

# Candles in the night

Sometimes it is enough to just stop and sit in the stillness; To give voice to our grief and pain and allow our weakness to wash over us - accepting that we are deserving of love in it's highest form simply because we are alive.

Helen McIlroy shares just such an experience at Bendigo Community of Christ at their recent Sacred Space. Here she found herself at her most vulnerable and chose to allow God to join her in that space of deep honesty.

For a long time now I have been keeping myself busy, smiling and I guess keeping a lot to myself.

On Thursday night I attended the Sacred Space at Bendigo Community of Christ. The room was warm, inviting, with beautiful soft music playing in the background. The source of light were many candles in different sizes and shapes.

The words shared by Kristie were meaningful, encouraging and insightful. The atmosphere created a space to breathe deep and reflect deep within. We were asked at one stage to reflect on these words - 'We are loved, we are enough.' Most candles burned bright except for a few that at times looked on the verge of going out. I couldn't help think they reflected some of people most dear to me. I saw myself as one of those candles. In this beautiful and healing atmosphere I felt uncomfortable, grief, sadness, vulnerable and overwhelmed. I left as soon as it was over as the last thing I wanted to do was to engage in any conversation. I knew that I would not be able to keep it together and people would see just how broken I felt.

I had a God moment. When we think about the times God has been there for us it usually is described as warm, loving, having a sense of peace and inner strength. My God moment was painful. Usually, I fill my life with activity or watching TV. Anything but listening or being aware of what was happening within. There I was in a room with my inner most thoughts that I had to face. My fears, grief of watching someone I love fade away with ongoing health concerns, supporting loved ones and those around me in need has taken its toll.

God has reminded me to stop, be broken, face my fears, be vulnerable and take time out in the wilderness. Sometimes we try to be and do everything we feel that is expected of us, either by ourself or others. I know I am loved. I just need to love and respect my body.

I love God and feel very blessed to be part of this community. I am not looking for sympathy as I know you all have had, are going through or face overwhelming obstacles and difficult times. I just wanted to share my testimony and hope that you all find your way of listening to what lies deep within.

Helen McIlroy

