne will explore embodied spirituality, and will celebrate some hidden or overlooked sources of female sacred power in the persons of Mary Magdalene, Brigid of the Celts, and Green Tara.

## **31 March - Into the Wilderness**

*Service led by Rev Peter Fairbrother*

Be still and know that I am love. Be still and know that I am loved.

# Refugee Tales

**On 25th November last year, St Mark's member and Waymark's former editor Jane Aaronson lit our Chalice with these words.**



Before lighting the chalice today, I am going to read you a statement on behalf of Refugee Tales. Refugee Tales is a pressure group that works in support of detained refugees. The statement had a profound effect on me. I heard it at the Book Festival in August, read by our Scottish Makar, Jackie Kay, together with Kamila Shamsie, a Pakistani-British writer.

"The UK is in the only country in Europe that detains people indefinitely under immigration rules. In 2017, according to Home Office statistics, over 27,000 people were detained in this way. At any one time between 2,500 and 3,000 people were detained indefinitely. 50% of all those detained indefinitely are released back into the community. Detention might only be for days and weeks, but it can be for months and years. The longest a person has been detained in the UK is 9 years.

A person who is charged *and convicted* has a sentence; they can count down the days till they are released. People who are detained indefinitely are not charged with anything; they can only count the days up. Day after day, week after week, they don't know when they might be released. Once detained, a person can be re-detained, and re-detained without limit. More than one person a day requires treatment for self-harming in UK detention centres. Between November 2016 and November 2017 in UK detention centres there were 10 deaths. By every measure and every charter, indefinite detention is a breach of human rights. 'No one,' as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights says, 'shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention, or exile.' Indefinite detention denies due process and is a breach of the rule of law.

In 2017 the Bar Council called for an end to indefinite detention. In 2017 the British Medical Association called for an end to Indefinite Detention. In 2015 a cross-party report on indefinite detention concluded categorically that it was time for a limit.

It costs £34,000 to detain a person for a year. It costs £140 million a year to maintain the current detention system.

Indefinite Detention is a waste of money. Indefinite Detention is a waste of life. If you heard these things about another country, imagine what you would say.

Refugee Tales calls for an immediate end to indefinite detention. It is time for a limit of 28 days. Indefinite Detention is an offence against humanity. Indefinite Detention must end.

The law must change, now."

I now light the chalice in support of Refugee Tales to highlight the plight of refugees and in the hope that we all as individuals and together as a congregation can help to ensure that they will be treated with more compassion and humanity in future.

*Words reproduced with kind permission from Refugee Tales.*

# St Mark's Good Causes

An important part of our community is our commitment to supporting local charities. As most of you know, we give to six 'good causes' each year through retiring collections following Sunday service. Among the six good causes are three long-term, long-standing commitments: our partner church in Chennai, India; St Catharine's Homeless Project; and a charity choice made by the Unitarian Women's League.

## Money Raised for Good Causes in 2018

Chennai £412.67      Mary's Meals £355  
 Edinburgh NW Foodbank, Edinburgh Food Project £230  
 SiMBA—Simpson's Memory Box Appeal £80  
 Clara Barton Indonesia Emergency Appeal £222  
 St Catharine's Homeless Project £170  
 Women's League National Project £140



For 2019 the remaining three were drawn from suggestions proposed by you, the community of St Mark's. As you may recall, at our service of welcome at the end of October last year, our minister, Peter, invited nominations of organisations that you'd like to see supported by our community. After six weeks of receiving suggestions, at our family Christmas service on 16th December Minnie did the honours and drew three from all those submitted (pictured left). A big thank-you to all who contributed to the process.

Listed below are all our good causes for 2019. Each will feature in a Sunday service in the year ahead. The first, Chennai Unitarian Christian Church, will be the subject of our Sunday service on 17th February.

### Chennai Unitarian Christian Church

depends on the support we can give through the 'Chennai Fund' for their unique and wonderful social outreach projects, which benefit the underprivileged people and children of the church, and the children of the Unitarian school in the Dalit village of Ammanambakkam.



### Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre

was established in 1978. Over the last 40 years they have provided emotional and practical support, information and advocacy to thousands of survivors of sexual violence.



edinburgh rape crisis centre  
 supporting survivors of sexual violence

### Edinburgh Interfaith Association

has worked to promote positive engagement between the communities of Edinburgh. They believe that through interfaith education and dialogue they can work towards a safe and more inclusive Scotland. They strive to bring people together to celebrate diversity, build meaningful and beneficial relationships and to represent the interests and needs of faith communities.



### Turning Point Scotland Edinburgh

services provide support to people experiencing problems with substance misuse. Based in Leith and Craigmillar the services provide a wide range of support based on harm reduction and moving towards recovery.



### St Catharine's Convent Homeless Project

offers friendship and practical support to homeless and disadvantaged people. They provide morning and evening meals, toilet and shower facilities, and perhaps, more importantly, a warm welcome, a listening ear and a place to call home.



St. Catharine's Mercy Centre

### The Unitarian Women's League

aims to quicken the religious life of our churches and to bring Unitarian and other Liberal Christian Women into closer fellowship. St Mark's good cause supports the Women's League in their Annual Project, which aims to raise over £5,000 for a nominated charity.



Unitarian Women's League

The British League of Unitarian and other Liberal Christian Women

# In and Around St Mark's

## Poetry & Prose Reading for Pleasure

Sundays **17 February & 31 March** at 1pm

Come and share some favourite poems or prose.

For more information speak to Margery MacKay  
e: stmarkssecretary@btinternet

## Mindfulness @ Lunchtime

Every Tuesday at 12.15

For more information speak to Jon Bagust  
f: mindfulnessatlunchtime



**Thankyou!**

A very big heartfelt thankyou to everyone who helped make our Christmas events wonderful last year.

## The Bereavement Support Group

Saturdays **16 February & 2 March** at 11am

The Bereavement Support Group offers support to anyone suffering a loss through bereavement, separation or estrangement.

For more information speak to Jane Aaronson  
e: ja@ednet.co.uk

## Interbeing Buddhist Meditation

Every Thursday at 7.15pm

## Jack Westwell Piano Recital

Tuesday **5 March** at 1.10pm  
in the **Reid Concert Hall**

Former St Mark's pianist Jack Westwell plays

**Brahms—Two Rhapsodies Op. 79**  
**Poulenc—Les Soirées de Nazelles**

# In memory of Liz Marshall

**Rev Peter Fairbrother reflects on the life of a much-loved, long-standing member of our community who died on 14th December 2018.**

I began to get to know Liz towards the end of her life. In the first weeks of my ministry at St Mark's I was the recipient of her warmth and generosity of welcome. When I raised the proposition of community involvement in the 2018 Edinburgh Pride march, she was among the first to come forward to take up the invitation. On the day of the march itself I remember us walking arm in arm up a dreich Royal Mile, and it was then that I began to learn a little of her remarkable life: her career in social work and some of the multitude of causes and campaigns that were close to her heart, too many to mention here, alas.



Liz's involvement in our community was long-standing. It began under the ministry of Rev. Bruce Findlow, with whom she had a close bond. Over the years she supported our community in a great many ways, notably through her involvement in the children's programme.

It was at St Mark's where Liz became deeply involved in the work of Amnesty International. Throughout her life, Liz was a passionate campaigner for human rights, standing up for people and communities wherever she found injustice.

Liz's central belief was that we are here to help others, to make the world a better place. Liz led a full, passionate life. Passion infused her all that she did. She was an inspiration to many, and a deeply loved member of our community. We are grateful for all that she shared with us.

## Children's Corner with Sara Robertson

As this is the first dedicated children's page in Waymark, we thought we would give you an insight into what we get up to downstairs each week. As with services upstairs, no two weeks are identical but we do have our own rituals to keep things familiar.



We are Unitarians  
This is the church of  
the open mind,  
This is the church of  
the loving heart,  
This is the church of  
the helping hands.

We start each session with a welcome song and this short poem.

If there are any new children, we follow this with introductions. Then we have time to share joys and sorrows with the group. All are encouraged to share but we ensure no-one feels they have to if this makes them uncomfortable. Next we have a story. Sometimes this is a true story, sometimes it is fiction but they will always have a lesson or question and regularly lead to a deep discussion.

Next there is an activity, inspired by the story or its message. This is the most varied part of the session. Often it is a craft or art based activity but can be a drama game, song or guided meditation. Some of the artwork we have made can be seen in the images here.



*Hand print menorahs for Hanukkah*

To close, we have recently started to do a short mindfulness exercise, followed by our long-standing goodbye song, *Go Now in Peace*.

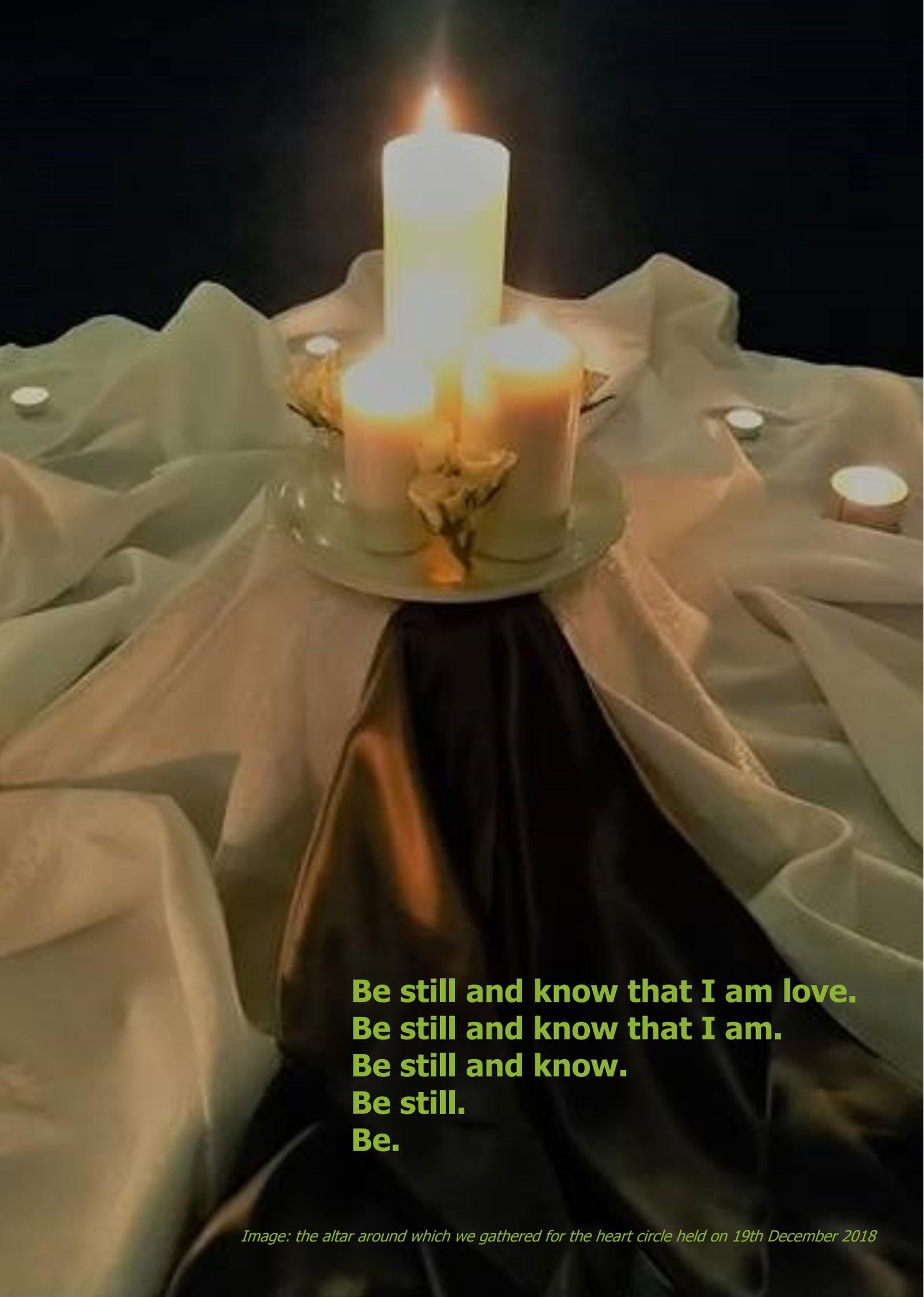


*Origami lamps for Diwali*

In the last few months of 2018, we looked at different festivals of light. The children uncovered various themes running through them all: hope; peace; dedication; love; and looking forward to a time when the earth would be warm and flourish again.

Our next theme is how individuals can make a difference in the world. Looking at visionaries such as Martin Luther-King and Gandhi, mould breakers such as Beatrix Potter and Mary Wollstonecraft, and everyday individuals who most people will never hear of.

If you would like to visit the children's programme, volunteer as a leader, or just get more information on what we are up to, please email Sara at [stmarkschildrensprogramme@gmail.com](mailto:stmarkschildrensprogramme@gmail.com).



**Be still and know that I am love.  
Be still and know that I am.  
Be still and know.  
Be still.  
Be.**

*Image: the altar around which we gathered for the heart circle held on 19th December 2018*