Origins of “Blue Christmas”

Some accounts trace the concept of Blue Christmas to British Columbia, Canada, in the late 1980s; Taylor Burton-Edwards, director of worship resources for the United Methodist Church, believes it originated in the hospice community and then migrated to churches in the 1990s.

By the late 1990s the practice had become widespread enough that many denominational offices were providing resources to individual congregations to hold the services. Such services seem most popular in mainline Protestant and Episcopal churches, but you’ll also find them in other denominations. The practice can be adapted by non-Christians, especially when it’s framed as “Longest Night.”

Many world religions have winter holidays that can be turned “blue.” Some say that even for non-believers, some kind of counter-programming makes sense as a response to the crazed Santa-fication of American culture this time of the year.

**Resources for clergy**

The website http://www.clergyleadership.com/hope/blueChristmas.cfm gives many samples of services, programs, hymns, prayers, candle lightings and ideas to conduct a Blue Christmas service. Just two others of many to check out:

* www.youngclergywomen.org
* www.godspacelight.com

Other resources may be found by searching online for “Blue Christmas liturgy” or “Blue Christmas worship.”

Resources for psychotherapists and helpers

Resources for therapists and other helpers appear not as available specifically for Blue Christmas. Here is one online article to explore -- 37 art therapy ideas on addressing grief and loss during the holiday season, use your search engine to look for “37 Art Therapy Techniques For De-Stressing This Season” by Priscilla Frank (published online in the Huffington Post).