



Friends of Crystal River UMC,

We find ourselves in a season where many corners of our culture want to scrub Christmas from the public square. There always seems to be this ongoing battle year after year. This battle ranges from removing the manger from the court house lawn to candy canes, because they form the letter "J" for Jesus and the symbolism of the red and white strips. Ok! It seems to me there are a lot of "Grinches" in the world who, for one reason or another, seem to despise Christmas.

In our sermon series, "Christmas Through The Eyes of the Grinch," we find that mean Mr. Grinch hates Christmas too. His problems stem from the rejection of the townspeople, and the way he was bullied as a child. The Grinch wants to take away from the citizens of Whoville their joy for Christmas as revenge for his rejection. So the Grinch decides he would dress up as Santa and steal Christmas from the citizens of Whoville.

The problem with despising or hating something or someone is that it enables our hearts to grow two sizes too small. The solution to that problem comes in the way we do or do not guard our hearts. Proverbs 4:23 offers this advice: **"Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life."** In other words, your heart is the center or the well-spring of how you will or will not behave and act in your life. Hate, anger, revenge, and un-forgiveness are very corrosive to both your physical and your spiritual body. This behavior is not good. You see, "A heart that is two sizes too small is a heart that has become consumed with hate." So what is the solution? The solution is to turn your heart toward God. It is making a conscious decision to say "No" to the hate and anger in the world, and to let it go. It is to receive the gift of God's grace and mercy and then offer that same grace and mercy to others.

Three ways in which we can keep our heart from growing two sizes too small are, in actuality, gifts we need to receive for ourselves. The First Gift we need to receive is **The Gift of a Faithful Heart overcoming a Troubled Heart.** The first step to being faithful to God is to be able to confess our wrongdoing before God. 1 John 1:9 says: **"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."** This first step acknowledges that God is our creator and sustainer of all of our lives. A faithful heart is one that puts their trust in Christ and

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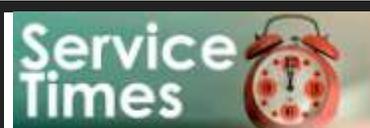
BB Preschool

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Happy Birthday

Happy Anniversary



9:00 A.M.
Traditional Service

Christ alone, and it is God who purifies our hearts and makes us righteous. A faithful heart will always overcome a Troubled heart.

The Second Gift we need to receive is **The Gift of a Hopeful Heart overcoming a Deceitful Heart.** This gift comes when we acknowledge that Jesus came for the very purpose of bringing light into a dark and distant world. Not only does Jesus bring light into a dark world, he brings light into our lives. We become light because the light of Jesus shines through us as we share the good news of God's Hope for the world. The Good News is that God came into the world as both a perfect man and a perfect God. Jesus came then to live among us and point us towards God love for each of us. This love brings hope to all who will accept God's love, and it is this "Hope" that keeps us from practicing deceit on our neighbor. Deceit brings darkness into our lives, and darkness allows our hearts to grow two sizes too small. It is Hope in Jesus that keeps us from practicing deceit that shrinks our heart. Deceit is the same as lying and lying is a deadly sin that leads to a dead end. Truth always sets you free.

The Third Gift we need to receive is **The Gift of a Loving Heart overcoming a Revengeful Heart.** God tells us in **Romans 12:19** the following: **"Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.** That is hard to do considering we want to get back at the person who hurt us, but a loving heart, even toward our enemy, is what God requires. In fact the Bible tells us that we will receive a blessing when love wins over revenge. **I Peter 3:9** says: **"Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.** Revenge corrodes you spiritually and physically, and it never satisfies your soul. It might in the short term, but it never works in the long run. The only way to overcome revenge is to seek to grow a loving heart. This is why Jesus came into the world. He came so we might grow a Heart that is Faithful, Hopeful, and Loving, and when this happens, not only are we blessed, but we become a blessing to others. Guard your heart, and keep it from growing two sizes too small.

WEEKEND WORSHIP

This weekend we will delve into the third part of this series: **Christmas Through The Eyes of the Grinch.** I hope you will join me as we look into how "Some People Misunderstand Christmas." This was certainly the case for the Grinch and for the Shepherds. The Grinch was misunderstood because he allowed his anger to build a wall and shut out the world. The Shepherds did not understand the message the angels brought them until they went and found the baby Jesus lying in the manger. Misunderstanding is a big problem and, for many of us, we do not seek to understand or to be understood. Join me as we see how understanding came to both the Grinch, and to the Shepherds standing watch over their sheep in the field. Maybe you and I can learn a lesson for our lives.

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE

On Sunday, December 23rd, we will worship at 9:00 and 10:30 as usual. Then on Monday, December 24th, we will hold a Traditional Christmas Eve service at 4:00 in the Bethel Chapel, and then a Contemporary Family Service at 6:30 in the main Sanctuary. This service will include a children's Christmas musical presentation. I hope you will join me for one or all of these services. Remember also, to place your order for Poinsettias this week so we will know who to list in the bulletin. We need your Poinsettia order by Wednesday, December 19th.

YEAR END GIFT

We are \$7400.00 short in paying out our missional givings. We have until the 10th of January to make this goal. These dollars go to support missions across the Florida Annual Conference. Our portion goes to support college ministries like the Wesley Foundation on

10:30 A.M. Contemporary Service

2018 DECEMBER						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3	4	5	6	7	8	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Florida Calendar's From 123Calendar.com

ALL MEETINGS ARE PUBLIC WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SPRC

FRIDAY- December 14, 2018

Divinely Unique Thrift & Gift Store
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
6:00 p.m. Celebrate Recovery (S)

SATURDAY- December 15, 2018

Divinely Unique Thrift & Gift Store
9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
11:30 Discovery Group
(Hardwood Smokehouse)
2:30 Celebrate Leadership (RM 22)

SUNDAY - December 16, 2018

9:00 a.m. Traditional Service (S)
9:15 a.m. Upper Room (RM 8)
10:30 a.m. Contemporary (S)
10:30 a.m. Kennedy Disc (RM 8)
6:30 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 415 (T)

MONDAY - December 17, 2018

7:00 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal (S)

TUESDAY - December 18, 2018

9:30 Worship Design (RM 22)
6:00 p.m. Praise Team (S)
6:30 p.m. Cubs Pack 415 (T)

WEDNESDAY- December 19, 2018

Divinely Unique Thrift & Gift Store
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
12:00 p.m. Friendship Circle
(Offsite)
3:00 p.m. Blessings In A Backpack
(Offsite)
6:00 p.m. Youth Group (RM 22)

THURSDAY - December 20, 2018

Divinely Unique Thrift & Gift Store
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
8:00 a.m. Meals on Wheels (K)
6:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal (C)
6:00 p.m. Mini Farms (T)

FRIDAY- December 21, 2018

Divinely Unique Thrift & Gift Store
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
6:00 p.m. Celebrate Recovery (S)

college campuses, Children ministries, Homeless ministries, Youth camp, and many more. Let us pray and set our minds on closing out the year at 100% for our missional gifts for the ministries of the Florida Annual Conference. Remember, we are a connectional church which means together we can accomplish more than we could by ourselves.

Have a great weekend, and remember the reason for the season, and do not allow anyone to "Steal your Christmas."

Blessings,
Pastor David



Remember to stop by and sign the prayer cards on Sunday morning. Then if you would, take the time to write a personal note of encouragement to these persons as well. The Care Notes are available at the table on Sundays. Thanks for serving and caring together as the CRUMC family of faith.

Ron Bass
Jane Meek
Earl



Advent Devotionals will be available daily on our website crumc.com and our [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/crumc) page. If you do not have online access and would like to request a hard copy of the devotional, please call the front office 352/795-3148

SATURDAY- December 22, 2018
Divinely Unique Thrift & Gift Store
9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
2:30 p.m. Celebrate Leadership
(RM 13)

if you have a change or cancellation of a regularly scheduled meeting/Bible Study, please be sure to call the front office with your information so that our calendars remain current. Thank You!

Sanctuary- (S)
Bethel Chapel- (BC)
Choir Room- (C)
Tabernacle- (T)
Kitchen- (K)



Bright Beginnings Learning Academy is Accepting Applications for Kindergarten and First Grade. To apply call 352/795-1240



Preschool Hours are 6:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Infants through VPK

Now enrolling for VPK 2018/2019 School Year
VPK Hours



Divinely Unique *Thrift Store*

5015 N. Citrus Ave - Crystal River, FL 34428
352/436-2221

Wed. Thru Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Sat 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Merry Christmas!

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
with wrap care available

Call 352-795-1240
Lic# C05C10049

LIFEgroups

Please Contact The Church
Office for a Listing at 795-3148



MON - THURS
9 A.M. - 12 P.M.
Closed Fridays



Discovery Group Christmas Lunch

December 15th at 11:30

Hardwood Smokehouse, 508 N. Citrus Ave

Everyone is Welcome!

Sign up at the Connection Point

See Jean Bush or call 795-6350

with any questions



***Do you love discussing Scripture
and offering your thoughts on it?***

Then we have the perfect class for you!

9:15 a.m.-Upper Room Jesus Fellowship (Room 8)

10:30 a.m.- Kennedy Discussion Class (Room 8)

We can't wait to see you there!



December 14

Betty Schooley

December 17

Marno Fagala

Stephen McDaniel

December 18



Our Congregational Care Team helps to connect people in the congregation through visitation, phone calls, emails, & correspondence.
If you have a need, please call the office
@ 352-795-3148
or email careteam@crumc.com



Join us every Friday night for Celebrate Recovery.

Dinner begins at 6 p.m.

Worship follows shortly
after at 7 p.m.
following with small groups

All are welcome to attend.

Free child care is available - please call the church office to make arrangements!

[Click to like](#)
(Click banner below)



Fred Whetzel

December 19

Sheryl Bartle

Cori Boney

December 23

Karen Thomas

Merry Williams

December 26

Jean Bradley

Irma Green

December 28

Charlie Jackson

Michele Rawls

December 29

Nancy Slack

December 30

Alice Gehring

Ashely Vanderhaar

December 31

Frank Pifer

April Schmitt

If we have missed your
Birthday, please contact the
Care Team at

careteam@crumc.com



December 15

Ida & Raymond Cozart

December 22

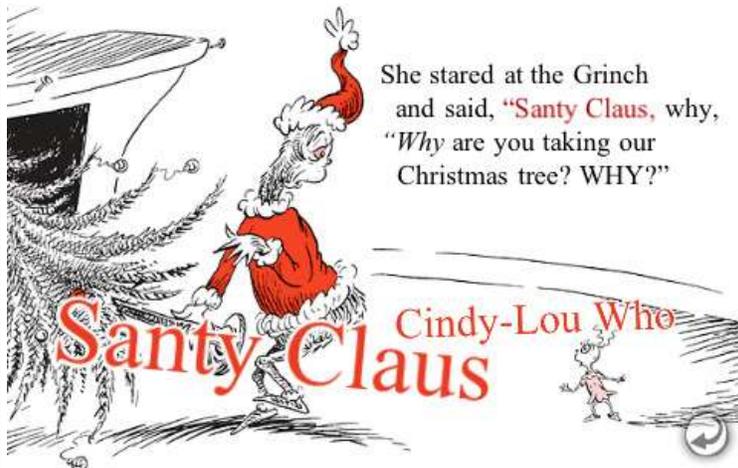
Peggy & Dennis Pilon

December 27

Mary & Bill Lyons

December 28

Azure & Jim Kelly



She stared at the Grinch
and said, "Santy Claus, why,
"Why are you taking our
Christmas tree? WHY?"

If we have missed your
anniversary, please
contact the Care
Team at

careteam@crumc.com



Stephen Ministry is an
ongoing ministry to meet the
needs of persons going
through a crisis or in need of
care.

Stephen Ministers provide
one-on-one confidential
Christian Care giving to those
in need. To refer yourself or
someone else, call Judy
Leavitt
@ 352-746-7716.

Stephen Ministers meet every
fourth Thursday of each
month for continuing
education and supervision.

[To view the best version of the message, please click here](#)

4801 N Citrus Ave, Crystal River, FL 34428

352-795-3148

<http://www.crumc.com>

