



# *Blue Christmas*

*A Service to Make Space for Your Grief at Christmas*

*Thank you for joining us tonight.*

*Please use this time however you need.*

*There is space for you to grieve here.*



CANADIAN  
BAPTISTS  
of Ontario  
and Quebec

# Welcome

## Space for our Sadness

Reading: Psalm 6

Prayer:

Leader: Dear God, This time of year we are surrounded by happiness.

**All: And we feel sad.**

Leader: There is happy music, happy families, happy movies on TV.

**All: And we feel sad.**

Leader: We hear the wish to have a “Merry Christmas” and we do not know if Christmas will be merry.

**All: Because we feel sad.**

Leader: Our hearts are heavy with our loss, and we miss the people that we loved that are not here to celebrate with us.

**All: It makes us sad.**

Leader: We long for you to come to the place of our sadness, tonight and in the days to come.

**All: Meet us in our sadness. Amen**

## Song

## Space for Lament and Regret

Readings: Lamentations 3: 1-18, Psalm 13

Prayer:

**If only, Lord God, if only we had taken more time,**

**If only we had said more,**

**If only we had said less.**

**We confess to you our regrets,**

**We acknowledge that what is past.**

**In this moment give us grace to receive**

**And to offer forgiveness;**

**Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**



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## Space for our Longing

Reading: Psalm 130: 1-6

Prayer:

Leader: Dear God, we come to you with hearts full of longing.

**All: We long for You.**

Leader: We want to feel better. We want it to hurt less.

We want the ache to go away.

**All: We long for You.**

Leader: We do not want to be weighed down by our grief. We want to heal.

**All: We long for you.**

Leader: Meet us, Lord in our longing.

**All: Amen**

## Song: O Come, O Come Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel  
And ransom captive Israel  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear.

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

O come, Thou Day-Spring, come and cheer  
Our spirits by Thine advent here  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night  
And death's dark shadows put to flight.

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free  
Thine own from Satan's tyranny  
From depths of hell Thy people save  
And give them victory o'er the grave

# Blue Christmas

## Space to Remember

### Space for Grief at Christmas

Reflection –

When your grief at Christmas is heavy, you don't always know where to put it. It doesn't go with the gingerbread houses, doesn't hang from a tree, doesn't have a Christmas carol to sing about it. At Christmas you can feel on the outside of everything.

But tonight I want to tell you that there is space for your Christmas grief. If you are also lamenting that through the years you wish you could be together, I want to give you permission to remember few things:

- It's okay that you're not okay

It's normal to find Christmas hard. It's normal to have good days and bad days. It's normal for weird things to trigger your grief. It's normal to need space. It's normal to have to rush from a room or need to skip church or struggle to buy Christmas presents. It's normal to feel angry. It's normal to miss them so much it hurts. It's normal to want Christmas to just be over already.

- Make space for your grief

Please don't feel you have to hide how you feel. Maybe not everyone will get it. But you don't need to pretend all the time. Try to find the ways to share that it's difficult. Find your safe people to talk to. Find the spaces to share how hard it is. Find your own ways to remember and make space for the one you loved. Maybe a special ornament on the tree. Maybe a tradition that you do in their honour. Sometimes making space is NOT doing things you feel you can't do and that's okay too.

- You are not alone

The Bible says "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." Your heart may be broken this Christmas, or it may carry the crack of a loss that is many years passed. And God is near you. God sees your pain. On the long nights that you are carrying the heaviness of this loss, know that God has not forgotten you. That is why Jesus came at Christmas.



# Blue Christmas

There is a song we sing in the season leading up to Christmas that has always felt a little more fitting during difficult Christmas seasons. O come O come Emmanuel. This is a song of longing. It is not one of arrival - it is asking for God's Emmanuel to come, praying for God to appear and be present to us. It is a good song for those who do not feel Christmas hope easily, but instead are crying out for God.

Do you know what the word Immanuel means? It literally means "God with us." Is it praying: God be with us. We are saying "God come and be here...." and then we are told that this is the name of the one who did come at Christmas: God with us, Emmanuel.

Today we will light a candle of longing and a light of hope. We light this candle as we sing "God come and speak to our pain. God come and be what we need." And we light it with a glimmer of hope that God is with us. Emmanuel. That is who came that we will never be alone.

Every time you hear that word, remember that God is with us. God is with you. You are not alone, and you are not forgotten.

Time of Silence

- Time of Quiet as we consider all the ways we find Christmas painful

## Space for Hope

Readings: Isaiah 9: 2, 6; Luke 2: 1-20

A Prayer in Hope:

**I believe, although everything hides you from my faith.**

**I believe, although everything shouts No! to me**

**I believe, although everything may seem to die,**

**I believe, even when I no longer wish to live,**

**Because I have found my life**

**on the word of God.**



# Blue Christmas

**I believe, although it still hurts  
I believe, although I feel alone in pain  
Because I have learnt with certainty  
That He comes to meet us  
In the hardest hours,  
With His love and His light.  
I believe but increase my faith.**

Lighting of Candles

## Song: Silent Night

Silent night, Holy night  
All is calm, all is bright  
'Round yon virgin, mother and child,  
Holy infant so gentle and mild  
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace

Silent night, Holy night,  
Shepherds quake at the sight.  
Glories stream from heaven afar,  
Heav'nly hosts sing Alleluia;  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.

Silent night, Holy night,  
Son of God, love's pure light  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Closing Prayer for Comfort

*When you are ready, please leave in silence. Stay as long as you need.*

*May you feel hope alongside your sorrow this season.*

*You are loved.*



# Space to Remember

**A space to remember is an opportunity to do one of the following;**

- Read the names of the loved ones being remembered.  
(These will need to be collected ahead of time)
- A table could be set up for a framed picture of the loved one to be on display during the service (This will need to be communicated prior to the service) and in this space you can take a moment to reference the pictures.
- Candle can be lit in memory of those who are being mourned.
- Have ornaments on hand that attendees can hang on your Christmas tree in honour of their loved ones.
- Allow for attendees to stand and say the name of the person they are missing at this time.
- Say a special devotional or prayer for those who are remembering their loved one.