

God Speaks to Us Through His Word

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture: Psalm 88

p.925

Message: Darkness and Dialogue

Pastor Joel Kok

Prayer of Hope

Please respond throughout the prayer as follows:

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Lighting of Candles

"Bright Morning Stars"

"Abide with Me"

LUYH 466:1-4

*Benediction (based on Romans 13:11-14, Revelation 22)

The time for going on alert is with us.

The hour has arrived for us to stop sleeping and wake up.

Now is our full salvation nearer than when we first believed.

The night is almost over and the dawn is in the sky.

**So let us throw off the trappings of darkness
and dress ourselves for the light.**

Jesus, the brightest star of the morning, gives us his promise:

"Look! I am coming quickly."

The Spirit and the church say "Come!"

Let everyone who hears answer, "Come!"

Amen! Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

*Song: "Silent Night! Holy Night" with "Peace, Peace" LUYH 85:1

You may add this chorus the second time through "Silent Night"

Peace, peace, peace on earth and good will to all.

This is a time for joy, this is a time for love.

Now let us all sing together of peace, peace, peace on earth.

Worship Participants

Pastor: Joel Kok ♦ Piano: Jill Friend ♦ Guitar: Laremy DeVries ♦ Viola: Derek Friend

Vocalists: Rebecca DeVries, Kate Henreckson, Sara Ploegstra

Sound: Jeff Ploegstra ♦ Projection: Tom Clark ♦ CCLI #493458 ♦ OneLicense #A-721171

Blue Christmas

December 20, 2020



The Man with the Blue Guitar

(excerpt)

The man bent over his guitar,
A shearsman of sorts. The day was green.

They said, "You have a blue guitar,
You do not play things as they are."

The man replied, "Things as they are
Are changed upon the blue guitar."

And they said then, "But play, you must,
A tune beyond us, yet ourselves,

A tune upon the blue guitar
Of things exactly as they are."

-Wallace Stevens

Psalm 126:5

Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy.

† Artwork: *The Old Guitarist* by Pablo Picasso

We Gather in God's Presence

Welcome

Opening Sentences: Psalm 88:1-4; Isaiah 9:2,6,7 p.925, 1027

*Song: "Within Our Darkest Night" LUYH 417

*God Greets Us

Prayer of Lament: Psalm 13:1,2 p.852

How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

How long must I wrestle with my thoughts
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?

How long will my enemy triumph over me?

Song: "O Lord, Hear My Prayer" LUYH 462:1

Prayer of Lament

Song: "O Lord, Hear My Prayer" LUYH 462:2

We Remember and Seek Comfort -A Litany of Remembrance

The First Candle: Persons Who Have Been Loved and Lost

We light the first Advent candle and remember those persons
who have been loved and lost.

We pause here to remember their names, their faces, their voices.

We give thanks for the memory that binds them to us in this season.

Lord, surround us all with your eternal love.

Song: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" LUYH 61:1

Time of Silence

Words of Comfort: Psalm 103:13-17 p.939

The Second Candle: Other Occasions of Loss

We light a second candle mindful of the many sources of loss and grief:

the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, or the loss of health,
the loss of routine, the loss of certainty, the loss of tradition.

As we gather up all our pain, we offer it to you, O God,
asking that into our open hands you will place the gift of peace.

Hold us, help us, heal us, O God.

Song: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" LUYH 61:6

Time of Silence

Words of Comfort: Psalm 139:11-12 p.974

The Third Candle: Acknowledging the Pain

We light a third candle to acknowledge the pain of our loss
in this Christmas season.

We pause to remember the past weeks, months,
and, for some of us, years of difficult times.

In the poignancy of memories, we feel all the grief, the sadness,
the hurts, and the fears, and we entrust them to Christ,
the suffering servant who is victorious over death itself.

We remember that the dawn overcomes the darkness.

Song: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" LUYH 61:5

Time of Silence

Words of Comfort: Psalm 34:19 p.872

The Fourth Candle: Gratitude for Those Who've Journeyed with Us

We light a fourth candle to remember all who have shared in our sorrow.

We thank you, Lord, for their compassion, for their presence with us
in times when our hurt went deeper than words could express.

We remember that you, Lord, sent your Holy Spirit
to sympathize with our weakness and to carry our sorrows.

We thank you for those who held us and pointed to your light.

Song: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" LUYH 61:7

Time of Silence

Words of Comfort: Matthew 5:4,7 p.1501