

December 1, 2023

## THE COUNTRYSIDE COURIER

Countryside Presbyterian Church (USA)  
7768 SW Hwy. 200, Ocala, FL 34476  
Tel: 352 237-4633 Fax: 352 873-3974



December 10, 2023  
at 10:30 Service

*“A Child, A King”*



### CHRISTMAS *Cantata*

*Celebrating the  
Son of the  
Father's love  
by  
Marty Parks*

#### DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Roger Hileman December 3, Kathy Walsh December 3, Janet Frechette, December 4, Ken Jacob December 4, Chuck Doyle December 6, Barbara Patrick December 7, Sharon Newberg December 8, Thomas Cherubino December 10, Connie Valois-Martin December 17, Carmen VanDerbeck December 23, Sherry Lowry December 29, Chris Deal December 31, Sarah Jane Hoffman December 31

**LITURGISTS FOR DECEMBER—Melita McGrath, Carol Melchior, John Bain, Susan Jones, Dale Ambler, Roger Hilemen**

**USHERS FOR DECEMBER—Wayne Melchior, Carol Melchior, Lennie Letendre, Bobbie Letendre, Ann Brown, Susan Ferguson, Sandy Stearns, Karen and Andy Bonner**

**SANCTUARY PREPARATION—Marilyn Whitford**

**COMMUNION PREPARATION—Sharon Ryer**

**GREETERS—Sally Rickolt, Deanna Smith**

**AUDIO VISUAL TEAM—Carl Berry, Ken Jacob, Al Kremer, Linda Peters, Valerie Sanders**

**The office will be closed Monday, December 25, Christmas Day, and Tuesday,**

**December 26, 2023.**

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Hallmark Christmas movies are in full swing, signs of the Christmas season are popping up in the stores, and Holiday music has taken over your favorite radio channel. What does this all mean? The Advent Season is upon us! This year we are going to spend four weeks (beginning November 30) to discuss the “good,” the “bad,” and the “ugly” people in the story of Christ’s birth. In our study, “The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly (An Advent Study for Adults)” by Richard B. Wilke, Wilke reminds us that it is because of the evil in our world that we are desperately in need of a Savior. If you are interested in participating in our study, you can purchase your book on Amazon and join us on Thursdays at 3:30.

Our Book Club is spending two months reading our latest book, The Lady’s Mine by Francine Rivers. In this book, Ms. Rivers takes us back in time to 1875 in the tiny mining town of Calvada, nestled in the Sierra Nevadas: a displaced New England suffragette and a former Union soldier, disinherited by his Southern family, join forces to save the lawless boomtown where everyone wants to strike it rich! Interested in diving into this book with us? Pick up a copy of The Lady’s Mine by Francine Rivers and join us in the choir room at 2:00 on January 15, 2024!!! Refreshments will be provided!

Looking to help at church but just not sure what you could do? The Christian Education Committee is looking for some volunteers to help in our Countryside Church Library! We need a team to work together to maintain the running of our library. If you think you might be interested in volunteering, you can let either Kara Savage or Warren Janes know by texting/calling Kara at 407-340-3375 or through email at kara-morey@yahoo.com, or Warren at (202) 438-4583 or email him at wrnjns@aol.com. You can always just tell us in person! More information and details will be given when a team has been formed.

We are always looking for new members to join our Christian Education Committee - to share your ideas for Christian Education activities, to further an individual’s Bible and Spiritual growth, and to improving our library!! We meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at 2:00 in the Session Room. Our next meeting will be held on December 14.

Kara Savage and Warren Janes, Co-Chairs

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## PASTORAL NOMINATING COMMITTEE UPDATE

Thank you for your continued cooperation, patience, and prayers. Since August, the PNC Committee has met twice a month working diligently using all the data from the Focus Group meetings. These findings will help us start completing the Ministry Discernment Profile on the PCUSA website. We are following protocols mandated by them and they require us to look at Countryside’s vision for ministry, our place and impact in the community and reviewing our mission statement, to name a few. These haven’t been reviewed for more than 20 years, so will take time and care. Everything compiled has to be approved by our Session and St. Augustine Presbytery before anything can be posted online to be seen by a pastor searching for a call.

We pray for God’s wisdom and guidance in our efforts. We ask you, the congregation, to continue to pray for the committee and everything we’re doing.

Wayne Melchior and Tari Ambler  
PNC Co-Chairs

**REPORT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**



The Finance Committee has voted to share with the congregation our giving and fundraising contributions versus expenses each month so that everyone may see where we stand financially.

For October 2023:

<i><b>Contributions</b></i>	<i><b>Expenses</b></i>
\$27,121	\$29,350

Contributions more closely matched expenses for October. This was helped because October had five Sundays as opposed to the usual four. If you have not done so, continue to contribute in accordance with your pledges. Let's close out 2023 on a high note. Thank you for your continuing support of our church.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kate Clayton, Finance Co-Chair.

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**WORSHIP & MUSIC**

Worship and Music ministries at Countryside are filled with a sense of expectancy during this Advent season.

December 3 is the first Sunday of Advent. Our service will be started with the Lighting of the Advent Candle in both our 9:00 Contemporary Service and our 10:30 Traditional Service and include the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Our December 10 service will feature our Chancel Choir presenting a Cantata "A Child, A King" at the 10:30 service.

On December 17 Countryside's Handbell Choir will offer special music celebrating the Advent season at the 10:30 service.

December 24 we will celebrate the fourth Sunday of Advent as well as our Christmas Eve service at 5:30.

Rev. Rhonda Link-Cummings invites all of you to join us to celebrate Jesus as the reason for the season at any of our Advent services.

In Christ  
Ken Jacob and Warren Janes Co-Chairs

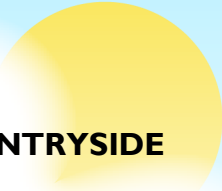


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**December 13, 2023—11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**  
**Presbytery of St. Augustine**  
**1937 University Blvd. West**  
**Jacksonville, FL 32217**

**COUNTRYSIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
SUNDAY AFTERNOON ARTS CONCERTS**



**THE MASTER CHOIR PRESENTS A CHRISTMAS PROGRAM AT COUNTRYSIDE**



A beautiful Christmas concert by the Central Florida Master Choir will be presented at Countryside Presbyterian Church on **Sunday, December 10 at 3:00**. This lovely music will add further joy to your Christmas season! The Master Choir is under the direction of Dr. Harold McSwain and accompanied by GayLyn Capitano and the New Moon String Ensemble. Come early to enjoy this lovely music because the event is always a season favorite!

Our November 2023 concert by the 17 member Southern Express Band was also well attended. The 17 member band began the concert with a dramatic entrance of a seven member Color Guard who carried the flag for The Star Spangled Banner. Patriotic music followed along with several swing and mood selections. It was a magnificent salute to our veterans. Best of all.....the Southern Express Band will return in November 2024 for another Veterans Day Concert!

Thanks to Grace Dunlevy for Chairing the concert series and to John Bain for ushers and setup.

Submitted by Sally Zarnowiec



**CRAFTY CHRISTIANS CORNER**

Once again the ladies of the Crafty Christians have made an outstanding effort to complete more than 300 oversized Christmas stockings for 300 homeless school children in Marion County! In addition, they have made and donated knit hats, gloves, infant quilts, infant sweaters, hat and bootie sets, bibs, stuffed toys, Christmas pillows, and tree skirts.

For our church Giving Tree, the ladies made 196 small stocking ornaments, 23 oversized stockings with each child's name on it, 20 stuffed animals, 4 baby dolls, and a large afghan for each of the 5 families. It is our joy and privilege to help make Christmas happier for these children and their families.

We welcome anyone to join us in the coming year. We make children's clothing, infant through age 10, and comfort items and toys.

We also make items for Hospice such as shawls, lap robes, cancer hats, positioning pillows, fidget pads, Foley bag covers, and novelty pillowcases. There's something for everyone to do. We have many sewing supplies available, but we can always use new cotton fabric (1-3 yards).

Our next meeting will be January 18, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. If you have questions or need further information, contact Kathie Paules at 352-291-0096 or 816-225-1064.

Kathie Paules



...that our Presbytery clergy and teaching elders have written many publications and books? If you would like a list of resources, call the office.

## MISSION COMMITTEE

### “MISSION POSSIBLE CONTINUES”

As of this writing, over 300+ stockings have been sewn by Crafty Christians. Our November Food Collection exceeds 500 items. So, in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you. Matthew 7:12.

#### December Food Offering Is Desserts



*Boxed Cake and Icing, Brownies, Pudding and Jell-O Mixes.  
Canned Pie Fillings, Pie Crusts, Chocolate Chips, Raisins, Nuts, Marshmallows.  
No Perishable Items*

ENGLAND & US Joy & Peace	AFRICA Vreugde & Vrede	BRAZIL & PUERTO RICO Algeria & Paz	CHINA Xiyue & Heping
FRANCE Joie & Paix	GERMANY Freude & Frieden	INDIA Joya & Sulah	ISRAEL Joi & Pedro
ITALY Gioia & Pace	JAPAN Kofuku & Heiwa	POLAND Radosc & Mir	RUSSIA Radost & Mir
SAUDI ARABIA Marah & Salam	KOREA Babla & Pyeonghwa	SPAIN Algeria & Paz	SWEDEN Gladje & Fred



Throughout the Earth,  
May the Joy of the Birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, bring Peace!

God so loved the World that he gave His only begotten Son to us!  
Spread Joy and Peace to each other and all over our Earth.



Thank You for your caring.  
Sue Jones & Kara Savage Co-Chairs



*To You and Your Families*

*We hope the year ends cheerfully and that  
your New Year is fresh and bright.*

*Rhonda*

*Rina*

*Connie*

*Chelsea*

*Raül*

## What is (WHO) is a CRE?

A Commissioned Ruling Elder (CRE) in the Presbyterian Church (USA) is a congregationally based ruling elder who has demonstrated skill for church leadership and has successfully completed CRE training. The role of the CRE is an expansion of the office and work of the ruling elder. The Book of Order states that “commissioning ruling elders to limited pastoral service” is a way that a presbytery nurtures the covenant community of disciples of Christ (G-2.1001).

Our congregation Certified/Commissioned Ruling Elders are Arthur Burditt, Joan Wells ( First Presbyterian Church of Williston) and Dr. Belinda Newhart (Fairfield Presbyterian Church, Fairfield, Florida).

(from PCUSA “Staying Connected” November 22, 2023)

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# New Year Blessing

*At the sound of the tolling midnight bell  
a brand new year will begin.  
Let's raise our hopes in a confident toast,  
to the promise it ushers in.*

*May your battles be few, your pleasures many,  
your wishes and dreams fulfilled.  
May your confidence stay in the face of loss  
and give you the strength to rebuild.*

*May peace of heart fill all your days  
May serenity grace your soul.  
May tranquil moments bless your life  
And keep your spirit whole.*

*Author Unknown*

*May God make your year a happy one!*

## STEWARDSHIP

Over the past 10 years I have been serving Countryside as the Stewardship Chair. During my mandatory year off of session after six years of service I was asked to write the annual stewardship letter. After ten annual letters and numerous Courier articles I sought help in energizing our Stewardship Program. With the blessing of Rev. Rhonda, I asked our retired Rev. Dale Ambler for assistance.

On Sunday, November 19, Rev. Rhonda delivered to us the best Stewardship Sermon that I have ever heard. She was spot on in reminding us that Stewardship is not solely about money, it is also about time and talent. Since we record our church services, I recommend that if you missed this service you find it on our Facebook site and listen to it.

The following slightly edited thoughts are some of those given to me by Dale:

From Genesis 1 and 2 we read that God created the heavens, the earth and humans. God gave dominion over his creation to the humans, and among other responsibilities, to be the stewards of his creation.

Throughout the Bible are references to God's desires to be in a relationship with his children. A relationship with a purpose, a responsibility to manage all the resources of life for the glory of God, acknowledging God as provider.

A major misconception about stewardship is thinking that generosity and giving are the same thing. One can give without being generous. Generosity flows from one's relationship with God. Generosity is an attitude of the heart. Therefore, one's willingness to give reveals, in large part, one's relationship with God.

Finally, I asked online, what is the biblical basis for stewardship?

"This is the fundamental principle of biblical stewardship. God owns everything, we are simply managers or administrators acting on his behalf. Therefore, stewardship expresses our obedience regarding the administration of everything God has placed under our control, which is all encompassing."

Blessings and Merry Christmas to all!

John Redden, Stewardship Chair

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## COUNTRYSIDE LUNCH MEETINGS

(Organized by your Fellowship Committee)



Please join us for the Countryside Lunch meeting on **Wednesday December 13 at 12 noon**. Our Music Director, Raúl Ramírez, will perform his favorite Christmas music and lead us in singing some of our favorite Christmas carols. Sign up in the Hallway on Sundays December 3 and December 10. The lunch is catered and the cost is \$10 per person.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 9:00 Bldg. & Grounds 10:30 DAR Party
3 9:00 Contemporary Service 10:30 Traditional Worship Online Service 1st Sunday Advent	4	5 9:00 Bldg. & Grounds 10:00 Fellowship Meeting 6:00 Master Choir	6 10:00 Al Anon Mtg. 1:30 Bell Choir 3:00 Praise Team 3:30 Chancel Choir 4:00 Christmas Dinner and Gift Auction	7 3:30 Christian Ed Class Advent Study(2)	8	9 9:00 Bldg. & Grounds  Lions Club in Parking Lot
10 9:00 Contemporary Service 10:30 Traditional Worship <i>Christmas Cantata</i> Online Service 3:00 Concert 2nd Sunday Advent	11	12 9:00 Bldg. & Grounds 10:00 PNC Meeting 1:00 Mission Committee 6:00 Master Choir	13 10:00 Al Anon Mtg. 10:00 Worship & Music Mtg. 12:00 Countryside Lunch 1:30 Bell Choir 3:00 Praise Team 3:30 Chancel Choir	14 2:00 Christian Ed Com. 3:30 Christian Ed Class Advent Study(3) 6:00 Girl Scouts 7:00 Southern Express Band	15	16 8:30 DAR Mtg. 9:00 Bldg. & Grounds <i>10:00 Countryside Farms Mtg.</i>
17 9:00 Contemporary Service 10:30 Traditional Worship Online Service 3rd Sunday Advent	18	19 9:00 Bldg. & Grounds 10:00 Nominating Committee 6:00 Master Choir	20 9:30 Membership Meeting 10:00 Al Anon Mtg. 11:00 Finance Mtg. 1:30 Bell Choir 3:00 Praise Team 3:30 Chancel Choir 6:00 Line Dance Social	21 3:30 Christian Ed Class Advent Study(4)	22	23 9:00 Bldg. & Grounds
24 9:00 Contemporary Service 10:30 Traditional Worship Online Service 4th Sunday Advent	25 Christmas Day Office Closed 	26 9:00 Bldg. & Grounds 6:00 Master Choir  Day After Christmas Office Closed	22 10:00 Al Anon Mtg. 1:30 Bell Choir 3:00 Praise Team 3:30 Chancel Choir	28 10:00 Session Meeting 3:30 Christian Ed Class 7:00 Southern Express Band	29	30 9:00 Bldg. & Grounds
31 9:00 Contemporary Service 10:30 Traditional Worship Online Service				Line Dance Instructions Each Thursday 1-3 p.m. Intermed. 3-4 p.m. Improver 4-5 p.m. Beginner <b>No line dance classes 12/7 &amp; 12/28</b>		



## FELLOWSHIP

### OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW IN FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship events are a great way to get to know your church family better and develop friendships. We know your holiday schedules fill up fast, so put these dates on your calendar **now**.

December 6, Wednesday, 4 – 7 pm, Annual Christmas Dinner and Gift Auction  
December 13, Wednesday, 12 noon, Lunch and Entertainment by Raúl Ramírez

Sign ups for all events are on the three Sundays prior to the event.

In Acts, in the first church, the new believers spent time together in church and shared meals together. **What does that look like here at Countryside?**

Our Fellowship Committee plans events for you to come together as friends to share meals together. Worship and Music Committee plans our two Sunday worship services. Both are opportunities for you to invite your friends and neighbors to experience life at Countryside.

**Our next dinner is Wednesday, December 6 when we will be hosting our annual Christmas Potluck Dinner and Gift Auction.** Sign up on December 3 to attend and indicate what dish you want to bring. We'll provide ham and you are asked to bring a side or dessert. For the gift auction, bring one or more beautifully wrapped items. These can be from around your home or a new item. Guests will bid on items, but the catch is, you don't know what is inside. Dale Ambler and Jack Alderton will be our auctioneers. It's sure to be a delicious meal and a fun way to raise funds for our church. If you can't attend, consider donating a gift for the auction or a monetary gift.

### HELP IS STILL NEEDED

We can always use extra help in our Fellowship ministry, so please consider serving. We all love these events, but it takes many hands for them to be successful and fun for those attending

**COFFEE FELLOWSHIP** is provided in The Founders Hall before and after the 9 a.m. service and after the 10:30 a.m. service every Sunday. It takes many folks to get this ready each week. There is a schedule on the bulletin board to the left of the beverage table for signing up to help or to bring treats. Please check your schedules and sign up to serve in this ministry. Call John or Tari with any questions.

John Berry and Tari Ambler, Co-Chairs

### Actual Announcements from Church Bulletins



- Miss Charlene Mason sang, "I will not pass this way again, giving obvious pleasure to the congregation."
- Attend and you will hear an excellent speaker and have a healthy lunch.
- Bertha Belch, a missionary from Africa, will be speaking tonight at Calvary Methodist. Come hear Bertha Belch all the way from Africa.

## **Countryside Presbyterian Church of Ocala Inc.**

7768 SW Highway 200  
Ocala, FL 34476  
352 237-4633 FAX 352 873-3974

**Part Time Interim Pastor—Rev. Rhonda Link-Cummings**  
**352 875-3002**

**Sunday at Countryside—Traditional Worship 10:30 a.m.**  
**Contemporary Service—9:00 a.m.**  
Worship online at [countrysideocala.org](http://countrysideocala.org)

E-mail us at  
[rina@countrysideocala.org](mailto:rina@countrysideocala.org), [connie@countrysideocala.org](mailto:connie@countrysideocala.org)

Office Hours: Monday—Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

