

January 1, 2024

THE COUNTRYSIDE COURIER

Countryside Presbyterian Church (USA)

7768 SW Hwy. 200, Ocala, FL 34476

Tel: 352 237-4633 Fax: 352 873-3974

Sunday Traditional Worship 10:30 a.m. Contemporary Service 9:00 a.m.

Interim Pastor—Rev. Rhonda Link-Cummings

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

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



*Let the lord guide
you to great things
in
2024*

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Janet Tenhor January 2, 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

LITURGISTS FOR JANUARY—Warren Janes, Carol Melchior

USHERS FOR JANUARY—Wayne Melchior, Ann Brown, Linda Martin

SANCTUARY PREPARATION—Marie Stachnik

COMMUNION PREPARATION—Peggy Adams

GREETERS—Sally Rickolt

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

**THE OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED MONDAY, JANUARY 1, 2024 FOR NEW YEAR'S DAY AND
MONDAY, JANUARY 15, 2024, BIRTHDAY OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Classes will begin the year 2024 with the online study “Ancient Christianity” presented by Hillsdale College. The class will consist of 11 lectures, each 30 minutes long, followed by a classroom discussion period. This will take the place of a normal book study. Classes will be held in Classroom 2 on Thursdays from 3:30-4:30 and will begin on January 4, 2024. The course is free and no other material will be needed to purchase outside of notetaking material if desired. If you are interested but did not sign up, simply come to class at 3:30! We'll gladly accommodate you!

The Book Club will hold our discussion of The Lady's Mine by Francine Rivers on January 8, 2024 at 2:00 in the Choir Room. This is a change from our normal 3rd Monday of the month for the observation of Dr. King's Birthday. We will discuss and choose the next book for February. Since this will be after January, Courier will have already been printed; the February book choice will be added to the bulletin announcements for anyone who would like to participate.

Have any thoughts on Vacation Bible School? You may share them by emailing Kara Savage at kara-morey@yahoo.com or Warren Janes at wrnjns@aol.com. We have just begun our initial discussions on the topic and will continue with our monthly committee meetings. Another way to express yourself is by joining us at our next committee meeting. We meet in the Session Room on the 2nd Thursday of every month. Our next meeting will be Thursday, January 11, 2024 at 2:00.

Kara Savage and Warren Janes, Co-Chairs

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Building & Grounds - help wanted!

Building & Grounds Committee needs a hand.



No, not that kind of hand.!



We need a few Movers & Shakers. Influential people with power (actually just a little arm strength), to help us move tables and chairs. We want to compile a list of members and friends of the church who we can call or text to help us move tables and chairs in The Founders Hall for events and meetings. Also, we will set up the Chancel for concerts and the Bell Choir. Currently John Berry and John Bain (JB²) perform this work two to three times a week but with the help of just 2 - 4 other Movers, the work would only take about 30 minutes. We work usually on Tuesday morning or Wednesday morning or Saturday morning at around 9:30 a.m. With enough helpers on our call list, you would only work once a week for about 30 minutes or 45 minutes when you include coffee and donuts! Can you help with this church stewardship?

Be a **Mover & Shaker** text me, John Bain, at 804-677-5664 or email me at JBGR8SCOT@GMAIL.COM.

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 November 2023:

<i>Contributions</i>	<i>Expenses</i>
\$22,708	\$28,664

Respectfully submitted,
Kate Clayton, Finance Co-Chair

WORSHIP & MUSIC

December is one of the busiest months in the life of the church. The familiar saying, “It takes a village,” was never more relevant.

We want to take this opportunity to thank the volunteers and office staff who work tirelessly to make things run smoothly. By sharing their special gifts, they are making an important contribution in helping Countryside fulfill its mission.

A special thank you to Raúl and all those who provided us with the music for our weekly services and especially for all the extra work it took to bless us with a beautiful Christmas Cantata. We are happy to say that we have several new choir members and look forward to what they have planned for us in the upcoming year.

We would also like to thank Pastor Rhonda for working with us and for keeping us focused on our ultimate mission which is to follow our Lord Jesus Christ in all things.

So now, as we begin the New Year, we must renew, revitalize, and re-establish the health and vitality of our church ministry. To do this will need YOUR help. Please prayerfully consider saying YES when we ask.

We have all enjoyed the beautiful greens and flowers in both The Founders Hall and the sanctuary but on January 7 we will be taking them down and packing them away until next year. Please plan to help after either service respectively.

The annual Countryside Faire is scheduled to take place on February 10. The items sold at the Faire and several weeks in advance are stored in The Founders Hall. That being the case, the Contemporary Service will take place in the Sanctuary on January 21, January 28 and February 4. Please mark your calendars accordingly.

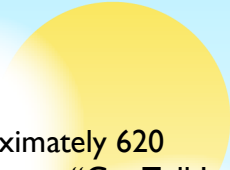
Ephesians 4:16 From Him (Christ) the whole body, joined and held together by supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

So, in the coming year may we prioritize “goodwill” and promote “a culture of kindness” and a “spirit of giving.”

May the Lord bless each of you with a Happy and Healthy New Year

In Christ.
Warren Janes and Ken Jacob

COUNTRYSIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SUNDAY AFTERNOON ARTS CONCERTS



The Central Florida Master Choir never disappoints! On December 10 approximately 620 guests gathered in the Countryside sanctuary to listen to the Master Choir present “Go, Tell It on the Mountain!” Dr. Harold McSwain is the conductor, and GayLyn Capitano is the accompanist. A highlight of the program was “Fantasia on Christmas Carols” with baritone Bud Meadows and soprano Jennifer Foster performing the solos. Jennifer eloquently ended the program with “O Holy Night.” We look forward to The CF Master Choir returning to Countryside on April 21, 2024 for the annual Spring concert!

Countryside welcomes back the “Amazing” Steel Drums for its January 14, 2024 Sunday concert at 3:00 p.m. This band, which originated with Sue and Ed Messer, performs as a full steel pan orchestra. The pans are made from 55 gallon steel drums and are locally handcrafted by Tom Reynolds, originally a native of St. Croix. The ensemble is part of the Good Spirit Foundation, a 401 (C) (3) charitable organization that provides summer camps to young people who are trained to play the instruments as an opportunity to learn about music as well as the values of practice, perseverance and performance. This will be an afternoon of islands and sunshine!

The congregation appreciates the Countryside Presbyterian Church Choir and director Raúl Ramírez for their beautiful presentation of The Christmas Cantata: “A Child, A King” on December 10 during the 10:30 service. Thank you.

Grace Dunlevy chairs the concert series, and John Bain oversees the setup and ushers.

Submitted by Sally Zarnowiec

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Ushers Needed
We are in serious need of additional ushers.
Can you help?

WHAT YOU GET: TWO RESERVED SEATS

**WHAT YOU GIVE: PROVIDING A SAFE AND COMFORTABLE EXPERIENCE FOR THE CONGREGATION.
YOUR DEDICATION, LOVE, TIME AND ENERGY.**

HOW YOU SERVE: WELCOME PEOPLE AS THEY ENTER THE CHURCH.

IF YOU CAN HELP, PLEASE CONTACT ANN BROWN AT 404/790-2891 OR WAYNE MELCHIOR AT 410/967-4141 OR SIGN UP ON THE CHART IN THE NARTHEX.

ANNUAL COUNTRYSIDE FAIRE

Plans are underway for the annual Countryside Faire which is scheduled for February 10, 2023.

As the saying goes “Many hands make for light work.” We need workers in all areas. Each department (such as books) works as a team to sort, organize, display, and price the items. Please let us know if you are willing to help.

We will begin accepting donations from January 15 (yes, it’s a holiday) through February 2 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. We 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!

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 we 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!

FAIRE COMMITTEE

STEWARDSHIP

JANUARY 2024

RAMBLINGS

It is simply amazing how time flies by. Sixty years ago, I left college to enter flight training in Pensacola. Thirty-eight years ago, I retired from the Navy. Twenty-four years ago, we all were fretting that our computers would stop working. Yes, time does fly by. Good grief, 2024 is here.

My mom had a painting of Jesus that hung on our wall in every house that we lived in. It simply said, **“Only one life will soon be past, only what’s done for Christ will last.”** I will never forget that picture and its message.

The message here is that we all need to do more for the church. Consider serving on one of our standing committees. I have served as the Stewardship chair with only Linda Peters assisting me with proofing my articles for grammatical errors. This year Dale Ambler has agreed to supply me with ideas to write about. For example, just a few days ago he asked me if I purchased lottery tickets in hopes of winning and paying off the mortgage on our church. Well, I do and so do some other church members. His response was that we the congregation are the lottery.

The church membership and guests (the new word replacing visitor) are our largest source of income. Our pledges are essential. We do hold our Countryside Faire (flea market), and this year expanding to two Arts and Crafts Show. Our Christmas dinner and auction, and other special events bring in income. However, we need more special events. If you know of any special event in a prior church that you participated in, let us know. By suggesting one, you are not going to be responsible for organizing one, only if you wanted to do so.

Membership is a very important committee in the church. Like most committees it meets once a month. Whether we serve on the committee or not we are all part of the committee’s program. Every member should be letting their friends and neighbors know about our church and inviting them to attend a Sunday service. Our Easter and Christmas Cantata or Christmas Eve service are great ways to introduce our friends/neighbors to our beautiful church and our programs. Bring someone to our monthly luncheons and other special events.

Building and Grounds is always looking for team members, especially members that are not intimidated with plumbing, painting, and yard work. The B&G is a very social group and consume lots of coffee and pastry on their workdays. Before I started helping the committee I weighed 189 pounds, now, well we don’t have to go there. We especially love pick-up truck owners.

Christian Ed, Finance Mission, Worship and Music and Finance all can use help. Check the back of the Sunday Bulletin to see who the chairs are and let them know of your interest. Greeters and Ushers are essential for the Sunday services as are the Video Booth folks. They help you to get to know our membership.

I will close this rambling with a thought. The more you are involved in the church the more you will feel that our church has become family to you.

Happy New Year and may it be a very safe and healthy year for all.

Blessings,

John Redden
Stewardship Co-Chair

FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship events are a great way to get to know your church family better and develop friendships. Thank you for attending the many events we hosted this fall. Here's a recap of November and December Dinners:

We held our first **Thanksgiving Dinner** on November 18 and nearly 80 folks came. Our Love offering goal was \$500 and thanks to your generosity for a delicious turkey dinner with all the trimmings, you donated \$907!!!

Our annual **Christmas Potluck Dinner and Gift Auction** was held December 6, with almost 60 attending. With your delicious potluck dishes and desserts and the ham provided by our committee, we enjoyed a fabulous dinner. The best part, though, through your generous bidding and buying gifts that folks brought, you raised \$1488.05!!

Proceeds from both these events were added to the general fund for the church.

We hope you'll continue attending our monthly lunches at noon on the second Wednesday, January 10, February 14, March 13, continuing through May. We're also planning a **chili cook off dinner** in the coming months, so start perfecting your recipes!

SHARE YOUR HOSPITALITY TALENTS

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 9 a.m. service and after 10:30 a.m. service every Sunday. It takes several 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. You **don't** have to serve every week. Call John or Tari with any questions.

John Berry and Tari Ambler, Co-Chairs



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COUNTRYSIDE LUNCH MEETINGS

(Organized by your Fellowship Committee)



Please join us for the Countryside Lunch meeting on **Wednesday January 10 at 12 noon**. Our own Karen Titus will give an informative presentation on genealogy. Last sign-up day is January 7. The lunch is catered and the cost is \$10 per person.

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

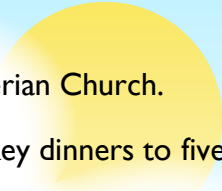
Sat

**JANUARY
2024**



1 New Year's Day Office Closed	2 9:00 Bldg. &Grounds 6:00 Master Choir	3 10:00 Al Anon Mtg.	4 3:30 Christian Ed Class Online Course 6:00 Girl Scouts	5	6 9:00 Bldg. &Grounds Epiphany of the Lord	
7 9:00 Contemporary Service 10:30 Traditional Worship Online Service Baptism of the Lord	8 2:00 Book Club	9 9:00 Bldg. & Grounds 10:00 Fellowship 1:00 Mission Committee 6:00 Master Choir	10 10:00 Al Anon Mtg. 10:00 Worship & Music Mtg. 12:00 Countryside Lunch 5:45 JB Ranch 6:00 Line Dance Social	11 2:00 Christian Ed Com. 3:30 Christian Ed Class Online Course 7:00 Southern Express Band	12	13 9:00 Bldg. &Grounds
14 9:00 Contemporary Service 10:30 Traditional Worship Online Service 3:00 Concert	15 Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. Office Closed	16 9:00 Bldg. &Grounds 6:00 Master Choir	17 9:30 Membership Meeting 10:00 Al Anon Mtg.	18 1:00 Crafty Christians 3:30 Christian Ed Class Online Course 6:00 Girl Scouts	19	20 8:30 DAR Mtg. 9:00 Bldg. &Grounds 10:00 Countryside Farms
21 9:00 Contemporary Service 10:30 Traditional Worship Online Service Congregational & Corporate Meeting	22	23 9:00 Bldg. &Grounds 6:00 Master Choir	24 10:00 PNC Meeting 10:00 Al Anon Mtg. 11:00 Finance Mtg. 1:30 Bell Choir 3:00 Praise Team 3:30 Chancel Choir	25 10:00 Session Meeting 3:30 Christian Ed Class Online Course 7:00 Southern Express Band	26 Wedding Rehearsal	27 9:00 Bldg. &Grounds 2:00 Wedding in Sanctuary
28 9:00 Contemporary Service 10:30 Traditional Worship Online Service	29	30 9:00 Bldg. &Grounds 6:00 Master Choir	31 10:00 Al Anon Mtg. 1:30 Bell Choir 3:00 Praise Team 3:30 Chancel Choir	Line Dance Instructions Each Thursday 1-3 p.m. Intermed. 3-4 p.m. Improver 4-5 p.m. Beginner (none during Craft Faire Setup)		

MISSION COMMITTEE



As we begin this New Year, may God bless the Mission activities at Countryside Presbyterian Church.

In December the Giving Tree Mission gave many gifts, stockings, and the makings for turkey dinners to five families in the Ocala area.

Our December food offering, dessert items, so far totaled 247.

Here is a note from Interfaith Emergency Services:

“Dear Friends,

On behalf of our clients on the receiving end of your kindness, please accept our sincere thanks for your gifts to support the ministry of Interfaith.

With God’s blessing and your help, we offer hope to those struggling to keep up during these uncertain times. Thank you for being in integral part of this important work, and you have our commitment to do our best to be good stewards of your gift.”



JANUARY FOOD ITEMS

Hot and Cold Cereal



We always welcome new volunteers to join our committee.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, January 9 2024, at 1 p.m. We’ll save you a seat.

What will “Mission Possible” do in 2024? It’s all up to you.

Thank you for caring.

Sue Jones and Kara Savage, Co-chairs

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MEMBERSHIP

We hope you enjoyed your Christmas with family and friends. As we start the New Year 2024, we also hope you take the opportunity to greet your church family when you attend worship services or church events in January. There are also new church members to greet; please say hello and give them a good Countryside welcome:

- Jack Alderton
- Tom and Susan Cherubino
- Raúl Ramirez (our Music Director)
- Roy and Betty Russell

Attendance at Worship Services in November and December can always be improved upon, so please remember to sign in on the black folders on each pew and help us keep accurate attendance records. Unfortunately, we do not know how many members are watching the 10:30 a.m. Sunday Service online at home. We would like to know, so please send me an email to jbgr8scot@gmail.com just to say “I watched the Sunday Service.”

God bless and be safe as we start our “Florida” winter season.

John Bain & Ken Jacob



“Merry Christmas!!

Thank you all so much for your thoughtfulness and kindness to me not only at Christmas, but all year long! It’s a blessing and gift to serve you guys through cleaning the facilities.

Blessings to you all and may you have a Jesus filled New Year!”

~ Chelsea Davison



*And Connie, Raúl, and I would also like to **thank everyone so much** for the spectacular gifts, cards, and good wishes received! It’s a warm and wonderful feeling.*

Countryside, you are the best!!!

Please have a Happy and Blessed New Year!!!

~Rina, Connie, Raúl

2022 “GIVING TREE” MISSION

Once again, the Giving Tree Mission For 2023 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 19 with tree ornaments and gift sign-ups and ended on December 21 and 22 when all five very appreciative families received your gifts. This year’s Giving Tree included a total of 21 children, with ages ranging from 3 to 15 years old, and 9 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 \$200 to help them start the New Year with more groceries.



The committee members of Building & Grounds and Missions wish to thank the congregation and other friends of the church for their participation in this year’s Giving Tree. Thanks also go to the Crafty Christians ladies who made the Giving Tree ornaments, made embroidered stockings and produced a soft pillow toy for each child. Thanks also to ladies of the Rainbow River Chapter of US Daughters of the Revolution for wrapping many stocking gifts and the others members and friends of Countryside who sorted and checked gifts, then finally delivered them with the food items to each 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)