



March 2022

NEWSLETTER

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INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S
DAY
#BreakTheBias



OUR PLACE COMMUNITY OF HOPE

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March Birthdays

Our Place Birthdays

Andre B. – March 1st



Famous January Birthdays

Jon Bon Jovi – March 2nd, 1962

Shaquille O’Neal – March 6th, 1972

Elton John – March 25th, 1947

Common – March 13th, 1972

Bruce Willis – March 19th, 1955

Eva Mendes – March 5th, 1974

Lady Gaga – March 28th, 1986



If you want to celebrate your birthday with us, let us know!

Program Updates

Hi everyone!

We are extremely happy to say that we have opened for indoor drop-in with limited capacity. With that said, there are guidelines that must be followed, like wearing a staff provided mask during your visit.

Please keep the following rules in mind when you come by:

1. To enter the building, you must wear an N95 mask provided by staff – ***we understand that these masks may not be as comfortable as others, but they provide a significantly higher amount of protection. The safety of our community is extremely important to us.***
2. You must keep your mask on at all times; if you need to take it off for a break, please exit the building.
3. Please socially distance from others when inside, you must maintain 6 feet distance from others. **Gathering in groups is not permitted.**
4. Only 2 people are allowed at a table and must sit on opposite ends.
5. Bathroom use is permitted. **Only one person per bathroom at a time.** *Please be patient and wait for your turn.*
6. There is a sign-up sheet for computer use; please sanitize the area once you have finished using the computer.
7. **No eating or drinking is permitted during drop-in hours.**
8. **Do not enter the back room, kitchen, bible study room, or office. STAY IN THE MAIN DROP-IN AREA.**
9. **DON'T FORGET TO HAVE FUN! ☺**



Our Place Weekly Programs

NEW Pool Table Time – Everyday! (*in-person*)

Enjoy a game of pool during our open pool hour! Grab a friend and come join us. If you have any questions, or want to sign up, please use the signup sheet or let staff know. 😊

UPDATED Gaming Tournaments – Mondays at 1:30 pm (*in-person*)

Come and join us as we play fun games every week! Games include: Trivia, Finish that Lyric and Name that Tune! There are prizes to be won. 😊 **Limited capacity.**

NEW Current Events– Mondays at 1:00 pm (*in-person*)

Join us for interesting group discussions about current world events. If you have some insight, we are here to chat! **Limited capacity.**

Anger Management – Mondays at 2:30 pm (*virtual*)

Our new program will run on a weekly basis. This is a group for anyone who is interested in gaining control over their anger and strong emotions using CBT tools.

Link to join Anger Management:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88931569624?pwd=RnlCbiszME50Y3RWT1RydEdpQ3VjZz09>

Join by phone: (647)374-4685. When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: **889 3156 9624**

Bingo – Tuesdays at 1:30 pm (*in-person*)

Bingo is back in person! Enjoy a game with us as there are great prizes to be won! **Limited capacity.**

UPDATED Peer Support Group – Wednesdays at 1.:30 pm (*in-person*)

Peer support meetings are a time to connect with others for support, encouragement, and hope. We'll learn from each other's experiences in conversations. We'll talk about relaxation, managing emotions, self-compassion, and self-acceptance. We'll look at positive steps that you could try towards having a better life. **Limited capacity.** 😊

Art & CRAFTS Group – Thursday at 1:30pm (*in-person*)

Art & Crafts is a time to explore your creative side and connect with others. It will include drawing and coloring, painting, sketching and many more fun activities. Suggestions are welcome! 😊

Online Writing Group – Fridays at 1:30pm

Writing Group with Peter (a professional journalist!) is a time to connect with others, build friendships and get creative together. Everyone is welcome to join in and no experience is necessary!

Link to join Writing Group via Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/93536287038>

Join by phone, dial: **647-374-4685**. When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: **935 3628 7038**

LIVE MUSIC – Fridays at 1:30pm

Enjoy some fun tunes performed by Kevin and Chas. We will be broadcasting them during indoor dine-in on Fridays! Join us if you are fully vaccinated and would like a meal and a show! 😊

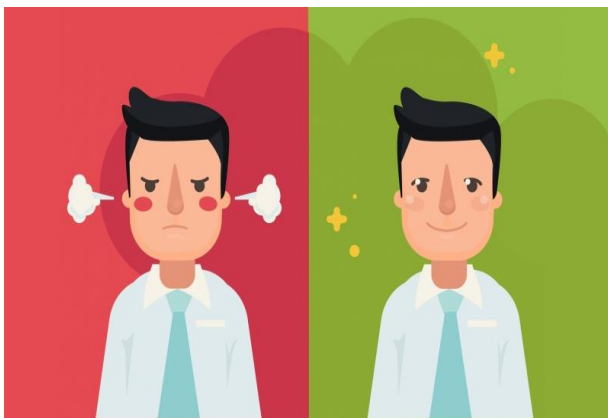
Link to join Live Music via Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82850357199>

Join by phone, dial **647-374-4685**. When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: **828 5035 7199**

Join Our New Program!

Anger Management – Online

Our Place has started a weekly virtual anger management group on Monday's! Anger management is a course for anyone who is interested in getting a handle on their anger and strong emotions. The training will utilize Cognitive-Behavioral tools and techniques to help individuals navigate tough situations. Participants are welcome to dive deeper into the root of their anger and learn more about themselves and what triggers them in the process. This group is open to all, and will be an interactive online group where all are welcome to share their experiences.



Together we will discuss topics such as managing our expectations vs. our reality, understanding and navigating our inner parent, adult and child, and creating an anger control plan.

Anyone who is interested in attending is encouraged to talk to staff about participating

Other Community Programs & Supports

Please ask one of the Our Place Staff if you need access to a phone or computer

Nicotine Replacement Therapy: Are you thinking of quitting smoking? Talk to any of our staff members about how you can access support and free nicotine replacement therapy like lozenges and patches with no wait.

Addiction Support Groups: If you are on a journey with addictions and are seeking support from the community, feel free to contact any of these communal resources.

<i>Narcotics Anonymous</i> Toronto – call 1-888-811-3887	<i>KeepSIX Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS)– 955 Queen Street East) – 416-461-1925 ext 2264</i>	<i>Evangel Hall Mission – 552 Adelaide Street West – 416-504-8056</i>
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Community Fridges Toronto is a mutual aid organization made up of community members and volunteers working to provide food for those in need. They have several fridges and

pantries across the city (locations listed below) and they operate on a “take what you need, leave what you don’t” basis. Feel free to visit any fridge to pick up or drop off food.

214 Wright Street	782 Adelaide Street West	250 Westlake Avenue	499 Parliament Street
1132 College Street	870 Dundas Street West	348 Pape Avenue (Pantry)	

Allan Gardens Food Bank 353 Sherbourne Street: You can visit and collect food from the bank once a week either on Thursday or Friday from 12:30pm to 3:00pm. Everyone who is interested must register and complete the intake process if it is your first time visiting. Please remember to bring your own bag.

Bloor West Food Bank 2305 Bloor St. West at the St. Pius X Catholic Church: They provide Prepacked bags for those who have made an appointment to visit. To make an appointment, email at appointments.foodbank@gmail.com. The food bank is open every Friday from 12:30pm to 3:00pm.

Parkdale Activity-Recreation Centre (PARC) 1499 Queen Street West: A drop-in space Running daily to support those who do not have stable housing (in shelter, respite). Meal Programming runs from Monday – Thursday from 9:30am to 12:30pm, Fridays from 1:00pm to 4:00pm, Saturday and Sunday from 11:00am to 3:00pm.

Evangel Hall Mission 552 Adelaide Street West: Clothing bank and various drop-in services are available Monday – Friday from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm. If you are need of shower access and laundry facilities, they provide services on Tuesdays and Thursdays; Registration for these specific services start at 9 am.

Davenport-Perth Neighbourhood Community Health Centre 1900 Davenport Rd: Provides free harm reduction kits (needles, stem kits, syringe kits and condoms), as well as other information and support. Contact (416) 656-8025 for more information. They also offer short term, one-on-one crisis support and information on community resources, OW, ODSP, shelter and housing, emergency needs and health-related supports. Contact their CSCI worker to book an appointment → Ingrid Moreno (416) 656-8025 ext. 401.

Warming Centres: The City of Toronto will open Warming Centres (locations listed below) when an extreme cold weather alert is issued because the temperature drops below -15° C or if there’s a wind chill -20° C or colder. Warming centres open at 7 PM on the day an alert is issued and will remain open until noon on the day the alert is

terminated. They are pet-friendly and TTC buses will provide transportation between the sites from evening until early morning at approximately 2 AM. To see if an alert has been called, contact 311 or Central Intake at (416) 338-4766, 1-877-338-3398.

129 Peter Street	195 Princes' Boulevard Exhibition Place
5800 Yonge Street	150 Borough Drive Scarborough Civic Centre

Shelter Beds and Respite Centres: If you need a place to stay you can access 24-hour respite sites and shelters by calling central intake at (416) 338-4766 or toll-free at 1-877-338-3398.

Gerstein Crisis Centre: Provides 24/7 telephone support, community support referrals, substance use crisis management, follow-up and access to short-term crisis beds. They also have an in-person mobile crisis team. Call (416) 929-5200 to access support.

New Circle: If you are in need of warmer clothing for the winter season, please connect with one of the Our Place staff and we will start the online referral process with you.

Call Lines & Online Chat Support

Please ask one of the Our Place Staff if you need access to a phone or computer



Progress Place - Warm Line: Warm Line is a confidential & anonymous service for adults. Think of them as a friendly ear. Chat online, text or call a Warm Line peer support worker. Call 416-960-9276 or/ 416-960-WARM between 8 pm to midnight or/ 416-323-3721 between 12pm – 8pm.

Gerstein Centre: Provides community-based crisis support that reflects and recognizes the needs and wishes of people experiencing a mental health crisis. Call 416-929-5200, 24 hrs/7 days.

Distress and Crisis Ontario: If you are experiencing distress or crisis and are in need of support, you can use their online chat function at <https://www.dcontario.org/> or text "SUPPORT" to 258258 from 2pm to 2am.

International Women's Day March 8th



On this day, we celebrate women's contributions to society, raise awareness about the fight for gender equality, and inspire support for organizations that help women globally. Women's Day started in America in 1909, but it wasn't until the following year that it became global. In 1910, German socialist, Clara Zetkin suggested the idea at an International Conference of Working Women where it was approved! Did you know, Women's

Day is an official holiday in some countries? Here are some more facts to follow →

- Every year there is a new theme. The theme for 2022 is #BreaktheBias.
- Purple, green, and white are the colors of International Women's Day. Purple signifies justice and dignity, green symbolizes hope, and white represents purity.
- The Mimosa flower is the known symbol as it demonstrates strength, sensibility and, sensitivity.

Here are some well-known women that have made a huge impact on the world! →



Marie Curie: According to BBC, Marie Curie was the most influential female in the world who left an impact on world history. She was a Polish and French physicist and chemist that made contributions in finding treatments for cancer. Marie Curie was the first woman to win the Nobel Prize in 1911! Because of her discoveries, advanced technologies for treatments such as X-Rays available today.

"I never see what has been done; I only see what remains to be done." - Marie Curie



Rosa Parks: African American activist and the mother of civil rights, Rosa Parks made a huge impact in the civil movement. On December 1st, 1955, Parks boarded the bus to Montgomery and sat in the first row of the bus. During this time, people of colour were forced to sit in the back of the bus and if buses were full, they had to offer their seat for white passengers.

She disagreed and was arrested, which led to a bus boycott planned by the NAACP. This boycott was to force a predominately racist society to treat black people with the same level of respect and courtesy they expect from others. It also aimed to support hiring more black people in transportation and for the middle row of buses to be available to anyone who came first. After 13 months, buses were desegregated.

"The only tired I was, was tired of giving in." - Rosa Parks



Malala Yousafzai: A Pakistani activist that advocated for education rights of young girls. She was attacked by Taliban terrorists at the young age of 15, as she was publicly supporting education and this went against what Taliban members believed. Fortunately, she survived and was able to tell her story as she was now even more determined to advocate for the rights of education for girls. After winning the Nobel Prize at the young age of 17, Malala established the *Malala Fund*, which was dedicated to providing every girl with the opportunity to achieve a future she chooses.

“I tell my story not because it is unique, but because it is the story of many girls” - Malala Yousafzai

International Transgender Day of Visibility March 31st

On this day, we take the time out to honor the achievements of transgender and gender-nonconforming people while raising awareness of the work that remains to be done in order to achieve Trans justice. This day was founded by activist Rachel Crandall in 2009 as a way to raise awareness about the incredible burden of discrimination against the Trans community. Rachel wanted to highlight the fact that the only transgender-centric day that is internationally recognized is Transgender Day of Remembrance, which is in mourning of members of the community who had lost their lives. By participating in campaigns and protests, this day was globally recognized and started to honor the living Trans community!



Christine Jorgensen: Christine was an American Trans woman and is known for being the first person that received sex reassignment surgery. While there were negative reactions, there were also positive reactions when outed through media. She opened the door for many people that felt trapped in their bodies and were afraid to go against societal norms and expectations. Christine’s bravery inspired many members of the Trans community to feel confident with who they are.



Marsha P. Johnston: Marsha was an American gay liberation activist and self-identified drag queen. She is well known for her work done during the Stonewall uprising. The “P” in her name stands for “Pay It No Mind”, which was how she responded to questions about her gender. Marsha

was known to be an outspoken advocate for gay rights and she created the STAR program to house Trans people who were experiencing homelessness. Marsha is known throughout the community and her work is still being spoken of today!



Laverne Cox: Laverne is one of the most influential American actresses and an LGBTQ2S+ advocate. She rose to fame after her role in Netflix's series, *Orange Is the New Black*. She became the first transgender person to play in a transgender series globally broadcasted on national TV. Laverne is also the first Trans woman to win an Emmy Award as she produced her documentary titled "*Disclosure*".

Here is a list of programs for individuals who are questioning or experiencing changes regarding their gender identity and some Trans-specific programs in Toronto →

Trans People of Colour Project (TPOC): They provide friendly over the phone check-ins to support racialized Trans people. They also hold virtual groups sessions through Zoom on Thursdays from 3-5pm. If you are interested in joining, email Yasmeen Persad at Ypersad@The519.org.

FTM, Transmasc & Non-Binary Support Group: This is an in-person support group for individuals of all ages and is inclusive to POC, FTM, Trans masculine, Trans male, non-binary identifying people who are transitioning or questioning. They are located at The 519 (519 Church St.) and run on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of every month from 7:30pm to 9:30pm.

Gender Journeys: This is a 10-week group that educates and supports anyone that is experiencing gender changes, which includes Trans folk, genderqueer individuals and those who are questioning. They bring in community speakers, provide information on health care questions and support experiences of gender transitioning, coming out and such. Group runs from April to June and October to December. To join, you have to register by emailing transprograms@sherbourne.on.ca.

What is St. Patrick's Day?



Every March 17th, we recognize it as St. Patrick's Day. The first thoughts that come to mind when we remember this holiday are usually along the lines of Ireland, green, gold, three leaf clovers and leprechauns. How St. Patrick's Day originated was to recognize and remember the missionary who introduced Christianity to Ireland. There are legends of how he used the shamrock to explain The Christian Holy Trinity. St. Patrick is Ireland's patron saint and the 17th marks the anniversary of his passing.

The holiday is celebrated by the Catholic Church, Irish people, as well as many others around the world. Today, people often celebrate by wearing green, making green coloured food, playing bagpipes, eating corned beef and cabbage. This day is largely celebrated in American culture & named the "Friendliest Day of the Year" by the Guinness Book of World Records. We wish you a very jolly St. Patrick's Day!

From the Kitchen of Our Place

Natasha's Favourite Salmon Patties

Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- ½ cup onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- ½ cup celery, diced
- 1 zucchini grated and squeezed dry
- 1 ½ cups sweet potato peeled, roughly chopped and steamed until tender
- ⅓ cup fresh basil, chopped
- ⅓ cup fresh mint, chopped
- ⅓ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- 2 eggs
- 1 can of salmon



- ½ cup whole wheat flour (optional)
- 2 Tbsp extra olive oil to cook (optional)

Directions

1. Sauté onion, garlic and celery in the oil for about one minute.
2. Add the zucchini, steamed sweet potato, basil, mint, parsley and cilantro and mash.
3. Mix in the eggs and salmon.
4. Roll the mixture into small balls. Flatten slightly and dust with the flour (this is optional).
5. Cook over a medium flame until golden on both sides.

The Best Classic Chili You'll Ever Have

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion- diced
- 1 pound of ground beef
- 2 ½ tablespoons of chili powder
- 2 tablespoons ground cumin
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 ½ cups beef broth
- 1 (15 oz) can of diced tomatoes
- 1 (16 oz) can of kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (8 oz) can tomato sauce



Instructions

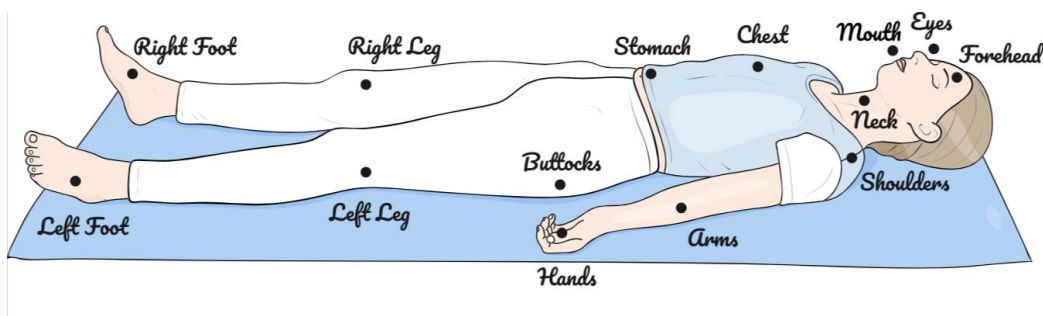
1. Add the olive oil to a large soup pot and place it over medium-high heat for two minutes. Add the onion. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Add the ground beef to the pot. Break it apart with a wooden spoon. Cook for 6-7 minutes, until the beef is browned, stirring occasionally.
3. Add the chili powder, cumin, sugar, tomato paste, garlic powder, salt, pepper, and optional cayenne. Stir until well combined.

4. Add the broth, diced tomatoes (with their juice), drained beans, and tomato sauce. Stir well.
5. Bring the liquid to a low boil. Then, reduce the heat (low to medium-low) to gently simmer the chili, uncovered, for 20-25 minutes, stirring occasionally.
6. Remove the pot from the heat. Let the chili rest for 5-10 minutes before serving.

Mental Health Tip of the Month

How to Use Progressive Muscle Relaxation

By Nyoka T.



Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) is a technique for lowering tension that was developed by American physician Edmund Jacobson in the 1920s. It began as an idea that physical relaxation could help with mental relaxation, but it was later proven to be effective for muscle relaxation. You contract a group of muscles as you inhale and relax them as you exhale when you practice progressive muscle relaxation. The muscles in your body are worked on in a specific order. You can't hold anxiety in your body if you are physically relaxed.

Benefits of PMR →

- Helps to reduce anxiety and tension
- Improves sleep
- Improves systolic blood pressure
- Reduces low back and neck pain
- Stress Management

How to Practice PMR →

1. Start by lying or sitting down. Relax your entire body. Take 5 deep, slow breaths.

2. Lift your toes upward. Hold, then let go. Pull your toes downward. Hold, then let go.
3. Next, tense your calf muscles, then let go.
4. Move your knees toward each other. Hold, then let go.
5. Squeeze your thigh muscles. Hold, then let go.
6. Clench your hands. Pause, then let go.
7. Tense your arms. Hold, then let go.
9. Contract your abdominal muscles. Pause, then let go.
10. Inhale and tighten your chest. Hold, then exhale and let go.
11. Raise your shoulders to your ears. Pause, then let go.
12. Purse your lips together. Hold, then release.
13. Open your mouth wide. Hold, then let go.
14. Close your eyes tightly. Pause, then release.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

TAKE 3 DEEP BREATHS

TENSE YOUR FOOT FOR 5 SECONDS
RELAX YOUR FOOT

TENSE YOUR LEG FOR 5 SECONDS
RELAX YOUR LEG

TENSE YOUR STOMACH FOR 5 SECONDS
RELAX YOUR STOMACH

TENSE YOUR ARM & HAND FOR 5 SECONDS
RELAX YOUR ARM & HAND

TENSE YOUR WHOLE BODY FOR 5 SECONDS
RELAX YOUR WHOLE BODY

TAKE 3 DEEP BREATHS



@illumiyogi

Writing Group Submissions

The Polkaroo Story

By Kimberly

One day two sisters went to a church. They were going to pick up some food that was available to families. It took 2 trips to the van. After the first trip, one of the 2 sisters ripped, fell and slid across the floor. She was a redhead. The other sister asked, "You okay." The redhead said, "I'm okay, I'm okay." She got up and walked away as if nothing had happened.

The next day the redhead woke up in pain and with a bruise on her right knee. She was grateful that it was nothing more serious or broken.

The two sisters were on the phone talking about what had happened. The one sister said to the redhead "when you put your head up, it reminded me of Polkaroo (just a redhead coming out behind something.)"

It was a laughing matter after it happened.

Well, I must confess something. The redhead is me. Surprise!!!!

This happened to me. I look back and I laugh at myself

HAHAHAHA

Praise Party 2021

By James

My wonderful New Year Eve for the coming of 2022 Praise Party. It was so interesting because it was all started when I took the wheel trans bus to my sister place around noon time and when I got there, she was standing in her parking lot waiting for my arrival. When I was there, she made me a coffee. It was the time to go into the New Year's Eve Writing Group. That was so interesting in our writing group. I wrote three pieces for the writing group on New Year's Eve to come and bring in the New Year with good friends with. When I started to read my stories on the New Year's it was very interesting of what I wrote, and it was so great of what was going to come out on paper.

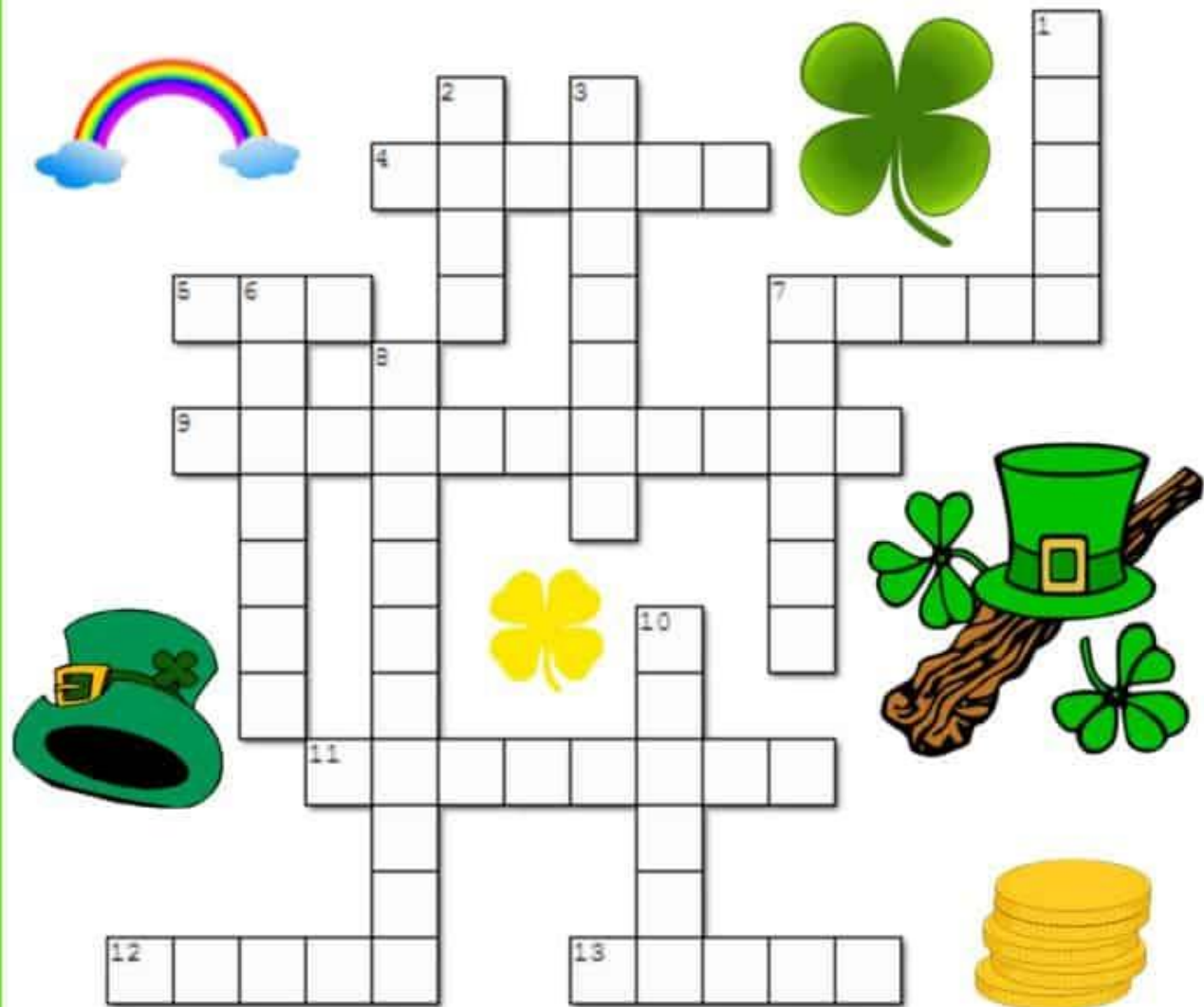
After the group was over my number one sister was helping to fix my laptop. So, we relaxed for the day until we get ready for our big night that we both got to celebrate the New Year together in our special place and that is right our church Elevation Church. The time has come to leave for to get our ride to the Elevation Church. The wheel trans came to pick us and both of us were on the way to our big event to bring in the New Year

together. It was lots of fun because it was my first event to go one of these events. While we were there it played different kind music.

It was that the time we waited to get ready to go back to my sister place from church. It was around 1:45 am on Saturday January 1st, 2022. When we got back to my sister place. Yes, we were still up because I had to waited for my ride to go home from my sister place. The wheel trans picked me up at 3:00 am and yes that was late, but I'm so used of it because I am usually up that late. Sometime in the day I can't sleep, and I had a nap during the day before.

I was so happy that I went because it was my first year and I love to Praise to my Lord with different things to say about my soul. I would like to say also that I would like to give thanks to God of what he has done for in the past. That was why I pick the word Surrender because it was very strong word for me during the month of December for the coming year of 2022 to being happiness to be on this earth.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Across

4. capital of Ireland
5. a type of Irish dance
7. if you do not wear green on March 17 this will happen
9. the day St. Patrick's Day falls on
11. the national emblem of Ireland
12. yellow and blue make _____
13. from Ireland

Down

1. the 3rd month of the year
2. good fortune
3. nonsense or misleading talk
6. called the Emerald Isle
7. a starchy vegetable
8. a sprite
10. 4 leaf _____

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HAPPY
ST. PATRICK'S DAY

nod
FUN
PAGE

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St Patrick's Day

WORD SEARCH Search across, down, and diagonally



Find the following words:

LEPRECHAUN	RAINBOW	GOLD
ST PATRICK	CLOVER	LUCK
SHAMROCK	GREEN	
IRELAND	MARCH	

