

January 1, 2023

THE COUNTRYSIDE COURIER

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



*Rejoice evermore.
Pray without ceasing.
In every thing give thanks for
this is the will of God in Christ
Jesus concerning you.*

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Janet Tenhor January 2, Clay Robertson January 3, John Bain January 4, Brenda Dalstrom January 5, Anita Foster January 5, Diane Huff January 6, Judy Harmon January 7, Cathy Rosol January 9, Margee Styles January 9, Gail Gibbs January 12, Robert Bates January 15, Peggy Adams January 17, Barbara Toman January 20, Paul Drake January 21, John Martin January 21, Bobbie Letendre January 22, Jack Johnston, January 23, Susan Manning January 24, Bruce Schnorr January 28, Linda Kinney January 30, Joyce Saxon January 31

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Susan Ferguson February 1, John Redden February 2, Kathie Paules February 5, Don McCurry February 7, Wayne Melchior February 7, Fran Bolson February 8, John Berry February 9, Jerry Deen February 10, Gene Topp February 11, Jay Walsh February 13, Carol Mackenzie February 16, Sue Barringer February 17, Ron Niebo February 18, Andy Bonner February 26, Bernie Sullivan February 27, Carolyn Parry February 29

LITURGIST FOR JANUARY—Kate Clayton

**USHERS FOR JANUARY—Ann Brown, Sandy Stearns, Catherine Whitehead,
Janet Abrahamson, Carolle Carlton**

SANCTUARY PREPARATION—Sherry Lowry

COMMUNION PREPARATION—Sue Reed

GREETERS—Kate Deen, Tina McCurry, Sally Rickolt

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

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

We'd like to begin our new year with special thanks to all those who have volunteered their time and abilities to providing church members and visitors with the opportunity to worship at Countryside. Moving from the busy-ness that surrounds our Advent season and Christmas observances, we move on in our "church year" into a new season.

In Christian tradition, the season we call Christmastide extends from Christmas Day until the Day of Epiphany, which comes on Friday, January 6, in this new year 2023. The name Epiphany comes from the Greek word epiphaneia, meaning "appearance" or "manifestation," and refers to the manifestation of Jesus Christ to the world.

During January we often draw our scriptural readings and studies from those passages concerning the presentation of the Lord to the world as represented by the magi and those concerning the Baptism of the Lord. We will observe Jesus' baptism this year on Sunday, January 8. Also on that day we will be observing the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper as a part of our worship service. We will be doing this by method of intinction, our normal tradition at Countryside.

Winter months often are times of increased attendance at worship. Keeping this in mind, we have a special need starting in January to enlist more worshippers among us to serve as ushers on Sunday morning. If you can serve for all or most of a month, or serve as a backup on occasion, please consider signing up on our ushers list posted in the narthex.

Even as our Chancel and Bell Choirs have concluded a busy season in Countryside's music program, we will "soon and very soon" be preparing new special music offerings. Our choirs will resume regular rehearsals on Wednesday, January 11. New singers and ringers are always welcome!

Singers or instrumentalists with talents or interests in wider ranging music styles are invited to indicate your interest to our music director Raúl Ramírez. Some of us have abilities in offering more contemporary music. Others are drawn to gospel music or other genres of faith music. Many singers feel very comfortable singing "in harmony" but may not feel they can handle complex music scores. Many of us share a special love for singing and joyful noisemaking based on our "youth night" or church camp song favorites.

Ministries such as our early morning "Praise Team," our lay TimberRidge worship singers, and past devotional leading that past elders have done at Interfaith – these are a few examples of how we can include varied music styles and worship formats in our church life.

Keeping this in mind, we expect to gather singers and instrumentalists interested in participating in an early service to begin following Ash Wednesday and extend through Palm Sunday. We anticipate scheduling the Lenten service to run 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. on Sundays, February 26 to April 2. Depending on levels of volunteer interest indicated during January – and subject to Session consideration – we will be firming up an abbreviated worship format for this to be added to our program of worship and church calendar in the February Courier.

Arthur Burditt and Susan Jones, Co-Chairs



Once again you put magic in our Christmas!
Thank you so much for the gifts and cards and
Happy New Year to everyone!

Rina and Connie

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Happy New Year!! What can Jesus teach us in 2023??

Are you starting this year feeling discouraged, frustrated, or empty inside? Do you feel as though you are trying to climb a descending escalator? Or do you simply want to know who Christ is? I mean who he *really* is? What ignites within him to so naturally and immediately come to the aid of the sinner and sufferer? Christian Education has a book study for you! Beginning January 5, 2023, we will start a book study on Dane C. Ortlund's book, Gentle and Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers. We will be looking at Matthew 11, where Jesus describes himself as "gentle and lowly" as he longs for his people to find rest in him. Through these chapters, we'll take a deeper look into the depths of Christ's very heart for sinners, diving deep into Bible passages that speak of who Christ is and encouraging us with the affections of Christ for his people. With his longing heart for us as sinners, we will find comfort as he sustains us in our up-and-down lives. If you are interested in joining us in the discussions, bring your copy of the book and come to the choir room every Thursday at 3:30. Your impact will be insightful! Hope to see you there!

Our Book Club is time travelling back to the year 1939. London is preparing for war as Hitler's forces are sweeping through Europe. In the midst of blackouts and air raids, how can a bookstore and storytelling unite a community? To find out, grab a copy of The Last Bookshop in London, by Madeline Martin, and join us January 23, 2023 at 2:00 in Classroom 2, and together we'll unwrap the story!

Kara Savage and Linda Peters, Co-Chairs



Thank you all for your magnificent support following the death of our daughter Kim. The calls, emails, cards and especially all of the hugs and comments we received at the December 18 church service is testament to the fact that Countryside Presbyterian Church is truly part of our family. God Bless all of you.

John & Virginia Redden



December 11 2022!
Were you there? Did you see it?
It was magnificent!
Thank you, Raúl, and the choir for this
beautiful presentation.
You all sounded fantastic!

STEWARDSHIP (#1)

The subject of special offerings was raised at the November meeting of our Session. Some of our special offerings were approved by the Session years before most of us joined the church. "Souper" Bowl Sunday, One Great Hour of Sharing, Peanut Butter Drive, Pentecost, Interfaith Rx program, School Supplies, Sock It To Me/Undies, Peace and Global Witness, Christmas Giving Tree and the Christmas Joy Offering have been observed at Countryside for many years.

Some special offerings are approved by Session on a need basis to cover expenses that are not in our budget but which need to be accomplished. The requests for funds to improve our outside grounds and to paint the interior after 16 years of operations are examples of special offerings that were needed to cover unfunded expenses in the church's budget.

Let me use our home as an example of special unfunded or unbudgeted items. Last year our HVAC system and roof needed to be replaced, a granddaughter got significantly delinquent in her funding for college, and our house needed to be painted. These and some other items were not in our budget, but needed to be funded. The total for everything was an eye watering sum and had to be paid out of savings.

In the case of the church, I appealed to the congregation for shrubbery and for paint. You were magnificent and we got the funds we needed and the result was well appreciated by everyone. The church needed some serious funds to pay for the initial two HVAC units to keep the temperature in the Sanctuary comfortable. Several church members stepped up and provided the needed funds that along with our Building & Grounds fund got the job done. We still rely on one ten ton original unit in the Sanctuary, but it will need to be replaced in the future. Many of us would like to see the proceeds of our fundraisers used to fund those unfunded items that come up during the year.

I recently asked the congregation to contribute funds to pay for special 6 x11 post cards that will be sent to 12,000 residential addresses of families in the three zip codes surrounding the church. This is an attempt to increase our congregation with new members. The cost sounds excessive at \$4,300, but this is because postage has gotten so high, even using bulk mailing rates. Consider that if only 10 people join our church, we will raise over \$12,500 each year and each 10 more the same. I believe that the mailing costs are reasonable considering the potential to substantially increase the size of Countryside and help our church to become a multi-generational church. This request was made by the Membership Committee.

Every time a committee of the church needs additional funds, they must make a presentation to Session to justify the request for a special offering. Only Session can approve the request.

Each member must make their own decision as to whether they will support the request. No one is required to honor the request. What we give is between our God and Creator and us. Only the offering counters will know what anyone gives to a special request and only then if you use a check to make the contribution.

I sincerely hope that this will help you understand the need for special offerings and the fact that participation is not a requirement.

Yours in Christ,
John Redden - Stewardship Chair

ANNUAL COUNTRYSIDE FAIRE



Plans are underway for the annual Countryside Faire which is scheduled for February 11, 2023.

I am the new Chair this year and I'm looking for lots of help in many areas. As the saying goes "Many hands make for light work." I'll need workers in all areas. Each department (such as books) works as a team to sort, organize, display, and price the items. Please let me know if you are willing to help.

We will begin accepting donations from January 16 (yes, it's a holiday) through February 3 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. I will also be looking for individuals to be in The Founders Hall to accept donations. A separate sign-up sheet will be available. These individuals take the donations and distribute them to their respective areas.

Many of us have started collecting items to donate. You can also talk to or text your neighbors and friends to see if they have anything to donate. I especially look for moving vans in my neighborhood. Whether they are moving in or out, I am sure they will have lots of things they will not know what to do with!

Our Countryside Faire is the major fundraiser for the church. We have had enormous success over the years, but our goal is to do even better each year.

Here are some **Do's & Don'ts** of items we accept:

- ◆ **Men's and women's clothes**. Must be clean. If the item is torn or dirty, we won't accept it. Hangers are appreciated. We will have our boutique section again. We take shoes, purses, scarves, belts, jewelry, hats. **NO** undergarments, swimwear, sleepwear, soiled/torn clothing.
- ◆ **Linens, Towels, Tablecloths, Napkins, Table Runners, Blankets, Bedspreads, Decorative Pillows, Curtains, etc.**
Again, items must be clean and not torn. **Please** mark the size of the items.
- ◆ **Holiday Decorations**. All holidays. If lights are involved, please make sure all lights work. **NO** broken items.
- ◆ **Books, Games, Toys, Puzzles, Crafts**. Again, games and puzzles must have all their parts and be in working order!
- ◆ **Tools, Sporting Goods, Garden items, Electronic Items**. Tools should be in working order. Garden items should be clean. Some electronic items will be accepted **IF** they work and have all their parts. We even accept artificial pink flamingos. We accept pet items (but no pets!).
- ◆ **White Elephant and Home Décor**. That wonderful mix of "other" household items such as baking dishes, candles, candlesticks, pots, pans, dishes, glasses, vases, knick-knacks, pictures, picture frames, artificial plants and flowers, lamps, etc. **NO** broken or dirty household items. **NO** used perfumes, body lotions, make-up or other personal care items.
- ◆ **Other items we cannot accept**.
NO VHS tapes, magazines, encyclopedias, Reader's Digest.
NO large furniture – we do not have space! **IF** you have a **SMALL** item that is easy to handle (especially for us old folks), please let us know and we will take it under consideration!

I hate to sound fussy, but this is not a place for anyone to dump trashy or unusable things. After all these years, our sale has the reputation of having nice, clean, useable items!

Putting on the Faire may be a lot of work, but it is a lot of fun as well. It is also a wonderful way to get better acquainted with church attendees. Oh, did I mention you do not have to be a member to help? Bring a friend to help. Who knows, they may like us so much, they will want to join Countryside!

THANK YOU SO MUCH!
Sherry Lowry (352) 438-9353

SUNDAY AFTERNOON ARTS CONCERTS



Sunday, December 11 was a monumental day for music at Countryside. The choir's performance of the Christmas Cantata was outstanding with its telling of the Christmas story with voices of song and narration. Susan Jones, on percussion, added greatly to the event. Thank you for all the work behind this worship experience.

The Central Florida Master Choir returned post COVID in outstanding form and performed beyond our highest expectations. Led by Director of Choir, Dr. Harold McSwain, accompanist GayLyn Capitano, plus The Blue Moon String Ensemble, we were primed with two familiar favorites, including sing along of *O Come All Ye Faithful*. Vivaldi's *Gloria!* was next, highlighted with soloists Jennifer Foster, Carissa Baker and Lisa Berger. There was beautiful blending and coordination between the voices of the choir, soloists and the strings. The results were greatly appreciated by the capacity audience of 525+. After intermission, the choir continued with classic Christmas favorites, including a clever "Musicological Journey Through The Twelve Days Of Christmas" highlighting composers from Tchaikovsky to Sousa. The concert concluded with the last two choruses of Handel's *Messiah*. Our inspiring day of music concluded with the Choir in the narthex to greet concertgoers and accept their thanks and congratulations for such an unforgettable concert. Great thanks go to John Bain and his crew who were kept active trying to find seating spaces and dealing with the large but WELCOME attendees.

January's concert on January 8, 2023 will have an upbeat cast as we experience an afternoon of "the happiest music on earth"--The "Amazing" Steel Drums. This is always a well-received concert by young and old. Come and join us.

Grace Dunlevy,
Concert Chair

Remaining Sunday Afternoon Arts Concerts scheduled for the 2022-2023 season

January 8, 2023 -- The "Amazing" Steel Drums Ensemble

Directed by Sue Messer, The Drums will present "The happiest music on earth," played on 55 gallon drums—always a favorite

February 12, 2023 -- No concert

Please support The Countryside Country Faire (yard sale) at the church with doors opening at 8:00.

March 12, 2023 -- The Ocala Youth Symphony

In 24th year, The Symphony, composed of 10-18 year olds from Marion and surrounding counties, is conducted by founder, Cindy Robertson Warringer

April 2, 2023 -- The Central Florida Master Choir

Directed by Dr. Harold McSwain and accompanied by GayLyn Capitano, the choir will present their annual Spring Concert

May 14, 2023 -- The Marion Civic Chorale

Chorale is directed by David Bedenbaugh and accompanied by Gary LaCroix

COUNTRYSIDE BREAKFAST
Wednesday, January 11, 2023, at 8:30 a.m.
American Battleships by Max Newhart



Our guest speaker for the first Countryside Breakfast in the new year is Max Newhart. Max has been a member, Elder and Session Clerk at Countryside for many years before joining his wife Bea who became the Pastor at Fairfield Presbyterian Church. Max has compiled a pictorial book on American Battleships from BB-1 to BB-71. This wonderful book has sold over 430,000 copies primarily at the many battleship memorial sites located in port cities in the USA. Max will present the history of these great fighting ships and discuss the active service they provided in overseas wars.

Join us for an interesting presentation on what made the US Navy great.

COUNTRYSIDE MISSION CORNER

Can you help?

Interfaith Emergency Services of Ocala has an urgent need of the following items for their homeless shelter:

Hygiene items — shampoo, conditioner, toothbrushes, toothpaste, mouth-wash, body wash (adult, children and babies), deodorant, razors, shaving cream, sanitary napkins, lotions, wash cloths, towels, and hair-brushes/combs.

Over-the-counter medicines — i.e. cold & cough medicines (adult and children), Benadryl, and pain relievers like Advil or Tylenol.

As stated in their request “.....when these residents go out seeking employment, we want them to present their best self and to be confident in their approach. Having what they need to help with their personal hygiene will increase the probability of landing a job. Please help our residents to put their best foot forward.”

2022 Joy Offering was \$887—Thanks!

UPCOMING MISSION OPPORTUNITY
Souper Bowl of Caring is on Sunday, February 12.

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Soup's on!!! Bring in canned soup, packaged soup, chili, beans, crackers, etc. to help others have a warm meal on a cold day. We will be collecting mid-January through Super Bowl Sunday.

Thanks for all your generosity.

Mission Committee





2023



Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

<p>1</p> <p>9:30 Let's Pray 10:30 Worship Online Service Arthur Burditt 1st Sunday of Christmas</p>	<p>2</p> <p>New Year's Day Substitute Holiday Office Closed</p>	<p>3</p> <p>6:00 Master Choir</p>	<p>4</p> <p>2:30 Worship & Music Meeting</p>	<p>5</p> <p>3:30 Christian Ed Class (Choir Room)</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Epiphany of the Lord</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p> <p>9:30 Let's Pray 10:30 Worship Online Service Baptism of the Lord Rev. Rhonda Link-Cummings</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>10:00 Haircuts 10:00 Nominating Comm. Mtg. 11:00 Membership Meeting 6:00 Master Choir</p>	<p>11</p> <p>8:30 Breakfast 10:00 Lydia Circle 10:00 Fellowship Meeting 2:00 Handbell Rehearsal 3:30 Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>12</p> <p>2:15 Christian Ed Meeting 3:30 Christian Ed Class 6:00 Women's Book Study 6:00 Girl Scouts</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9:30 Let's Pray 10:30 Worship Online Service 2nd Sunday after Epiphany Rev. Rhonda Link-Cummings</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. Office Closed</p>	<p>17</p> <p>6:00 Master Choir</p>	<p>18</p> <p>11:00 Finance Mtg. 2:00 Handbell Rehearsal 3:30 Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>19</p> <p>1:00 Crafty Christians 3:30 Christian Ed Class</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>8:30 D.A.R. Meeting 10:00 Countryside Farms Mtg.</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9:30 Let's Pray 10:30 Worship Online Service 3rd Sunday after Epiphany Rev. Rhonda Link-Cummings</p>	<p>23</p> <p>12:30 Shine Mtg. 2:00 Book Club</p>	<p>24</p> <p>6:00 Master Choir</p>	<p>25</p> <p>2:00 Handbell Rehearsal 3:30 Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>26</p> <p>10:00 Session Mtg. 3:30 Christian Ed Class 6:00 Girl Scouts</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9:30 Let's Pray 10:30 Worship Online Service 4th Sunday after Epiphany Rev. Rhonda Link-Cummings</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>6:00 Master Choir</p>				

STEWARDSHIP (#2)

Call this submission late night musings of my not being able to sleep after getting two epidural steroid injections for my spinal stenosis today, one on each side of the spine. It got me thinking about the miracles of modern medicine. Fortunately, my doc told me that this would occur for one to two nights. I can now say that I have been struck by lightning. They hit the same nerve twice which gives a powerful shock all the way down to the ankle.

I would like to focus on Blessings, since all of us have received many during our lives. Last year I described some of the miracles that I experienced and that I attribute to our God that is always looking out for me and all of us.

Jesus performed many miracles in his time here on earth. However, God gave mankind brains that over thousands of years mankind has used to advance the understanding of almost everything, including the Universe.

Since the beginning man has advanced from roots and herbs to treat injuries and sickness through so many levels of advancement that have led us to ever advancing drugs, X-Ray equipment, MRIs, PET Scans, CT scans, bypass surgery, heart stents, lung surgery and transplants, heart transplants, to name just a few that come readily to mind.

From the wheel to carts to cars, jet aircraft, 100,000+-ton ships and 2-mile-long trains. Paths to interstate highways. Records to Radio, movies to TV, silent movies to ultra-wide screen movies in theaters with all the comforts of wide-screen home television.

We all have received many Blessings over the years of our lives. Appreciating these Blessings is something that we need to thank our God for every day. A neat picture that I purchased at our first Countryside Arts and Crafts Show says is best. "What if you woke up today with only the Blessings that we thanked God for yesterday." Think about that.

Some thoughts that I have come across that I would like to share:

"In matters of style, swim with the current, in matters of principle, stand like a rock." Thomas Jefferson

"It is not how much we give, but how much love we put into giving." Mother Teresa

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as a faithful steward of God's grace in its various forms." 1 Peter 4:10

Final thought – If you have not submitted your pledge card yet, please do so. Remember, this is not a contract. You may modify it at any time as circumstances change.

John Redden
Stewardship Chair

2022 “GIVING TREE” MISSION



Once again, the 2022 Giving Tree Mission has been an extraordinary display of goodwill and kindness from Countryside members and friends of the church. This year we were given five families with children attending Sunrise Elementary School. We kicked off on November 20 with tree ornaments and gift sign-ups and ended on December 22 when the five very appreciative families received your gifts. This year’s Giving Tree included a total of 20 children, with ages ranging from 8 months to 17 years old, and 8 adults. Your generosity has provided gifts of clothing, shoes, toys, and a full Christmas stocking for each child. In addition, each family received a huge amount of food for their Christmas dinner and gift certificates for food to help the families start the new year.

Our “Countryside Men” within Building & Grounds, Fellowship and Missions want to thank the congregation and other friends of the church for their participation in this year’s Giving Tree. Thanks also go to the members who made tree ornaments, decorated our Giving Tree, USDAR for wrapping stocking gifts, the members who sorted and checked gifts and those who delivered gifts and food to the families.

Once again Countryside Presbyterian Church has made an enormous difference at Christmas for these five local families. Thank you for your continued support and overwhelming generosity.

John Bain and John Berry (JB²)

MEMBERSHIP

The membership committee has been working with the Worship and Music Committee to start a Contemporary Service. It was decided to start the Contemporary Service during Lent. The service will be at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday. More details will be available in the February Courier. If there is anyone in the congregation who plays guitar, and would volunteer to play at the Contemporary Service, please let either Linda Peters or Arthur Burditt know.

The membership committee has been presenting mugs to first time visitors. We have gone to the visitor’s home and given them a mug to welcome them to Countryside.

We are going to have a special offering on January 22, 2023, to help pay the postage for postcards to send to people who have moved into the area. This is a good way to let the people in our neighborhoods know about Countryside Presbyterian Church. Thank you in advance for your support.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Peters and Don Faith, Co-Chairs

Countryside Presbyterian Church of Ocala Inc.
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Ocala, FL 34476
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Church Area Coordinator—Rev. Rhonda Link-Cummings 352 875-3002

Sunday at Countryside.....Worship 10:30 a.m.
Worship online at countrysideocala.org

E-mail us at
rina@countrysideocala.org, connie@countrysideocala.org

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

