

Blue Christmas

Gathering Music – *Guitar*

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| <p><i>Person 1</i></p> <p>Joy</p> | <p>Good evening, and welcome to our Christmas Eve Remembrance Service. This is a special time we have set aside in the midst of the holiday celebrations to remember special people we love and miss, and to receive God’s comfort in our sorrow.</p> <p>Hear these words from the Holy Scriptures:</p> |
| <p><i>Person 2</i></p> | <p>From the Gospel according Matthew, Jesus says, “Come to me all you who labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”</p> <p>Also from Matthew, Jesus says, “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”</p> |
| <p><i>Person 3</i></p> | <p>From the Psalms: “The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.”</p> <p>Isaiah says: “He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted . . . to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve . . . to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.”</p> |

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| <i>Person 4</i> | <p>From Matthew, Jesus says, "Look, I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age."</p> <p>From Isaiah: "Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. Should you pass through the waters, I shall be with you; or through rivers, they will not swallow you up. Should you walk through fire, you will not suffer, and the flame will not burn you. For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, Your Savior."</p> |
| <i>Person 5</i> | <p>Also from Isaiah: "Though the mountains leave their place and the hills be shaken, my love shall never leave you . . . says the Holy One, who has mercy on you."</p> <p>From Revelation: "God will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more. There will be no mourning, or crying, or pain anymore, for the former things have passed away... Look! I'm making all things new."</p> |
| <i>Person 2</i> | <p>From Romans: "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are nothing compared to the glory to be revealed for us."</p> <p>From 1st Corinthians: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him."</p> <p>Let us now stand as you are able and sing together, Hymn 221, <i>In the Bleak Midwinter</i>. You'll find the words in your bulletin.</p> |

Hymn 221- *In the Bleak Midwinter*, verses 1, 3, and 4 –

Candle Lighting Ceremony

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| <i>Person 3</i> | <p>We gather together at this special time</p> <p>To remember our loved ones who have died.</p> <p>To affirm the blessing they were in our lives,</p> <p>To focus on their love, To celebrate their lives,</p> <p>And to have them live on in our hearts.</p> <p>We honor these loved ones we loved and lost by lighting these candles.</p> |
| <i>Person 4</i> | <p>The blue candle represents our Grief.</p> <p>The pain of loss that no words can alleviate</p> <p>Which makes us truly understand the meaning of heartache</p> <p>And triggers endless tears for the great void in our lives.</p> |
| <i>Person 5</i> | <p>The purple candle represents our Courage.</p> <p>To get up in the morning,</p> <p>To reweave our family tapestry,</p> <p>To seek comfort,</p> <p>To walk through the Valley—</p> <p>To seek support.</p> |
| <i>Person 1</i> | <p>The yellow candle represents our Memories.</p> <p>So precious as time goes on</p> <p>Reliving all the times we laughed and cried, argued, fought</p> <p>and disagreed, teased, played, rejoiced, and celebrated.</p> <p>All the times we want to memorize and tuck into our hearts.</p> |

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| <p><i>Person 2</i></p> | <p>The red candle represents our Love.</p> <p>That special love we have for our departed</p> <p>Which we don't ever want to stop feeling</p> <p>That lives on always in our hearts,</p> <p>And shines for the rest of the world to see</p> <p>In the good things that we do in our loved one's memory.</p> |
| <p><i>Person 3</i></p> | <p>The green candle represents our Hope.</p> <p>That our loved ones live on through us,</p> <p>Never to be erased from our memories.</p> <p>That they are proud of us;</p> <p>They see us living on without them,</p> <p>And we may rest assured that one day we will be together again.</p> |
| <p><i>Person 4</i></p> | <p>Now we invite you to come forward and light a candle in memory of your loved one. After you light your candle, we invite you to pray at the altar, if you would like to do so.</p> |

Devotional-

Hymn 229- *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly* verses 1- 2

Closing Prayer-

Dismissal-

