

February 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 352 875-3002

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

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



*May the light of this
day gain you divine
grace.*

2/14/24

*Ash Wednesday
Service 12 Noon*

*1st Sunday in Lent
2/18/24*

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

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

LITURGIST FOR FEBRUARY—Kate Clayton

USHERS FOR FEBRUARY—Wayne Melchior, Ann Brown, Linda Martin, Sandy Stearns

SANCTUARY PREPARATION—Peggy Adams

COMMUNION PREPARATION—Deanna Smith

GREETERS—Sally Rickolt, Yvonne DiPiazza, Kim DiPiazza

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

The office will be closed Monday, February 19, 2024, Presidents' Day.

Come to The Countryside Faire—see page 5 of this Courier.

And watch for the February 11 Sunday Bulletin Insert on the March 9 Craft Faire!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Christian Education is well into our study, “Ancient Christianity,” presented by Hillsdale College. We have enjoyed getting together and watching the lecture videos and then finishing with our own discussion of what we learned. It is never too late to join us if you are interested. There is no need to sign up, simply come to class at 3:30! We meet every Thursday in the Choir Room. If you want to catch up on missed lectures, or you prefer to learn at home, the website for the course is online.hillsdale.edu/courses/ancient-christianity. The course is free; however; you will need to register with your email information.

Once again, the next Book Club gathering falls on a national holiday! Since the church will be closed to honor Presidents’ Day, we have decided to meet at one of our local restaurants (Starbucks 2 p.m.) to discuss our next read, The Saints of Swallow Hill, by Donna Everhart. If you are a fan of Where the Crawdads Sing, you will also fall in love with this novel set in the turpentine camps and pine forests of the American South during the Great Depression. The characters take us on a journey intersecting their lives through friendship, survival, and hope. If you are interested in joining us, check the weekly Sunday bulletin for updates or text or email Kara Savage at 407-340-3375/ karamorey@yahoo.com.

Have any thoughts on Vacation Bible School? You may share them by emailing Kara Savage at karamorey@yahoo.com or Warren Janes at wrrnjns@aol.com. We have begun our discussions on the theme and dates 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, February 15, 2024 at 2:00.

Kara Savage and Warren Janes, Co-Chairs

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CHURCH OFFICERS ELECTION RESULTS (ELECTED AT JANUARY 21, 2024 SERVICE)



- PRESIDENT: JOHN REDDEN**
- VICE PRESIDENT: WARREN JANES**
- SECRETARY: SUSAN JONES**
- TREASURER: KATE CLAYTON**

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While reading a novel recently I came across the third verse of the Britain National Anthem.

I thought it would be meaningful to show it here.

Rina

*Not in this land alone,
But be God's mercies known,
From shore to shore!
Lord make the nations see,
That men should brothers be,
And form one family,
The wide world ov'er*

REPORT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE



The Church's financial results for December 2023 are:

Contributions/Fund Raisers	Expenses
\$33,468	\$28,249



We had a good December where for the first time since early in 2023 our income from contributions and fund raisers exceeded our expenses. This was helped by some generous year-end donations as well as the two extra services we had in December – a fifth Sunday and Christmas Eve. Let's continue as we enter 2024.

Additionally, if anyone has any questions regarding the Budget approved by the Session for 2024 which was presented at the Congregational Meeting, including the year-end results for 2023, please feel free to email me at kateclayton@msn.com or ask me a question after the 10:30 service.

Respectfully submitted,
Kate Clayton, Finance Chair.

PNC MESSAGE TO CONGREGATION FEBRUARY 4, 2024

The budget of 2024 which was approved by Session and presented to the congregation on January 21 at the congregational meeting reflects an inability of our church to pursue hiring a permanent pastor at the present time. As a result, the PNC will be placed on hold. However, all research and completed documents have been prepared as mandated by PCUSA and will be preserved for future use.

When our financial outlook improves to the point that we can hire a pastor, our committee will reconvene and we will continue our work.

We as a congregation and church family will continue with our outreach programs, our mission programs, fellowship and fundraisers. As always, please continue to pray for the continuation of our wonderful church.

Pastor Rhonda will continue to be our interim pastor in 2024.

If anyone has any questions, please ask any of the committee members.

Committee members are Wayne Melchior, Tari Ambler, Sue Reed, Don McCurry, John Bain, and Ginny Redden.

Thank you, and please pray for our church!

Submitted by Wayne Melchior

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

What comes to mind when you think of the month of February? Most people would say Valentine's Day which celebrates the love and affection between two people through the exchange of cards, flowers, and other gifts.

It is typically observed on February 14 each year. This year, however, February 14 has a more significant meaning as it represents the beginning of Lent. Let's see how showing love and Lent are connected.

You can show love through acts of kindness and compassion through words, deeds or even small gestures that make someone feel they have value.

Lent is a season for reflection and preparation for Easter. During Lent people sometimes focus on acts of self-discipline and various charitable activities. This shows the concept of expressing love through selfless acts.

Love can be expressed by putting the well-being of others before oneself.

Lent can involve a time of self-denial and prayer as a way of identifying with the sacrifice and love Jesus Christ showed us on the cross.

Forgiving others and reconciling differences can be a powerful expression of love.

Lent also aligns with the idea of showing our love by letting go of resentments and fostering a spirit of reconciliation.

Lastly, Lent should be a spiritual time for Christians. We can express our love towards God and our community by engaging in prayer, reflecting on one's faith and by attending religious services.

This year we are planning to have an Ash Wednesday Service on February 14 at 12:00 Noon. We will have a service on Maundy Thursday March 28 at 7:00 p.m. (communion will be served), and a Good Friday service March 29 12:00 Noon.

The Easter Cantata will be presented on Palm Sunday March 24 at 10:30 a.m.

Pastor Rhonda is making the arrangements for the Palms and crosses that are needed and for ordering Easter Lilies which will be offered to the congregation for \$15.00 each. We will be taking orders starting on March 4.

While showing love is a universal concept, Lent provides us with a specific religious context to show love through self-discipline, acts of kindness and our commitment to spiritual growth.

In Christ,

Warren Janes and Ken Jacob Co-Chairs





Countryside Country Faire

Saturday

February 10, 2024

8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

in The Founders Hall

White Elephant

Clothing/Jewelry

Books, Videos & CD's

Toys, Games, Puzzles

Tools

Crafts

Bake Sale

Refreshments available



“Amazing” Steel Drums at Countryside



Amazing! Guests clapped and swayed to island music favorites while the “Amazing” Steel Drums Ensemble performed on January 14, 2024 at Countryside Presbyterian Church’s Sunday Afternoon Art Concert Series. Fun was had by all as the full steel orchestra played “the happiest music on earth.” The concert ended with audience participation in our own very amazing patriotic songs!

The “Amazing Steel Drums Ensemble” began in 1993. All instruments are created from 55 gallon steel drums by Tom Reynolds, originally a St Croix native who now resides in Sanford, Florida. The ensemble is part of The Good Spirit Foundation, Inc., a 401c (3) charitable organization that also provides opportunities at a day camp for young people to learn the skills and discipline of playing steel drums. Anyone interested in a camp session should contact Ed or Sue Messer at 352-726-7531.

There will NOT be a concert in February. Please join us for the Countryside Country Faire (yard sale) at the church on Saturday, February 10! This concert series will RESUME on March 10 with the Ocala Youth Symphony performing.

Much appreciation to Grace Dunlevy for chairing the concert series and John Bain for organization and setup the day of the concert.

Submitted by Sally Zarnowiec



LET THERE BE CEREAL!
GOOD JOB COUNTRYSIDE!

It bears repeating....
It is not
Founders Hall
Founder’s Hall
Founders’ Hall
The Founder’s Hall
The Founders’ Hall

As voted by The Session at work in the first decade of the 21st century, **it is:**

The Founders Hall

Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. ²Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— ³if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

1 Peter 2:1-3





FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE



Chili Dinner and Cook-Off
4:00 PM Saturday, February 24, 2024

WHO SHOULD COME: All are welcome. We need chili chefs and chili eaters.

WHAT TO BRING: Not everyone has to bring chili, but we welcome you to bring your favorite recipe, which will be tasted by those attending. Bring your 5-6 quart crockpot full of chili. This can be any variety of meat chili, vegetarian chili, white chili or any other kind you like. You must bring a small ladle and any condiments you want to serve with your chili. Fellowship committee will provide crackers, cornbread and cookies.

TASTING AND JUDGING: You can taste as many chilis as desired and then vote for your favorite.

COST: This event doesn't have a ticket price, but we will be accepting your LOVE offering that night.

SIGN UP: February 4, 11, 18. Let us know if you're bringing chili and what type or if you are attending as a chili eater.

Fellowship events are a great way to get to know your church family better and develop friendships. Here are a few events we have planned for the few months ahead:

We'll hold our Café for breakfast treats and light lunch during the Faire on February 10 and the Craft Faire on March 9.

We hope you'll continue attending our monthly lunches at noon on the second Wednesday, starting March 13, continuing through May.

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)



No lunch this month due to The Countryside Faire. Join us on March 13 at 12 Noon; our guest speaker to be advised.

The lunch is catered and the cost is \$10 per person.

Sun

Mon

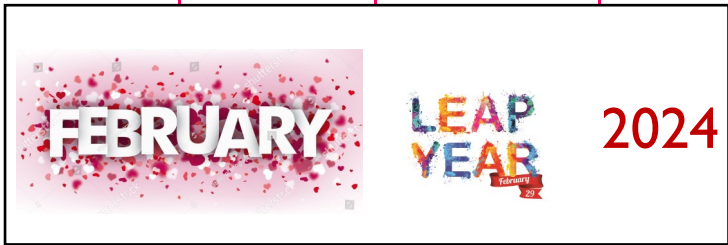
Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat



1

3:30 Christian Ed Class
Online Course(5)
7:00 Southern Express
Band

2

3

9:00 Bldg.
&Grounds
**Lions Club in
parking lot**
Fall Stated Meeting
of Presbytery
Montgomery Center
9:30 a.m.

4

9:00 Contemporary
Service
10:30 Traditional
Worship
Online Service

5

6

9:00 Bldg. &Grounds
10:00 Fellowship
6:00 Master Choir

7

10:00 Al Anon Mtg.
1:30 Bell Choir
3:00 Praise Team
3:30 Chancel Choir

8

3:30 Christian Ed Class
Online Course(6)

9

10

COUNTRYSIDE-
ANNUAL FAIRE
8:00 A.M. -
1:00 P.M.

11

9:00 Contemporary
Service
10:30 Traditional
Worship
Online Service

Transfiguration of
the Lord

12

13

9:00 Bldg. & Grounds
1:00 Mission
Committee
6:00 Master Choir

14

10:00 Al Anon Mtg.
10:00 Worship &
Music Mtg.
**Ash Wednesday
Service 12 Noon**
1:30 Bell Choir
3:00 Praise Team
3:30 Chancel Choir

15

1:00 Crafty Christians
2:00 Christian Ed
Committee
3:30 Christian Ed
Class Online
Course(7)
6:00 Girl Scouts
7:00 Southern Express
Band

16

17

8:30 DAR Mtg.
9:00 Bldg.
&Grounds
**10:00 Countryside
Farms**

18

9:00 Contemporary
Service
10:30 Traditional
Worship
Online Service
1st Sunday in Lent
Blood Drive

19

2:00 Book Club
at Starbucks

Presidents' Day
Office Closed

20

9:00 Bldg. &Grounds
11:00 Shepherds' Mtg.
6:00 Master Choir

21

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

22

10:00 Session Meeting
3:30 Christian Ed Class
Online Course(8)

Line Dancing
Lessons***

23

10:00 PNC Mtg.

24

9:00 Bldg.
&Grounds

4:00 Chili Dinner
and Cook-off

25

9:00 Contemporary
Service
10:30 Traditional
Worship
Online Service

2nd Sunday in Lent

16

27

9:00 Bldg. &Grounds
6:00 Master Choir

28

10:00 Al Anon Mtg.
1:30 Bell Choir
3:00 Praise Team
3:30 Chancel Choir
6:00 :Line Dance
Social

29

3:30 Christian Ed Class
Online Course(9)
6:00 Girl Scouts

Line Dancing
Lessons***

***Line Dance Lessons Start Again
on 2/22/24

1:00 Intermediate Plus
2:00 Intermediate
4:00 Improver

MISSION COMMITTEE

Overall Monthly December Mission Donations

344 dessert items, clothing, food, personal care and backpack foods.

In the Crafty Christians arena, the emphasis is on making pillowcases for hospice.

February: Soups and Stews

Welcome to one of the busiest Mission Committee months of the year. We have many events you can be part of doing. So go and get your calendars...



We start with collecting soups for the February donations. This is the “Souper Bowl” of Super Bowls. Any type of soup will be gratefully appreciated, especially during some of our 39 degrees “warm” Florida weather. Just fill up our soup stadium tables.



Our next endeavor centers around the Countryside Yard Sale. Just say to yourself, as you go through your closets, “Will I really ever use this item?” If not, then donate it to the yard sale! The yard sale has been an excellent way to contribute to our church. It also brings in many visitors to meet our church family.

2023 Mission Giving

Due to the generosity of Countryside Members and Guests, a total of **\$7,736 supported local missions here in Ocala and around the world.** Additionally, **2,816 items were donated to Interfaith** (includes food items, backpack, school supplies, socks, and Crafty Christians items). Thank you so much.

Hunger Offering. \$4,690.00. 1/2 to interfaith Food Bank and 1/2 to Presbytery for World Hunger.

One Great Hour of Sharing. \$200.00 to Presbytery.

Pentecost Offering. \$815.00. \$326.00 to Montgomery Camp for youth and \$489.00 to Presbytery.

Ocala Prescription Assistance Program. \$492.00 to Interfaith.

Global Peacemaking. \$501.00. \$200.00 to Boys and Girls Club of Ocala and \$301.00 to Presbytery.

Joy Offering. \$1,038.00 to Presbytery.

Let’s keep our “Mission Possible” going.....

Thank You for Caring.

Sue Jones and Kara Savage, Co-chairs, Mission Committee.

MEMBERSHIP



Next Gathering of Countryside Shepherds



The next meeting of the Countryside Shepherds will be **on Tuesday, February 20, at 11:00 a.m. in The Founders Hall.** We want to thank our Shepherds for your continued support of this ministry and the membership. We will receive your feedback on this ministry’s goals and any concerns your neighborhood flock may have. There are new revisions to the membership rolls, and we will provide those changes to update your shepherd lists. A light lunch and refreshments will be provided. Shepherds, please look for more information by email a week before the meeting. If members of Countryside would like more information on the Shepherding Mission, or would like to join the Shepherds Group, please contact John Bain at 804-677-5664.

Attendance at Worship Services in January can always be improved upon, so please remember to add your name to the attendance sheet in the black folders on each pew. This will help us keep accurate attendance records.

God bless and be safe.
John Bain & Ken Jacob
(Co-chairs of Membership)

Did You Know?

- ◇ That February 4 is Presbyterian Media Sunday. “We celebrate publishing in the PC(USA) in the service of truth, justice and peace, through news, information and inspiration found in printed and digital magazines, books, curricula, videos, websites, social media and other resources. This special day is meant to encourage Presbyterians to access sound news coverage and commentary and give them resources to see the world through eyes of faith and stimulate discussion and engagement.”
- ◇ That on February 4 we Remember our Chaplains—Presbyterian Federal Chaplaincies. Military chaplains are ministers of the Word and Sacrament providing pastoral care, spiritual counsel, and moral advice to those in military service and their families. **The PC(USA) has more than 150 teaching elders serving as chaplains in our federal institutions.**
- ◇ That February 18 is Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Blue T-Shirt Sunday—The first Sunday in Lent is designated “Wear your blue T-shirt to church Sunday,” as a testament to one of the ways One Great Hour of Sharing makes a difference. Be creative—wear a blue shirt, blue hat or blue flowers.

