

PLYMOUTH CHURCH

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The holidays are meant to be a time to celebrate, give, and share in the joy of the season. But for people facing grief, loss—or just a tough

period in life—it can be a challenging time of year. Seeing others reveling in the holiday spirit can magnify feelings of isolation and sadness. While the data is limited, psychology surveys suggest that people feel more stress, anxiety, and depression in the weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day.

If you are struggling over the holidays, you are not alone. Below are a few tips that can help you find hope this season:

- **Acknowledge your feelings**
With heartwarming ads on television and carolers on every corner, it’s tempting to put on a brave face and resist any negative feelings. But remember—it’s okay to not be okay. Accepting how you feel can help alleviate some stress.
- **Shift your expectations**
Are your life circumstances different this year? Perhaps you’re caring for a sick loved one, or you’re living in a new city. Big life changes will almost certainly impact the way you spend the holidays. Christmas or New Year’s may just be regular days for you, rather than joyous ones.
- **Connect with others**
If you have friends or family members nearby, make time to connect with them. Grabbing coffee with a loved one can feel less daunting than a big holiday party. Call someone you’ve been meaning to catch up with, or write them a card. Engaging with others in small ways will make a big difference.

- Get professional support

If sadness over the holidays becomes too much, don't hesitate to seek professional help. Ask your doctor, faith leader, or a trusted friend to help you find mental health services that meet your needs.

By taking a few small steps to care for yourself, the holidays can become more manageable. If you'd like to connect with others in the community who may be facing similar challenges, [Plymouth Church](#) in Brooklyn Heights is hosting a Blue Christmas service on December 4 at 7 p.m. The service is open to anyone who is seeking peace, hope, and connection this season. Information about additional support services will be available to all who attend.