

# DARKEST NIGHT

*A sacred pause for the winter solstice*



## **Light a candle in a dark room.**

(take all appropriate safety precautions – if you want to use an electric candle or a small lamp, it is no less valid)

## **Spend some minutes sitting in the darkness gently watching the light of the candle, as you take in the experience of being held in the dark.**

Consider them both – light and dark, the way they bleed into each other and dance together.



You can simply sit in silence if you feel able to do that, or you might like to pick a song from my [Darkest Night spotify playlist](#) to listen to if you struggle with extended silence. There's no hierarchy of spiritual practice here.

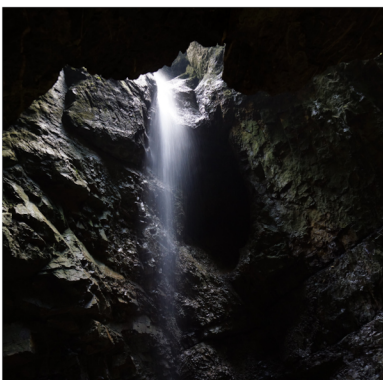
## **Consider these questions, either in your own thoughts or in your journal:**

- What feels fearful and painful about the darkness of my own life and the world right now? How does that need to be expressed in this moment (in words, movement, sound)?
- What feels life-giving and healing about the darkness of my own life and the world right now? How does that need to be expressed in this moment (in words, movement, sound)?



## **Read Psalm 139:7-12 (Translation by Wil Gafney)**

*Where can I go from your Spirit?  
Or where from your presence can I flee?  
If I ascend to the heavens you are there.  
If I recline in Sheol, see, it is you!  
If I take up dawn's wings,  
If I settle at the farthest reaches of the sea,  
Even there your hand shall lead me,  
And your right hand shall hold me fast.  
If I say, "surely darkness shall cover me,  
And night will become light behind me"  
Even darkness is not dark to you;  
Night is as daylight,  
For dark is the same as light.*



### **Movement Prayer:**

Stand and turn to face the west – the direction of the setting sun. You may like to hold your hands open before you.

***Holy Spirit of the dusk,  
May I now release what is no longer mine to carry.  
Will you uncurl my tightly clenched fists  
and gently take from me all that I think I can't be without.  
May you be my deep exhale, my invitation to come home again  
To your safe presence.***

Stand and turn to face the north – the direction of polar night, land where the sun never rises at this time of year. You may like to place your hands across your eyes.

***Holy Spirit of the night,  
May my senses awaken to this experience of darkness.  
Help me to tune in to the new voices and sensations  
Of this dark season,  
May I trust myself to walk in the dark  
And may I trust your Presence to go always with me.***

Stand and turn to face the east – the direction of the rising sun. You might like to raise your arms high and wide above you.

***Holy Spirit of the dawn,  
Give me a stubborn fierce hope  
For the new life that is birthed in the dark.  
Let that howl of hope become a serenade  
To your Dawning Light in the world  
As I move towards it.***

Stand and turn to face the south – the direction of the summer warmth.

***Holy Spirit of the day,  
May this experience of resting and struggling  
In the darkness  
Motivate me to action in the light.  
Let your wisdom and courage warm my bones  
And energise my limbs to love this world.***

If you like, sit again in the silence of the darkness for a little longer. When you are ready, blow out your candle, take a few deep breaths, and return to the rhythm of your day.