

# December

## NEWSLETTER

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**OUR PLACE COMMUNITY OF HOPE**

1183 Davenport Road | 416-598-2919

[info@ourplacecommunityofhope.com](mailto:info@ourplacecommunityofhope.com) | [www.ourplacecommunityofhope.com](http://www.ourplacecommunityofhope.com)

## December Birthdays

### Our Place

Michael M -- December 6<sup>th</sup>  
Frank S - December 7<sup>th</sup>  
Dominique S - December 11<sup>th</sup>  
Diane A - December 17<sup>th</sup>  
Khal B - December 19<sup>th</sup>  
Kierov B - December 30<sup>th</sup>



### Famous People Born in December

Brittany Spears - Dec. 2, 1981  
Jay-Z - Dec. 4, 1969  
Walt Disney - Dec. 5, 1901  
Frank Sinatra - Dec. 12, 1915  
Taylor Swift - Dec. 13, 1989  
Beethoven - Dec. 16, 1770

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## Program Updates from Our Place

### Special Programs in December:

- ★ **Friday, December 4, 3:30-4:30 - Mind-Body-Health Workshop**  
Join Evonne Sullivan, Registered Yoga Teacher who specializes in yoga for mental health & addiction recovery, for an online Mental Health discussion, Mindfulness & Chair Yoga session.  
To Participate:
  - Join by Zoom on your phone or computer: <https://zoom.us/j/93699227292>
  - Phone in: Dial (647) 374-4685, then enter the Meeting ID 936 9922 7292 #
- ★ **Wednesday, December 9, 12:30-5:00 - FLU SHOT CLINIC**  
Come by Our Place for your flu shot. No appointment or Health Card required.
- ★ **Friday, December 11, 3:30-4:30 - Virtual Christmas Sing-a-Long & Party**  
Join us on line for some holiday cheer!  
To Participate:
  - Join by Zoom on your phone or computer: <https://zoom.us/j/98063194785>

- Phone in: Dial (647) 374-4685, then enter the Meeting ID 980 6319 4785

★ **Friday, December 18, 2-5:00 - Christmas Dinner To Go**

Jeanne's home-made turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, gravy, veggies and a Christmas dessert... delish!

★ **Wednesday, December 23, 2-5:00 - SANTA COMES TO OUR PLACE! HO HO HO!**

Hot apple cider and Christmas presents with your meal. (One gift per person and a limited number of gifts available).

★ **Thursday, December 24, 11-1 - Christmas Eve Brunch To-Go**

★ **Thursday, December 31, 11-1 - New Years Eve Brunch To-Go**



**Holiday Closures:**

**Friday, December 25 | Monday, December 28 | Friday, January 1**

**Special Hours:**

**Our Place will be closed at 1pm on Thursday, December 24<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, December 31<sup>st</sup>.**

***We hope to have a list of drop-ins open over the holidays soon... stay tuned!***

**Meals**

Meals to-go are served Monday-Friday between 2:00pm and 5:00pm.

*Reminders:*

- To make sure that everyone gets a meal, we are not able to give more than one meal per person. Seconds will only be given between 4:45pm and 5:00pm, *if we have enough but they are not guaranteed.*
- If you have a dietary restriction, please let us know before 12pm on the day you are coming so that we can do our best to accommodate you.
- Please be patient with us as we grab your meal, snacks and drink... we are going as fast as we can!

**In light of the increase in COVID-19 numbers, we are asking for your cooperation with the following:**

- \* Practice social distancing (maintain a 6ft distance from others) while waiting in line for your meal. We also strongly encourage you to wear a mask while waiting to protect yourself and those around you.
- \* Please do not approach the table until the person in front of you has left.
- \* *Masks are now mandatory while picking up your meal.* Need a mask?? No problem! Just ask us for one.
- \* If you are not able to wear a mask due to a medical condition, please wait on the "x" in front of the table. Your meal will be placed on the table. Once staff are back inside and the door is closed, please take your meal and step away from the table so that others can safely get theirs.

We *really* appreciate your patience and understanding during these strange times. We know that wearing a mask is not fun and is more difficult for some than others. Please be mindful of the fact

that people around you may be more vulnerable to the virus than you are, and so by wearing a mask and keeping your distance, you are helping to keep them safe.

We want to do everything we can to stay open to continue to offer meals and support, which is why we have these policies in place.

### **Computers, WiFi and/or Phone Use**

If you would like to book a time to come into the centre to use one of the computers, WiFi and/or telephone – either to participate in a program or for personal use - please let us know! We would be happy to have you!

### **Weekly Check-Ins**

Let us know if you are interested in receiving a weekly supportive phone call from staff to check in and see how you're doing.

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## **A Note from Natasha...**

As some of you already know, I will be going on maternity leave soon.

Kristel will be looking after Our Place for the duration of my leave, as of December 11<sup>th</sup>. Please feel free to email her at [info@ourplacecommunityofhope.com](mailto:info@ourplacecommunityofhope.com) or phone the office at (416) 598-2919 if you need anything.

Before I go, I wanted to let you know how much I have appreciated the friendships that have kept us all afloat during this difficult year and the sense of community and warmth that you bring to this little corner of an often lonely and overwhelming city.

Thank you for letting me sing Christmas Carols during Karaoke - 12 months of the year - for all of the lessons you've taught me and for being a constant source of light in my life.

I wish you all happiness and good health in the year to come and look forward to catching up with you in 2022!

Until then... be well!






~ Natasha





# DECEMBER PROGRAM CALENDAR

# DECEMBER 2020

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<p><b>OUR PLACE</b>  <b>COMMUNITY OF HOPE</b>                      1183 Davenport Rd                      (63 Bus North from Ossington                      TTC Station)                      (416) 598-2919                      www.ourplacecommunityofhope.com</p>	<p><b>1</b>                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      Virtual TRIVIA!                      3:30-4:30</p>	<p><b>2</b>                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      Online Peer Support                      3:30-4:30</p>	<p><b>3</b>                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      Virtual Anger                      Management                      Women: 2:30   Men: 3:30</p>	<p><b>4</b>                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      Online Writing Group                      1:30-2:30                      Mind-Body-Health                      Workshop                      3:30-4:30</p>
<p><b>7</b>                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      Online Discussion                      Groups                      Women: 2:30   Men: 3:30</p>	<p><b>8</b>                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      Virtual TRIVIA!                      3:30-4:30</p>	<p><b>9</b>                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      FLU SHOT                      CLINIC                      12:30-5                        No Peer Support Today</p>	<p><b>10</b>                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      Virtual Anger                      Management                      Women: 2:30   Men: 3:30</p>	<p><b>11</b> HANUKKAH BEGINS                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      Online Writing Group                      1:30-2:30                      Virtual Christmas                      Sing-a-Long &amp; Party                      3:30-4:30  </p>
<p><b>14</b>                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      Online Discussion                      Groups                      Women: 2:30   Men: 3:30</p>	<p><b>15</b>                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      Virtual TRIVIA!                      3:30-4:30</p>	<p><b>16</b>                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      Online Peer Support                      3:30-4:30</p>	<p><b>17</b>                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      No Anger Management                      Today</p>	<p><b>18</b>                      TO-GO CHRISTMAS                      DINNER 2-5                      No Writing Group Today</p>
<p><b>21</b>                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      Online Discussion                      Groups                      Women: 2:30   Men: 3:30</p>	<p><b>22</b>                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      Virtual TRIVIA!                      3:30-4:30</p>	<p><b>23</b> SANTA COMES TODAY!                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      Hot Apple Cider &amp;                      Christmas Presents                      No Peer Support Today</p>	<p><b>24</b> CHRISTMAS EVE                      TO-GO CHRISTMAS                      BRUNCH 11-1                      No Anger Management                      Today</p>	<p><b>25</b> CHRISTMAS DAY                        OUR PLACE CLOSED</p>
<p><b>28</b>  </p>	<p><b>29</b>                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      Virtual TRIVIA!                      3:30-4:30</p>	<p><b>30</b>                      TO-GO MEALS 2-5                      Online Peer Support                      3:30-4:30</p>	<p><b>31</b> NEW YEARS EVE                      TO-GO NEW YEARS                      BRUNCH 11-1                      Virtual Anger                      Management                      Women: 2:30   Men: 3:30</p>	<p>JANUARY 1, 2021                        OUR PLACE CLOSED</p>

# Our Place Weekly Online Programs

## Monday Discussion Groups

### Women's - 2:30pm

This group is an open discussion group for all female-identifying people. We will discuss all topics including depression, anxiety, body image, health/wellness, addictions, victimization/survivor issues and more.

Link to join Women's Discussion Group via Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/93541305742?pwd=TUVzWkhCNHdTVEN5aE5rTEQ3UjROdz09>

To join by phone, dial: 647-374-4685

When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: 935 4130 5742 and Passcode: 969998

### Men's - 3:30pm

This group is a space for male-identifying people to check in and talk about how you're doing. We can talk about what's on your mind, what's going well for you, or what you're coping with. Possible topics will be stress, relationships, or life goals. We'll focus on what you're interested in and what matters to you.

Link to join the Men's Discussion Group via Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/92357132760?pwd=ZWltaXlsK3dQaXpnTTgydnNaWUd4Zz09>

To join by phone, dial: 647-374-4685

When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: 923 5713 2760 and Passcode: 075601

## Online Trivia – Tuesdays at 3:30pm

A casual, fun online space for trivia with friends!

Link to join Online Trivia via Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/93121462646?pwd=dJXm2R1eEdSMehIL3VTa0x2b0tBUT09>

To join by phone, dial: 647-558-0588

When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: 931 2146 2646 and Passcode: 945094

## Peer Support Group – Wednesdays at 3:30pm

These 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 to have a better life. There will be a different topic each week. Input on future topics is more than welcome.

Link to join Peer Support Group via Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/94221242340>

To join by phone, dial: 647-374-4685

When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: 942 2124 2340 and Passcode: 211350

### **Anger Management – Thursdays at 2:30 (Women’s) and 3:30 (Men’s)**

This virtual Anger Management course is for anyone who is interested in getting a handle on their anger and strong emotions.

The training utilizes Cognitive-Behavioural tools and techniques to help individuals navigate tough situations. With topics such as Communication, The Cycle of Violence, and Learning from Mistakes, participants can dive deeper into the root of their anger and learn more about themselves in the process.

There are also many opportunities for individuals to connect the lessons with their past and/or current experiences, as open discussion is encouraged. This group operates from a trauma-informed perspective, and aims to provide a safe, open, and non-judgmental space for individuals to explore their emotions and find new ways to grow.

**To Sign Up:** Email [info@ourplacecommunityofhope.com](mailto:info@ourplacecommunityofhope.com) or call the Our Place office: (416) 598-2919. To complete your registration, Tia or Clarence will call you to introduce themselves and have a quick chat with you.

### **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://zoom.us/j/93536287038?pwd=RVpzR1pMSGcxQ01UQXZ6YVBHTlI0UT09>

Join by phone, dial: 647-374-4685

When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: 935 3628 7038 and Passcode: 812561

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## **Other Programs & Supports**

### **Nicotine Replacement Therapy**

Thinking of quitting smoking?? Talk to staff about how you can access support and free Nicotine Replacement Therapy with no wait.

### **Free Rapid-Access Psychotherapy**

St. Michael’s Homes is temporarily expanding their existing Psychotherapy program. They will be working with ten Student Therapists through to March 31, 2021 and are looking for clients ages 18 and up. Sessions can be done by phone, tablet, or computer and in-person sessions will begin when conditions permit. This is an amazing opportunity to access **free** one-to-one psychotherapy (up to 16 sessions per person). Please let the staff at Our Place know if you would like to register.

### **The Holidays, Your Mental Health & COVID-10**

Canadian Mental Health Association is hosting a virtual webinar that takes a deeper look into how the Coronavirus has and will impact the 2020 Holiday season while focusing on concrete strategies

to maintain your mental health and still stay connected to our loved ones during this time. There are three opportunities to join: Wednesday, December 2, 7-8pm; Tuesday, December 9, 12-1pm and Tuesday, December 15, 12-1pm. To register, talk to Our Place staff or visit:

<https://cmhamilton.ca/news/the-holidays-your-mental-health-covid-19/>

### Recovery in Action (RIA)

A virtual 7-week program that aims to build skills and provide individuals with the supports they need to navigate and personalize recovery.

Depending on where you are in your journey, the group-based recovery program uses CBT-p to focus on everything from grief and loss around aspirations and relationships; the importance of medication adherence and community supports; revisiting goal-setting; and, understanding relapse prevention and negative symptoms, like anxiety, depression and lack of motivation.

The next cycle begins in January and will take place on Wednesdays from 1pm-3pm.

For more information, check out <https://www.iamentalhealth.ca/Find-Support/Individuals> or call one of the counsellors at 1-855-449-9949.

You can refer yourself or Our Place staff can refer you.

Check out these awesome organizations that also offer virtual programs:

- \* Progress Place - <https://www.progressplace.org/virtual.html>
- \* Mood Disorders AoO  
<https://app.acuityscheduling.com/schedule.php?owner=19361959&appointmentType=category%3APeer+Support+Groups>
- \* Sound Times - <https://soundtimes.com/>
- \* i am mental health [former schizophrenia society] - <https://www.iamentalhealth.ca/Find-Support/Individuals>
- \* CMHA courses - <https://cmha.ca/recovery-college/courses>

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## An Important Note About the Holidays

We know that the holiday season can be a very difficult time of year for a lot of people. And this year, we are approaching the holidays during a pandemic.

It may appear as though everyone but you is having a jolly and merry time during the holidays. However, many people are mentally, emotionally and physically struggling. So if you are feeling this way, **you are not alone**.

Mental health experts want everyone to know that it is OK to not be OK during the holidays.

If you are struggling, please reach out to us at Our Place, to friends, or to any of the supports listed in this newsletter.



You  
are  
♥  
not  
alone



# Peer Support Lines

*Need someone to talk to who has lived-experience with mental health issues?*

Check out a Peer Support Line. A volunteer will listen to you talk about your day or what's happening in your life. These are not crisis lines so you can call if you're doing OK and just want to talk.

**Krasman Centre:** 1-888-777-0979

Available any time every day, 20 mins/call

**Mood Disorders Association:** 1-866-363-6663

Available 9:30am to 5pm. 30 mins/call

**Progress Place:**

416-323-3721 - 12pm to 8pm

416-960-9276 - 8pm to midnight. 30 mins/call



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## 4 Ways to Ward off the Winter Blues

Sourced from: <https://www.medbroadcast.com/channel/mental-health/depression/5-ways-to-ward-off-the-winter-blues>

- 1. Exercise.** Exercise is known to increase your levels of serotonin and endorphins, leading to a happier mood. You can walk inside or outside, or listen to music and dance in your home. You can also do yoga online. Yoga with Adriene is the world's most popular, easy, free, online yoga program: <https://yogawithadriene.com/free-yoga-videos/>
- 2. Socialize.** Build and maintain social networks is an important way to keep a positive outlook. During COVID, you can still call friends and family and set times to regularly talk to each other.
- 3. Keep a regular sleep schedule.** Research has shown that lack of sleep may lead to anxiety and depression. To keep a regular sleep-wake cycle, make sure you go to sleep and wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends. It's important to avoid naps throughout the day as they can throw off your sleep schedule.
- 4. Eat well.** When you're feeling down, it's natural to want to turn to comfort foods that are loaded with fats and sugars. Stick to healthier foods. This will keep you healthy while giving you the energy you need to stay active and social until a brighter season comes along.



# Mental Health & Crisis Resources

1. Call **911** if you are in immediate danger or need urgent medical support.
2. Canada Suicide Prevention Helpline: **1-833-456-4566**
3. Text **WELLNESS** to 741741 to access the Crisis Text Line. Provides immediate support.
4. Wellness Together: **1-866-0445** (24/7). Provides free counseling and support.
5. Gerstein Crisis Centre: **(416) 929-5200** (24/7). This is a community-based crisis service for adults age 16+ in Toronto who are dealing with mental health issues and/or substance use issues and are currently in crisis. Also offers online face-to-face support, wellness groups, short term follow-up support, and referrals to other services.
6. Crisis Services Canada: **1-833-456-4566** (24/7) or text **START to 45645** (4pm-midnight). This is support for people who are thinking about suicide.
7. Distress Centre of Greater Toronto: **(416)-408-4357** (42/7). They provide emotional and crisis support.
8. St. Michael's Homes: **(416) 926-8267 ext. 110**. Addictions Services for men.
9. Assaulted Women's Hotline: **(416) 863-0511** or **1-866-863-0511** (24/7 crisis line)

**If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, call 911.**



IT'S OK  
TO ASK  
FOR HELP.

# Overdose Prevention

## At Our Place...

- Staff are trained to administer and dispense Naloxone!
- Naloxone kits are now located in each bathroom stall in case someone ever needs it.
- See staff if you would like a Naloxone kit – we would be happy to give you one!
- All assistance is confidential.

**What is Naloxone?** Naloxone is an antidote which can be used to temporarily reverse an opioid overdose. It is very safe and has no effect on non-opioid users (for someone who has taken stimulants, alcohol, etc.).

**What is an Overdose?** An overdose occurs when a drug or combination of substances overwhelm the body, making it unable to control basic life functions such as breathing, heart rate, body temperature and consciousness.

## Signs of Overdose:

- Deep snoring, gurgling or wheezing
- Change in skin tone: grey, white, or blue tinge to skin (usually lips and fingertips show first)
- Pale, clammy skin
- Won't respond to stimulation (yelling or sternum rub) or won't wake up
- Breathing is very slow, irregular or has stopped

**What is Harm Reduction?** Harm reduction is an approach that tries to reduce the harmful effects of substance use. It involves working with the person using substances so that they use more safely (e.g., needle and syringe exchange programs and supervised injection sites).

If you or someone you know is looking for harm reduction support, talk to Our Place staff, call 211 or check out these links for a list of locations:

- <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/health-wellness-care/health-programs-advice/harm-reduction-supplies-and-locations/>
- <https://www.camh.ca/-/media/files/community-resource-sheets/harm-reduction-resources-pdf.pdf?la=en&hash=A175EF581BD43ACE51D964DEEBD09DD2738CB7D7>

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## Warming Centres

**Out of the Cold Update:** The Out of the Cold (OOTC) program previously offered meals and overnight spaces for individuals experiencing homelessness to sleep, delivered by a network of inter-denominational faith-based organizations. Due to the program model, rotation of locations

each night and use of volunteers, the city feels the model is not feasible to operate during the pandemic within Ministry of Health guidelines for congregate settings.

For winter 2020/2021, new hotel spaces will be offered to replace the overnight capacity previously provided by the OOTC program. The rooms will be available between mid-November and April, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and will be run by Dixon Hall.

Information on how to access a space has not yet been released...

**Warming Centres:** The City will activate 4 Warming Centres if an Extreme Cold Weather Alert (ECWA) is issued by Toronto's Medical Officer of Health based on information from Environment and Climate Change Canada.

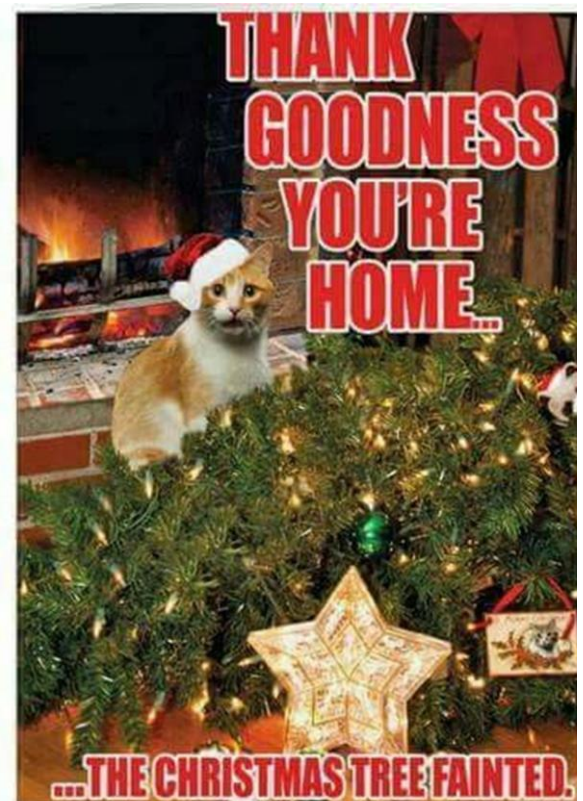
Space will be offered at the following:

- \* 129 Peter Street (15 spaces)
- \* Exhibition Place, Better Living Centre (50 spaces)
- \* 5800 Yonge Street (35 spaces)
- \* Scarborough Civic Centre (30 spaces)

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## Free – or almost free – Holiday Gift Ideas

- ★ *Book of Memories.* Write down as many stories and shared experiences as you can remember between you and a friend or family member. Include sketches, photos and anything else you'd like to add.
- ★ *A Heartfelt Letter.* Tell a friend or relative how much they mean to you in a thoughtful letter.
- ★ *Memory or Inspiration Jar.* Fill a jar with strips of paper containing inspirational quotes or thoughts or shared memories.
- ★ *Art.* Draw it, paint it, sculpt it, gift it!
- ★ *Poetry.* Write a poem or share one you love.
- ★ *Hand Warmers.* Combine scraps of fabric and uncooked rice to make hand warmers. Just pop them in the microwave take them out and warm up your hands!
- ★ *Recipe Book.* Write your favorite recipes down on index cards or paper and tie the pages together with a ribbon.
- ★ *Coupons.* Give the gift of your time! Write out a coupon to offer your time to do house cleaning, a car wash, handiwork, or babysitting.
- ★ *Make some natural Christmas decorations.* Head to your nearest park or woods with some scissors and a large bag to collect pieces of ivy, fir branches and holly to decorate your home or give as a gift to someone you love.



# Things to Do During Lockdown in December

- ★ **Watch the Santa Claus Parade!** December 5<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. Watch it on CTV and CTV2.
- ★ **Holiday Street Market** – Hillcrest Mall, 9350 Yonge Street, Richmond Hill. Every Saturday & Sunday from December 5 & 6, 12 & 13, 19 & 20, 21-24 from 12pm-8pm. Rotating artisans, baked goods, socially distance marshmallow fire pits, 60' LED Christmas Tree, 100' light tunnel, holiday music, hot chocolate, specialty drinks and of course, all the food trucks from Street Eats Market plus more!
- ★ **Magical “Window Wonderland,” Toronto’s First Augmented Reality Outdoor Art Exhibition.** The Junction’s first annual immersive urban art-walk, presented by MEDS Junction Pharmacy. From Nov. 14, 2020 to Jan. 31, 2021, the Window Wonderland exhibition will transform the Junction neighbourhood into an outdoor gallery that is interactive, engaging, and magical. This is open, even during lockdown! <https://thejunctionbia.ca/window-wonderland>
- ★ **Check out an outdoor skating rink.** Free leisure skating will be available at 54 outdoor ice rinks, including Nathan Phillips Square. You have to reserve a 45-minute spot on line, as there will only be room for a maximum of 25 people at a time. Let us know if you want help booking or would like to use one of our computers.
- ★ **Try tobogganing!** Bundle up and check out these toboggan hills in neighbourhoods across the city: <https://www.toronto.ca/explore-enjoy/recreation/skating-winter-sports/tobogganing/>
- ★ **Winter Village at the Distillery District.** Enjoy starlit canopies, a Grand Christmas Tree in Trinity Square, and festive music throughout from November 12 to March 31. All guests are asked to wear masks while on-site, both indoors and outdoors. <https://www.thedistillerydistrict.com/wintervillage/>
- ★ **Sweaters n’ Snowflakes** - 621 Richmond Street W. The SW corner of Bathurst & Richmond has been transformed into a cozy holiday pop up forest experience. Walk through a magical tunnel and enter the charm of a winter wonderland outdoor popup holiday forest. During lockdown, all food and drinks will be served to go. <https://www.todocanada.ca/city/toronto/event/sweaters-n-snowflakes-food-wine-bar-pop-up/>
- ★ **Holiday Magic Market** - 21 Old Mill Road, Etobicoke. Head there on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays between Dec 4 – Dec 22 between 4-10:00pm to shop local, enjoy freshly baked sweet treats, sip on warm cocoa or hot cider and gaze at winter wonderland lights. Purchase your tickets (\$8.00) here: <https://www.todocanada.ca/city/toronto/event/holiday-magic-market/>
- ★ **Watch a Free Online Concert.** December 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:30: The Annex Singers. A Child's Christmas in Wales. Dramatic reading of Dylan Thomas's A Child's Christmas in Wales with choral works by Morley, Rossini and Walton. Annexsingers.com or 416-847-1065.  
December 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:30: Mississauga Festival Choir. A Light in the Darkness. Festive favourites and a sing-along. Visit [www.mfchoir.com](http://www.mfchoir.com) to watch on YouTube.



# From Nurse Julie: Taking Care of Diabetes During Cold & Flu Season

Fall is here and winter is coming, which means 'tis the season for colds, flus and stomach bugs. It's important to take care of yourself when you get sick, especially if you also have diabetes. The reason for this is that when we are sick, our bodies produce hormones to help fight the infection, but those hormones will also raise blood sugar, sometimes as high as 20.0 mmol/L. If you are sick and your blood sugar is very high, you could get dehydrated (that means there is not enough water in your body). If you get too dehydrated, or if your blood sugar gets too high, you might need to go to the hospital. Let's review how to prevent illness, what to do when we get sick, and when to go with the hospital.



Infections like colds, flus sore throats, and stomach flu are caused by germs. When someone who is sick coughs, sneezes, vomits, or has diarrhea, they spread their germs into the air and onto objects around them. If you touch their body fluids, or something that has touched their body fluids (such as doorknobs or elevator buttons), you catch their germs and those can make you sick. There are lots of ways to help prevent getting sick and to help prevent spreading your germs if you are sick. These

include washing your hands or using hand sanitizer before you eat and when you come home, covering coughs and sneezes with Kleenex or your elbow so that your germs don't spray into the air, wearing a mask in public, staying home if you are sick, and getting your flu shot.

There is also a vaccine to prevent some kinds of pneumonia, called the pneumococcal (noo-mo-cox-al) vaccine, but you need to ask your doctor about it because it's not right for everyone.

All of this makes it less likely that you will get sick, but germs are sneaky so you could still get sick. That's why it's important to know what to do in case you do get sick. Here is a review, but it's also important to talk with your doctor, nurse or pharmacist before you get sick so that you have special instructions for your body. There are two categories of things to do. The first is if you are sick but can eat and drink normally, and the second is if you feel too sick to eat or if you are having a lot of vomiting or diarrhea.

If you are able to eat normally, you need to drink lots of fluids to prevent getting dehydrated. You need to drink at least 1 cup every hour of fluids without sugar. That includes water, tea, soup, diet pop and even sugar-free Jello. Try to avoid alcohol and coffee, as those drinks make you pee more so you could get more dehydrated. You should measure your blood sugar every 2 to 4 hours to make sure it's not going above 20.0 mmol/L.

You should take all of your medicine as normal. If you take insulin with meals, you might need to take more because your blood sugar is extra high. Call your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if you are not sure what to do.

If you feel too sick to eat normally, or if you have diarrhea or vomiting, then not only do you have to drink liquids without sugar to stay hydrated, you also need to drink fluids with sugar to give your body some nutrition. This includes Powerade, Gatorade, juice, regular pop, regular jello, popsicles, milk, and Glucerna. You still need to check your blood sugar every 2-4 hours. If you are having trouble eating or drinking, or if you have diarrhea or vomiting, then you should skip some diabetes pills until you feel better. Call your doctor, nurse or pharmacy to ask which ones.

If you take insulin once a day, keep taking that. If you take insulin with meals, called rapid-acting insulin, even if you are not eating you may need to take it because your blood sugar might be very high. Call your doctor, nurse or pharmacist for instructions.

Germs and infections can be unpredictable, so sometimes you might need to go to the hospital. Here's are sometimes when you should go:

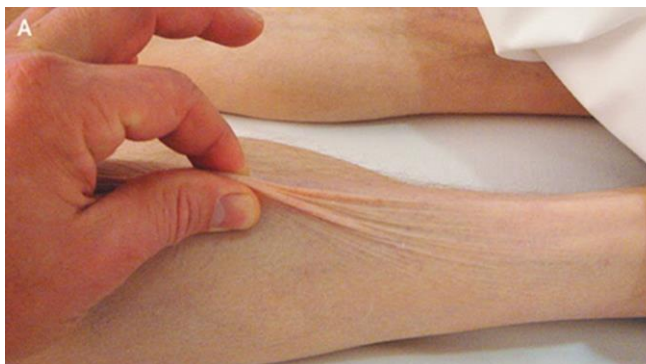
- If you vomit or have diarrhea 2 or more times in 12 hours
- If your mouth is very dry
- If you are dizzy or having trouble thinking clearly
- If, when you pinch your skin, it stays pinched instead of going back to normal (this is called "skin tenting", it's a sign that you don't have enough water in your body). See Picture below.
- If your blood sugar has been 20.0 mmol/L or higher for 4 or more hours and it won't go down
- If you feel really sick and you're not sure what to do

It's important to look after our bodies to help keep them healthy and to take care of them when they get sick. This is especially important if you have diabetes. This article is a guideline on how to look after yourself. If you have diabetes and don't have a special diabetes nurse or dietitian, you can call our office to sign up at 416-252-1928 x100. Ask an Our Place staff member if you would like some help.

**Have a great fall and winter, and stay safe!**

**~ From, Nurse Julie**

***How to tell if you are dehydrated:***



# From the Our Place Kitchen

## Toban's Creamy Tahini Dressing

### Ingredients

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup tahini
- 2 to 3 tablespoons lemon juice, to taste
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 2 teaspoons maple syrup or honey
- ½ teaspoon fine sea salt
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 tablespoons ice-cold water, or more as needed



### Instructions

1. In a liquid measuring cup or jar, combine the olive oil, tahini, 2 tablespoons lemon juice, mustard, maple syrup, salt, and several twists of black pepper. Whisk until fully blended.
2. Add the cold water, and whisk again. The dressing should become creamy. Taste, and add more lemon juice (for zing) and pepper, if desired. If your dressing is too thick to drizzle, whisk in more cold water, 1 tablespoon at a time.



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## Jeanne's Christmas Jello Balls

### Ingredients

- ¾ cup thick cream, Fussell's or Carnation brand (170 mL)
- 3 ounce package red Jello
- 2 cups unsweetened desiccated coconut, very finely grated – not shredded!

### Instructions

1. Add the thick cream to a mixing bowl, along with the Jello powder. Stir well to combine
2. Add 1 ½ cups of the desiccated coconut to the mixture and stir to combine.
3. Roll the mixture into 1 tablespoon-sized balls. Roll the balls into the remaining coconut to coat.
4. Place balls onto baking sheet and refrigerate for 2 hours.

## Alanna's Chocolate Chunk Banana Bread

### Ingredients

- 4 medium overly ripe bananas, mashed (about 1 1/4 cup mashed)
- 1/4 cup melted coconut oil
- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups whole wheat pastry flour, or all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup semi-sweet or dark chocolate chunks



### Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Grease a 9x5 inch bread pan.
  2. In a large mixing bowl, stir together the mashed bananas, coconut oil, honey, eggs, and vanilla until combined. Add the flour, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt, mix until just combined. Fold in the chocolate chunks.
  3. Pour the batter into the prepared bread pan. Bake for 50-60 minutes, or until center is just set. Remove and let cool for at least 30 minutes before cutting. Enjoy!
- 

## Easy Potato Latkes From June

### Ingredients

- 1 1/2 pounds baking potatoes (3 to 4 potatoes; Russets are recommended)
- 1/2 medium yellow onion, peeled and quartered
- 1 large egg
- 2 tablespoons unseasoned dry breadcrumbs
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup canola oil
- Applesauce and sour cream, for serving

### Instructions

1. Heat the oven and fit one baking sheet with paper towels and another with a cooling rack. Arrange a rack in the middle of the oven and heat to 200°F. Line 1 rimmed baking sheet with a double layer of paper towels. Fit a wire cooling rack into another baking sheet. Set both aside.
2. Prepare the potatoes. Scrub the potatoes well, but do not peel. Cut each potato in half crosswise.

3. Grate potatoes and onion with a food processor or by hand with a box grater.
4. Cover the potato onion mixture with a clean kitchen towel (or paper towels) and squeeze it between your hands to wring out as much of the liquid as you can.
5. Wash your hands well. Add the potatoes, onion, eggs, breadcrumbs, salt, and pepper to a bowl. Mix with your fingers (or a wooden spoon if you prefer, making sure that the potato starch breaks up and is evenly distributed with the rest of the ingredients). Set batter aside for 10 minutes.
6. Heat the oil. Place the oil in a large skillet so that when melted there is a depth of 1/4 inch (for a 10-inch skillet you'll need 1 cup of oil). Heat over medium-high heat until a piece of the latke mixture sizzles immediately.
7. Form latkes one at a time. Scoop 1/4 cup of the mixture onto a fish or flat spatula. Flatten with your fingers to a 4-inch patty.
8. Fry the latkes until golden on both sides. Carefully slide the latke into the hot oil, using a fork to nudge the latke into the pan. Repeat until the pan is full but the latkes aren't crowded. Cook until deeply golden-brown, 4 to 5 minutes per side, adjusting the heat if necessary.
9. Drain the latkes. Transfer the latkes to a paper towel-lined baking sheet to drain for 2 minutes.
10. Serve with applesauce and sour cream or keep warm in the oven. Serve immediately with applesauce and sour cream, or transfer the latkes to the wire cooling rack set in the baking sheet and keep warm in the oven for up to 30 minutes while you continue cooking the rest of the latkes.

*Note:* Latkes are best made and served right away. They can be fried and kept warm in a 200°F oven for up to 30 minutes.

### ***About Latkes:***

Hanukkah, as a holiday, celebrates rededication to the Jewish identity after it was compromised by oppressors in 168 B.C.E. The burning of the oil (the eternal light) for eight days by those who were escaping the oppressors is considered a miracle, because it seemed there was only enough oil that could burn for a single day in the Temple. To celebrate the life of that ancient oil in modern celebrations of the holiday, Jewish people devour oil-soaked dishes.

Jewish or not, you can enjoy these easy latkes for a treat at home this holiday season!





Natasha's Quinoa Salad  
("Borrowed" from Cactus Club Restaurant)

Ingredients

*Salad*

- 2 chopped Sweet peppers, any colour
- 1 bag Arugula
- 1 C Feta cheese, crumbled
- ¾ C Candied pecans
- ¾ C Raisins
- 2 tbsp apers
- Chopped snap peas (one small bag)
- Chopped fresh basil (as much as you like!)
- 2 Chopped celery stalks
- 1 C cooked, cooled quinoa

*Dressing*

- ½ C Olive oil
- 3 tbsp White wine vinegar or balsamic vinegar
- Juice of half a Lemon
- 2 diced cloves of garlic
- 1 tbsp Honey
- 1 tbsp Dijon or Honey mustard
- Salt and Pepper, to taste



Directions

1. Make Quinoa:
  - 1 cup quinoa
  - 2 cups water
  - Bring to a boil. Put lid on and turn heat down to minimum for 15 minutes.
  - Fluff with a fork and let cool with lid off.
2. The rest of the salad.... In a large bowl, mix cold quinoa, with all other ingredients.
3. You can use any store bought dressing or make your own: combine all dressing ingredients and add to salad right before serving.



# Writing Group Submissions

## Write On! Friday Afternoons!

From Peter Carter

Covid schmovid. The Friday afternoon Our Place Writing Group is not about to let a measly worldwide pandemic get in the way of improving the universe one syllable at a time.

That's right, **every Friday at 1:30**, you're welcome to zoom in and join the army of word folks who spend an hour sharing stories, dreams, poems and sometimes, just important and moving spiritual yarns that never ever get written down.

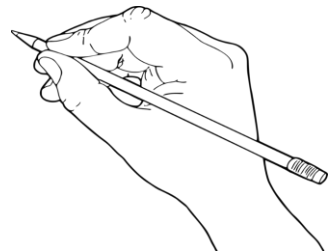
We all know a story the real important tales live forever whether anybody takes time to put pen to paper, right?

In the beginning was the word, right? Turns out, the word's right there in the middle and towards the end, too. And we Friday writing workshop devotees are the champions of this movement!

If you have a chance to sidle up to a computer someplace and log in, you would be most welcome. As one of the most dedicated members of the writing group, I think I'm in a position to welcome new faces and encourage former participants to come back. Writing group is like recess from the quarantine. And I always learn new stuff there. Every time out.

Writing is good for your soul; it's food for your spirit and it's a reward in itself. Ask staff to send you a link and see you Friday!

Finally, whatever you do, thou shalt not covid thy neighbour's wife!



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## The Bench

By Patricia Reid

Josie was tired and sat down on the bench in the downtown park she had often frequented trying to unravel the mysterious lady who died on the bench long ago. It was a quiet place where she could hear the many sparrows chirping but where not many people came to visit.

Years ago the police found an unnamed woman sitting on the bench where she died. It had been so long ago but Josie remembered it as if it was yesterday. An unknown woman dead, sitting on a bench.

Over the first few years articles were written in the newspapers asking the public if they knew the woman who police found on the bench. The police found no one who knew her or could help them identify her.

The police knew a few things about her. They knew that she came from a wealthy home. Her hands were not calloused and her clothes on her body were expensive brand names. She was holding a small white purse on her lap. It had nothing in it not even a few coins. She didn't even have a birth certificate, nor a health card.

An autopsy told police that she died of natural causes. There was no foul play.

The man who did the autopsy said she was between 50 and 60 years old. She had never given birth to a child.

Josie was very interested in the story and she cut out each newspaper article, always hoping that someone would provide a clue as to whom this lady had been in life. But the only clue the police had was the woman herself and the beautiful manicured fingers. And the ring with three large diamonds on it between a garden of flowers.

Every few months there would be another small article especially in the Toronto Sun. It would again be asking the public—Do you know this woman? Have you seen this ring? No one ever got in touch with the police. The articles appeared over a two year period trying to find out who the lady was on the bench. Even though it was a mystery the police were never given any tips to her identity.

Josie would go over the news clippings once a month and she would do so on the very bench the lady had died upon. With each article Josie saw in the paper she would cut them out and put them in her scrapbook. She had visions of finding out the identity of the mysterious lady. It hung on her mind whatever she was doing and she envisioned herself finding out who the lady was in real life.

Why would she just die without anyone missing her? After 2 years of periodical articles about the unknown lady all articles stopped. Two years when the police found the corpse and she was buried in an unmarked grave.

Still Josie continued to ponder on who the mysterious lady could have been in real life.

However when Josie's long time marriage collapsed and her husband left her for a much younger woman, Josie realized she couldn't take everything with her.

The newspaper clippings of an unknown lady with a unique ring- didn't move with her.

The End.



Silent night, holy night!  
All is calm, all is bright.  
Round yon Virgin, Mother and Child.  
Holy infant so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace,  
Sleep in heavenly peace

Silent night, holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight.  
Glories stream from heaven afar  
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia,

Christ the Saviour is born!  
Christ the Saviour is born

Silent night, holy night!  
Son of God love's pure light.  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face  
With dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth  
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth

**About Silent Night:** This famous Christmas carol was composed and performed on Christmas Eve 1818 in Austria. It is believed to have first been translated into English in 1858.

By 1914, *Silent Night* was so familiar when German soldiers sang it in the World War I trenches, their British counterparts were able to respond with the English version. It's nice to think that, maybe, for that one night, all was calm. Since then it has also been sung and recorded by some of the world's most famous singers. (Source: [www.classical-music.com](http://www.classical-music.com))



O Holy night! The stars are brightly shining  
It is the night of our dear Savior's birth  
Long lay the world in sin and error pining  
'Til He appears and the soul felt its worth  
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn  
Fall on your knees; O hear the Angel  
voices!  
O night divine, O night when Christ was  
born  
O night, O Holy night, O night divine!

Led by the light of Faith serenely beaming  
With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand  
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming  
Here come the Wise Men from Orient land  
The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger  
In all our trials born to be our friend

He knows our need, to our weakness is no  
stranger

Behold your King; before Him lowly bend  
Behold your King; before Him lowly bend

Truly He taught us to love one another;  
His law is love and His Gospel is Peace  
Chains shall He break, for the slave is our  
brother

And in His name, all oppression shall cease  
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise  
we

Let all within us Praise His Holy name  
Christ is the Lord; O praise His name  
forever!

His power and glory evermore proclaim  
His power and glory evermore proclaim

**About O Holy Night:** In Roquemaure at the end of 1843, the church organ had recently been renovated. To celebrate the event, the parish priest persuaded poet Placide Cappeau, a commissioner of wine the town, to write a Christmas poem. Soon afterwards that same year, Adolphe Adam composed the music. The song was premiered in Roquemaure in 1847 by the opera singer Emily Laurey. Unitarian minister John Sullivan Dwight, editor of Dwight's Journal of Music, translated the song into English in 1855.





Come they told me, pa rum pum pum pum  
 A new born King to see, pa rum pum pum pum  
 Our finest gifts we bring, pa rum pum pum  
 pum  
 To lay before the King, pa rum pum pum pum,  
 rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum,

So to honor Him, pa rum pum pum pum,  
 When we come.

Little Baby, pa rum pum pum pum  
 I am a poor boy too, pa rum pum pum pum  
 I have no gift to bring, pa rum pum pum pum  
 That's fit to give the King, pa rum pum pum  
 pum,  
 rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum,

Shall I play for you, pa rum pum pum pum,  
 On my drum?

Mary nodded, pa rum pum pum pum  
 The ox and lamb kept time, pa rum pum pum  
 pum  
 I played my drum for Him, pa rum pum pum  
 pum  
 I played my best for Him, pa rum pum pum  
 pum,  
 rum pum pum pum, rum pum pum pum,

Then He smiled at me, pa rum pum pum pum  
 Me and my drum.

**About the Little Drummer Boy:** "The Little Drummer Boy" (originally known as "Carol of the Drum") is a popular Christmas song written by the American classical music composer and teacher Katherine Kennicott Davis in 1941. First recorded in 1951 by the Trapp Family Singers, the song was further popularized by a 1958 recording by the Harry Simeone Chorale; the Simeone version was re-released successfully for several years and the song has been recorded many times since.

The lyrics of Little Drummer Boy consist of no less than 21 rum pum pum pum' - a major part of the song and therefore presenting an apparently easy task for the lyricist! However, Little Drummer Boy has been a huge hit for several artists.

(Sourced from: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Little\\_Drummer\\_Boy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Little_Drummer_Boy) and [https://www.carols.org.uk/little\\_drummer\\_boy.htm](https://www.carols.org.uk/little_drummer_boy.htm))



We wish you a Merry Christmas,  
We wish you a Merry Christmas,  
We wish you a Merry Christmas  
And a Happy New Year!

*Chorus*  
Good tidings we bring to you and your kin.  
We wish you a merry Christmas  
And a Happy New Year!

Oh, bring us some figgy pudding, x3  
And bring it right here!

*Repeat chorus*

We won't go until we get some, x3  
So bring it right here!

*Repeat chorus*

We all like our figgy pudding, x3  
With all its good cheer!

*Repeat chorus*

We wish you a Merry Christmas  
And a Happy New Year!

*Repeat 1st verse*



... from your friends at  
Our Place



# Holiday Word Search Challenge



Solve each clue to reveal the holiday-related words to find in the puzzle going across, down, and diagonal.

- December 25th holiday: \_\_\_\_\_
- Jolly man in red suit: \_\_\_\_\_
- Hung by the chimney: \_\_\_\_\_
- December holiday celebrating African-American heritage: \_\_\_\_\_
- Family customs passed down to next generation: \_\_\_\_\_
- Kwanzaa candle holder: \_\_\_\_\_
- Hung on a door at Christmas: \_\_\_\_\_
- Jewish Festival of Lights: \_\_\_\_\_
- Special Jewish candelabra: \_\_\_\_\_
- Red and white striped Christmas sweet: \_\_\_\_\_
- A wax light that is used as a ceremonial symbol of many holidays: \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of days of Hanukkah: \_\_\_\_\_
- Santa's vehicle: \_\_\_\_\_
- Kwanzaa feast: \_\_\_\_\_
- Gifts given on the last day of Kwanzaa: \_\_\_\_\_
- Christmas songs: \_\_\_\_\_
- Potato pancakes: \_\_\_\_\_
- They pull Santa's sleigh: \_\_\_\_\_



N Z R D C C J Y H C H R I S T M A S  
 T L C X U C A N D L E L L L S T I J  
 H F D Z N N O Z H R J E C E Q R G R  
 V O G R C L U A C E W M N R J A Q R  
 G M O B N O K W H K V A E P O D J K  
 G C E W Q K O A N R C E W X K I I A  
 S A F N U C G D E Y D K Q S V T L R  
 B T S N O O Z I D N R N E W K I X A  
 D G A T E R E N I L O K N R W O Q M  
 O H N R O K A E F S T T E A N L U  
 N G T R H C R H L A K N H A N S F W  
 W Q A Q Q O K O L W N G J T Z G G G  
 S R C B X I R I H K I C F H A W I P  
 R M L W A A F F N E I W Y S A G F N  
 P E A Y C T X P L G I N X T R X T F  
 O Z U G Q G U S O D S G A C R D S U  
 S G S V Z N W V F C D X H R U N E L  
 V W V C E L E B R A T E F T A W M I

**Bonus: Find 5 more holiday words hidden in the word search grid**





# Holiday Word Search Answers



## Holiday Word Search Challenge

Solve each clue to reveal the holiday-related words to find in the puzzle going across, down, and diagonal.



1. December 25th holiday: Christmas
2. Jolly man in red suit: Santa Claus
3. Hung by the chimney: Stocking
4. December holiday celebrating African-American heritage: Kwanzaa
5. Family customs passed down to next generation: Traditions
6. Kwanzaa candle holder: Kinara
7. Hung on a door at Christmas: Wreath
8. Jewish Festival of Lights: Hanukkah
9. Special Jewish candelabra: Menorah
10. Red and white striped Christmas sweet: Candy Cane
11. A wax light that is used as a ceremonial symbol of many holidays: Candle
12. Number of days of Hanukkah: Eight
13. Santa's vehicle: Sleigh
14. Kwanzaa feast: Karamu
15. Gifts given on the last day of Kwanzaa: Zawadi
16. Christmas songs: Carols
17. Potato pancakes: Latkes
18. They pull Santa's sleigh: Reindeer



N Z R D D C C J Y H C H R I S T M A S  
 T L C X U C A N D L E L L S T I J  
 H F D Z N N O Z H R J E C E Q R G R  
 V O G R C L U A C E W M N R J A Q R  
 G M O B N O K W H K V A E P O D J K  
 G C E W Q K O A N R C E W X K I I A  
 S A F N U C G D E Y D K Q S V T L R  
 B T S N O O Z I D N R N E W K I X A  
 D G A T E R E N I L L O K N R W O Q M  
 O H N R O K A E F S T T E A N L L U  
 N G T R H C R H L L A K N H A N S F W  
 W Q A Q Q O K O L W N G J T Z G G G  
 S R C B X I R I H K I C F H A W I P  
 R M L W A A F F N E I W Y S A G F N  
 P E A Y C T X P L G I N X T R X T F  
 O Z U G Q G U S O D S G A C R D S U  
 S G S V Z N W V F C D X H R U N E L  
 V W V C E L E B R A T E F T A W M I

**Bonus Words: Gifts, Celebrate, Oil, Corn, Star**



*\* A big thank you to Writing Group volunteer, Kathryn for her help with the newsletter this month and to everyone who contributed! \**

If you would like to contribute to the Our Place newsletter, please email [info@ourplacecommunityofhope.com](mailto:info@ourplacecommunityofhope.com). We would love to hear from you!