



Friends of Crystal River,
As you enter into the business of the Christmas season, I would guess you are decorating the house, setting up the Christmas tree, and shopping for friends and family. It is so easy to get so caught up in the business of the season that we forget the reason for the season. As we discovered this past weekend, all this business can take our attention away from Jesus, and, in fact, we allow the distractions of this season to steal Christmas from our hearts. Not only does our business steal Christmas, but so do our bad attitudes and our self-righteous natures that ignore God.

As we follow the story of the Grinch, we find that he has a heart that is two sizes too small. This condition for him comes from his anger towards the citizens of "Whoville," who at one time bullied him and drove him out of town. The Grinch then isolated himself on top of the mountain and the walls of anger and disappointment grew taller. He allowed his anger and resentment to steal Christmas from his heart and thereby his heart grew two sizes too small.

Just like the Grinch, our hearts can grow two sizes too small if we allow the distractions and the business of life, bad attitudes, and a refusal to allow Jesus into our hearts. That is why Proverbs 4:23 says: *"Above all else, Guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."* I would say this is good advice if we do not want to end up like the Grinch, with a heart two sizes too small, and as a thief who steals Christmas. Yet, even if someone does try to steal Christmas from our hearts, they will not be successful if we have guarded our heart from being infiltrated by distractions, bad attitudes, and complacency. We know this is true, because the citizens of "Whoville," did not allow their Christmas to be stolen. Instead they chose to guard their hearts, take each other's hand and circle around the Christmas tree, singing together as a family in spite of stolen gifts. No one, including the Grinch, was going to steal their joy for Christmas!

How about you? How will you deal with the Joy stealers this year? Will you allow them into your heart? Will you allow your heart to be infiltrated with anger, resentment and mistrust? Or will you guard your heart from the distractions of life, keep a good attitude, and most of all, keep Jesus at the center of all that you do? I pray that you will not allow anyone or anything to steal your Christmas this year.

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WEEKEND WORSHIP

This weekend we will continue in our series, "Christmas Through the Eyes of the Grinch." Not only do people and things try to steal our Christmas, they even "Hate" Christmas. We see this across the country more and more each year, as the stories keep flooding in as to how people want to remove Christmas from all aspects of our culture. Like the principal in Nebraska at an elementary school who wants to get rid of candy canes because they form the letter "J," which stands for Jesus. Really? Or the song, "Baby It's Cold Outside," citing that it is a sexist song and offensive to women. Wow, never saw that in all the years I have heard this song sung since the 1950's. Well, the stories go on and on as to how some people, at least in their actions, seem to "Hate" Christmas. Join me as we see how the Grinch hated Christmas, but also how King Herod hated Christmas even more than the Grinch, when it came to the birth of Jesus. It is ironic that a lot has not changed. People still "Hate" Jesus, but praise God, He Loves us in spite of ourselves and our crazy behavior.

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 have 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.

I want to thank everyone who helped in the front office mailing letters. Thanks also to all who helped paint the backdrop on the platform, and to all who constructed and walked in the Christmas Parade. The Church is only as effective as those of you who make things happen for the Kingdom of God. Remember, "Christ has no hands but your hands." Thank you for serving.

Have a great weekend and coming week, and thank you for being faithful in your tithes and offerings. Your gifts make things possible, because they express your love for God.

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.



9:00 A.M.
Traditional Service

10:30 A.M.
Contemporary Service

2018 DECEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	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					

Freeable Calendar From 123Calendar.com

**ALL MEETINGS ARE PUBLIC
WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SPRC**

FRIDAY - December 7, 2018
Divinely Unique Thrift & Gift Store
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
6:00 p.m. Celebrate Recovery (S)

SATURDAY - December 8, 2018
Divinely Unique Thrift & Gift Store
9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
8:00 a.m. Cookie Walk
2:30 Celebrate Leadership (RM 22)

SUNDAY - December 9, 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 10, 2018
7:00 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal (S)

TUESDAY - December 11, 2018
9:30 Worship Design (RM 22)
6:00 p.m. Praise Team (Sanctuary)
6:30 p.m. Cubs Pack 415 (T)

WEDNESDAY - December 12, 2018
Divinely Unique Thrift & Gift Store
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
6:00 p.m. Youth Group (RM 22)

THURSDAY - December 13, 2018
Divinely Unique Thrift & Gift Store

together as the CRUMC family of faith.

The Poole Family

Advent

DEVOTIONAL

Advent Devotionals will be available daily on our website crumc.com and our [facebook](#) 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



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 a.m. - 4 p.m.

8:00 a.m. Meals on Wheels (K)
6:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal (C)
6:00 p.m. N. Citrus Civic Assoc. (T)
7:00 p.m. 4H (RM 22)

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)

**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



Saturday - December 8

Christmas cookies will be sold for a donation of \$10 per 8"x8" box. The sale will start at 9 a.m. and last until all cookies are sold - usually by 11 a.m.
Come and bring a friend or two!



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!

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

**Now enrolling for VPK
2018/2019 School Year**

VPK Hours
Monday - Friday
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





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)



December 1

Susan Schirmer

December 2

Leslie Bollin
Hallie Castell
Rusty Harry
James Jefferson Jr.

December 3

William Lyons

December 8

Nancy Witty

December 10

Patricia Schabruch

December 11

Ida Cozart

December 12

Marion Corbin

December 13

Roger Schooley

December 14

Betty Schooley

December 17

Marno Fagala

Stephen McDaniel

December 18

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



Stephen
MINISTRY

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.

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

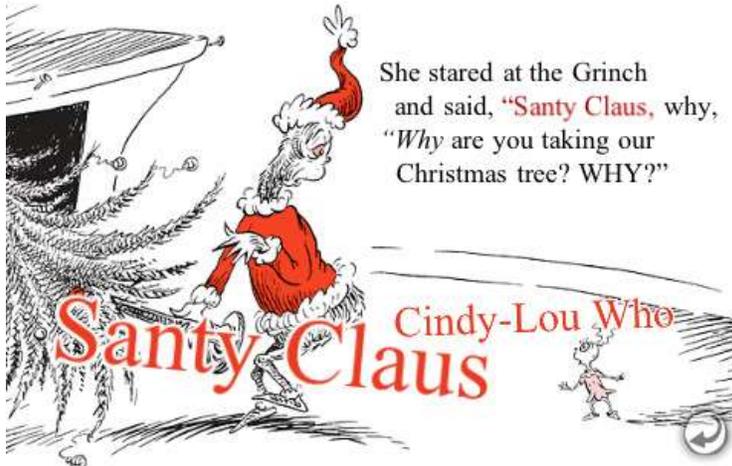
Mary & Bill Lyons

December 28

Azure & Jim Kelly

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

careteam@crumc.com



[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>

