



**NOVEMBER
DECEMBER
2020**

**Banks
Community
United Methodist
Church**

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Banks, OR 97106



**PASTOR'S
COLUMN**

And He (Jesus) was also saying to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, 'A shower is coming,' and so it turns out. And when you see a south wind blowing, you say, 'It will be a hot day,' and it turns out that way... You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, but why do you not analyze this present time? (Luke 12:54-36 NASB)

The weather services are predicting that we will see la nina conditions this winter. That could mean that cooler ocean waters will generate a colder, wetter season than our usual mild Northwest temperatures and rain. The most recent strong la nina effect was in the winter of 2017-2018. If I remember correctly, we had about seven inches of snow at one point. We can often look at the sky and predict whether we should take a raincoat that day

or not. Personally, I look at the weather forecast often during the day. I want to know the predicted high temperature and the air quality as the day wears on. In Palestine, it is just as Jesus told the crowds in the Scripture passage here: When the wind is from the south, it is blowing from the Sinai Peninsula — always warmer than wind from the north. Moisture most often reaches the Holy Land from the Mediterranean coast, so a cloud in the west means it will rain.

But, Jesus is not speaking about air temperature or rain. He is discussing the signs of the time in which the people of Palestine find themselves. In the larger context of this chapter of the Gospel of Luke, He is describing the coming of the kingdom when all things and all peoples will be judged. He points out in an earlier verses (35-53) that His faithful followers must be ready to rise and meet the Master at any hour of the day or night. He speaks of the urgency of putting

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our affairs in order, getting rid of surplus belongings, and laying up treasure in heaven, not on earth. Jesus' teaching about "analyzing the present time" applies to us as much as to his hearers then in the 1st century. He has told them that the fact of Christ coming into the world causes divisions among societies, groups and even families. As Jesus faces his own execution, He is concerned for his disciples. He wants us to be prepared for the sudden fulfillment of His kingdom. He accurately predicts that His ultimate sacrifice will be like "casting fire upon the earth." It was the greatest turning point in the history of our world — even in the history of the universe.

Just as many of us packed a "go" bag during the smoky days of the west coast forest fires, we are to be spiritually prepared to move when the Lord calls us. He lovingly warns us to watch for signs of the culmination of history at His return. We can easily grow drowsy and forget that all things are moving toward a meaningful end. Our lives have purpose in Jesus Christ.

Year-end is often a time when we step aside and ponder larger issues. As we sit by the fire, let us read the story at the end of the Bible. It is St. John's vision of the fulfillment of the Kingdom of Christ. We each have a place in that scene. We will go out to meet the Master, and He will establish His eternal rule immediately. Come, Lord Jesus.

Blessings,
Pastor Margot

LIVE STREAMING THE FAITH GATHERING

Small Faith Gatherings are held on Sundays at 9 AM & 10 AM. These are limited to 10 people only. For those of you who are interested in "attending" the 10 AM gathering by video these are available on both Face book and You tube. To view them live you will need an account on one or both of these sights and to subscribe to the BCUMC pages on them. This does not cost anything.

If you prefer not to set up an account, you can view the videos after the service as links to them are sent out via email as soon as they are available on Sunday mornings. The links are also posted on the BCUMC website (<https://bankscommunityumc.org>) and are updated every Sunday.



Transportation services out in West Washington County will be expanding soon!

These (free) Ride Connection services are expanding:

- WestLink (the bus which links Forest Grove, Banks, North Plains and Hillsboro)
- The Rural General Public Service Door to Door Service (which links people in rural locations of Washington County to areas within transit).

Ride Connection would like to thank the community and riders who provided the feedback which helped plan these expansions.

Please visit <https://rideconnection.org/washcoexpansion> to see the expansion plans and let us know what you think!

CALENDAR FOR NOVEMBER/DECEMBER:

For Now - most group activities are on hold. We'll let you know when we can gather again. So stay well and visit with each other via phone, face time or zoom.

Thurs., Nov. 26: Thanksgiving Day

Sun., Nov. 29: First Sunday in Advent

Sun., Dec. 6: Second Sunday in Advent

Sun., Dec. 13: Third Sunday in Advent

Sun., Dec. 20: Fourth Sunday in Advent

Thurs., Dec. 24: Christmas Eve; Small Faith Gathering at 7 PM

Fri., Dec. 25: Merry Christmas

Sundays: 9:00 AM & 10:00 AM - Small Faith Gatherings (Limited to 10 attendees at each time) at the church. If you would like to attend, please contact Pastor Margot to see if there is a space for you.

Mondays: 7:00 PM - You are invited to a continuing study of the *Letter to the Colossians!* Pastor Margot will send a link via email to the Zoom Bible Study each Monday. If you are not a Zoom subscriber, you can copy and paste the link into your browser. Please have your Bible and bring your voice to be part of this informal Bible Study.

November

11/06 Laurelen Jabbour

11/14 Ane Fonua

11/30 Jeannie Cochran

December

12/07 Sarah Boswell

12/13 Julian Medinger

12/16 Dianne Harrang

12/23 Helen Schuman

12/31 Don Bake



JEANNE COCHRANE

Jeanne Cochran has been moved to Rainbows End Adult Foster Care Home in Forest Grove.

Please keep Jeanne Cochran in your prayers as she has dislocated ankle. Jill asked that cards be sent to Rainbows End. Address to :

Jeanne Cochran
3352 Edgeview Lane
Forest Grove, OR 97116

Just a reminder - Jeanne's 95th birthday is November 30.



HELEN SCHUMAN

For those who wish to send cards and notes, reach Helen at:

Avamere at Hillsboro
650 SE Oak St.
Hillsboro, Or. 97123

Helen's birthday is December 23rd.

EMERGING FROM THE WATER

Rev. Dexter Danielson (Ret. Chaplain)

The last several months of caring for my mother, Marcelle, with hospice and then her death on August 17th felt to me like having been underwater. My senses were numbed to the outside world and I dealt with only the necessities of life. Since that day I have felt a re-emerging into the world outside. Even with all the pain, suffering, unrest, and fear in our world today I now look to each day with confidence.

I have in my ministry encountered many deaths, some six hundred is my calculation, I have encountered most of these on the heels of first responders; EMT/Firefighters and Police, some sixty times a year, whether from natural or violent means, grief is involved that brings pain and heartache.

Grief and mourning are a universal experience in the death of loved ones, bringing with it much emotional pain and I, with all my experiencing of it, am not immune, as is no one. Let me offer some insight into dealing with the pain of grief in our common human experience; Insights I have gleaned from observation, training, and personal experience.

Know that following the death of a loved one it takes time for the pain to stop, in a few hours or even days, sometimes months

following, the answers to difficult questions are not available nor are there cures for the pain. Acknowledge powerlessness to know the answers for the many grieving questions as to why...? This is especially true in sudden unexpected death. Most often the answer to the questions "why" is an answer we do not have.

Realize the response of a loved one can be variable and erratic; sometimes in ways that we cannot imagine. Anger, hysteria, physical

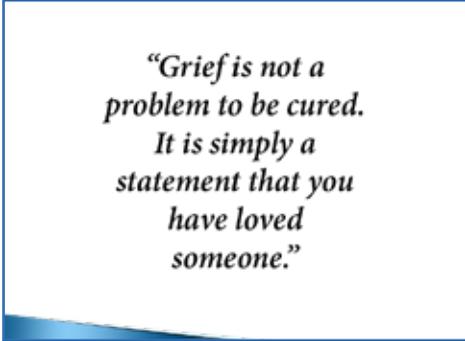
outbursts, apathy and non-communicative are just a few; being allowed time and space to vent these reactions safely is important.

Do not try to "argue" them out of these thoughts but reassure them that they did all they could, and self-

guilt is not healthful. The coping mechanism we have vary according to the individual, the situation and the shock can be numbing. Listening is the key.

What are some of the things you can do practically to help in the first hours?

- Help make some of the important phone calls to let other friends and family know, over and over I have seen the importance of doing this for the grieving loved ones.
- Stay with the person, arrange that they are not alone for the first one to two days. Be present but not smothering is key.
- Very few real decisions need to be made



*"Grief is not a
problem to be cured.
It is simply a
statement that you
have loved
someone."*

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for in the first few hours and the mortuary selected can be extremely helpful in this.

- Set-up a meal plan for friends and family to bring meals for them for several days. The last thing they want to do is prepare meals which is vital to their health in these occasions.

Consider what you can do make it easier and lessen the impact of grief on your loved ones in event of your death (yes, it is inescapable for all of us).

A will, a power of attorney, a directive for type of services desired and very importantly what are your wishes for disposition of your body, burial, cremation, other (you would be surprised how many people had not even discussed this with family and loved ones). Designate a mortuary you wish to handle those final details and even consider purchasing a pre-paid service plan from the mortuary, some are very reasonably priced.

Emerging from the waters of grief takes time but those who surround the grieving family and loved ones in a matter of a few hours can make a long-term impact on how the person handles grief in the months and years ahead.

Nancy and I would like to thank all those who have sent the kind notes of encouragement and cards, they are deeply appreciated.

(Note: I have 40 copies of an excellent book on grief; "Good-bye, for now" by Welby O'Brien. She has a master's in counseling and bachelor's in teaching and has been a conference speaker

and lecturer at seminars on grief. Welby has written a guide that is very practical and easy to understand no matter whether you are experiencing grief or want to know how to help a friend. She provided these free to me and I will give them free to anyone who might like one, first come first serve. Let me know at email: chapddd@gmail.com or call 503-312-2361 and I will get one to you.)

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

EACH DAY ADD AN ITEM TO A BOX.
ON CHRISTMAS EVE DONATE THE CONTENTS TO A
FOOD BANK.

December 1 - box of cereal
December 2 - peanut butter
December 3 - stuffing mix
December 4 - boxed potatoes
December 5 - macaroni and cheese
December 6 - canned fruit
December 7 - canned tomatoes
December 8 - canned tuna
December 9 - dessert mix
December 10 - jar of applesauce
December 11 - canned sweet potatoes
December 12 - cranberry sauce
December 13 - canned beans
December 14 - box of crackers
December 15 - package of rice
December 16 - package of oatmeal
December 17 - package pasta
December 18 - spaghetti sauce
December 19 - chicken noodle soup
December 20 - tomato soup
December 21 - can corn
December 22 - can mixed vegetables
December 23 - can carrots
December 24 - can green beans

PASSIONATEPENNYPINCHER.COM



I See Jesus

I saw Jesus last week.
He was wearing blue jeans and an old shirt.
He was up at the church building;
He was alone and working hard.
For just a minute he looked a little like
one of our members.
But it was Jesus . . . I could tell by his smile.

I saw Jesus last Sunday.
He was teaching a Bible class.
He didn't talk real loud or use long words,
But you could tell he believed what he said.
For just a minute, he looked like my
Bible teacher.
But it was Jesus . . . I could tell by his
loving voice.

I saw Jesus yesterday.
He was at the hospital visiting a friend
who was sick.
They prayed together quietly.
For just a minute he looked like Brother Jones.
But it was Jesus... I could tell by the
tears in his eyes.

I saw Jesus this morning.
He was in my kitchen making my breakfast
and fixing me a special lunch.
For just a minute he looked like my mom.
But it was Jesus... I could feel the love
from his heart.

I see Jesus everywhere,
Taking food to the sick ...
Welcoming others to his home, Being
friendly to a newcomer ...
And for just a minute, I think he's
someone I know.
But it's always Jesus... I can tell by the
way he serves.

May someone see Jesus in you today.

Author Unknown

Attributed to Summer Waters, age 11, New Zealand



EVERYDAY THANKSGIVING

Even though I clutch my blanket and growl when the alarm rings, thank you, Lord, that I can hear. There are many who are deaf.

Even though I keep my eyes closed against the morning light as long as possible, thank you, Lord, that I can see. Many are blind.

Even though I huddle in my bed and put off rising, thank you Lord, that I have the strength to rise. There are many who are bedridden.

Even though the first hour of my day is hectic, when socks are lost, toast is burned, and tempers are short, my children are so loud, thank you, Lord, for my family. There are many who are alone.

Even though our breakfast table never looks like the pictures in magazines and the menu is at times unbalanced, thank you, Lord, for the food we have. There are so many who are hungry.

Even though the routine of my job is often monotonous, thank you, Lord, for the opportunity to work. There are many who have no job.

Even though I grumble and bemoan my fate from day to day and wish my circumstances were not so modest, thank you, Lord, for life.

**Wear it
for each
other**

Face coverings are a way we support each other — like holding a loved one's hand when crossing the street or sharing an umbrella in the rain.

Wearing a face covering is one of the best ways we can protect our families, coworkers, neighbors and friends from COVID-19.

Let's wear it today to ensure safe, strong days ahead.



Safe +
Strong

Oregon
Health

PERILOUS PLUNGE OR LIBERATING LAUNCH? CHURCH ON THE PRECIPICE



Photo by [Nathan Shipps](#) on [Unsplash](#)

For a very long while—since well before the pandemic began, well before the tragic events of this year ripped the brittle veneer off the myth of racial equality in our country—I have been in a season of lament over the church, particularly the North American church. Just as the pandemic drags on and we grow weary of restrictions and losses, longing for the happy light at the end of the tunnel, so this season of lament has lingered, intensifying rather than waning, and I yearn for the mighty, sweeping work of the Spirit that will usher out the tears and bid welcome to the glorious wind of revival. But the great spiritual awakenings across the centuries always, without exception, have been sown in the soil of lament and repentance, so I will not rush out of this season of groaning. I am not alone; there is a great groundswell of repentance and intercession bubbling up within the church (see, for example, “Watch for Awakening” at newroomnetwork.com). And like persevering old Simeon (Luke 2), I pray that we will have the privilege of glimpsing at least the beginning of God’s wave of awakening and revival, even if only for a day, after the long-haul journey of lament.

During this season, the Holy Spirit has impressed on my spirit a vivid image of the church in our socio-cultural and historic moment. I see the church in the United States (Anglo, Latino, African American, Methodist, Baptist, Pentecostal—no variety excluded!) standing on a breath-taking precipice, a high, narrow ledge where a step in either direction will mean an unstoppable fall. On one side is a slippery plunge into the abyss of irrelevance and impotence. On the other side, however, is an exuberant, risk-taking, intentional leap of faith. That leap launches the church into the arms of the God who longs to send upon his people a wildfire of awakening, repentance, renewal, and world-changing gospel proclamation. I sense that the width of our ledge is narrowing; either we will choose—quickly, urgently, with abandon—the leap into revival, or we will inevitably plunge off the other side of the precipice.

As she perches precariously on the shrinking ledge, the church’s feet are surrounded by a welter of ropes. These ropes are attached to sin-boulders, the weighty entanglements that both threaten to propel us over the side of the precipice in a disastrous plunge and keep us from launching out into the unknown of a great awakening. One of the biggest boulders in that pile is the accumulation of small, secondary loyalties that we have allowed to shape our thinking and living. These secondary allegiances, when permitted to creep into first place, divide and separate us—from the Lord and from each other. Political and ideological, ethnic and racial, institutional and organizational, or even doctrinal and

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theological, these unrestrained subordinate loyalties become like encroaching kudzu around our feet, growing up to consume our hearts and distort our vision. People of God, we are being called to cut the ropes! If we are to fulfill our calling as the Church of Jesus Christ in our day, we must be ruthlessly honest in *acknowledging* these competing allegiances, boldly humble in *lamenting* and *repenting* of them, and radically *obedient* in removing them from the throne that is to be occupied only by the One King.

The central message and mission of Jesus—and therefore of the church—is found distilled in Mark 1:15 and repeated throughout the Gospels: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news” (NRSV). The kingdom of God has come near—it is present to us here and now; our citizenship in this kingdom is a present reality. Dear brothers and sisters, a kingdom always has a KING. And the High King whom we serve and in whom we find our unifying identity has always demanded exclusive loyalty of his subjects. When Yahweh rescued the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob from their centuries of slavery in Egypt and invited them into covenant relationship with himself, how did that covenant begin? “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery” (Exo. 20:2). The covenant is rooted in the redeeming act of God. And the very first stipulation of that covenant? “You shall have no other gods before me” (Ex. 20:3). One rescue, one redemption, one King, one allegiance.

And what proved to be Israel’s besetting sin, her greatest failure? The exaltation of other small allegiances onto the throne that belonged exclusively to Yahweh. And so the voice of God comes over and over again through the prophets, exposing Israel’s divided loyalties for what they are, a stunning rejection of the covenant. In Jeremiah, we hear the Lord’s incredulous assessment of Israel’s devastating foolishness: “Cross to the coasts of Cyprus and look, send to Kedar and examine with care; see if there has ever been such a thing. [*Implied: Of course there has never been such a thing, it’s too ridiculous to contemplate!*] Has a nation changed its gods, even though they are no gods? But my people have changed their glory for something that does not profit” (Jer. 2:11). The Lord calls on the heavens to be shocked, appalled, and utterly desolate as they witness Israel’s divided allegiance, and then he provides a striking visual image for Israel’s choice: “My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and dug out cisterns for themselves, cracked cisterns, that can hold no water” (v. 13). I don’t think there is a better picture in all of Scripture for the secondary loyalties we set up as “little gods”—they are nothing more than broken cisterns that cannot hold water. Yahweh has asked his people for an all-or-nothing relationship and he will not allow us to find our identity or our security in any other.

Jesus’ message of the in-breaking kingdom of God held the same consistent demand for exclusive loyalty. “You cannot serve two masters,” Jesus taught, recognizing that any attempt at dual allegiance will inevitably

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result in loving only one of those masters and hating the other, whether we are aware of the divergence or not (Matt 6:24; Luke 16:13–15). Discipleship (following Jesus) requires setting all other loyalties in subordinate roles; political, social, cultural, or even familial allegiances may not determine the scope of one's commitment to King Jesus (see, for example, Luke 9:57–62; 14:26–28). It is absolutely essential that individual believers and churches alike take a brutally honest inventory of our allegiances and priorities, because, as Glen Stassen and David Gushee remind us, “We bring into every situation in life our deepest loyalties; these are not checked at the door” (*Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context*, p. 63). If our primary loyalty is to something other than the One King and his kingdom, then our actions, attitudes, choices, and decisions will be shaped by the values of that other sovereign. “Jesus’ realism,” write Stassen and Gushee, “warns us to be aware of our loyalties and vested interests” (p. 64). Jesus repeatedly reminds us that where our treasures (highest priorities) are, there also will be our hearts (our highest loyalties; see Matt 6:19–21; Luke 12:21, 32–34).

And let us never forget the central declaration of the early church, the affirmation of singular loyalty that set the Christians apart from both Jews and Greeks. The consistent, bold “pledge of allegiance” of the primitive church was simply this: “Jesus is Lord.” And in the first-century context, in a world ruled by Rome, the clearly understood corollary to that declaration was: “And Caesar is not.” The choice remains equally stark in the

21st century. The necessary corollary to the church’s foundational declaration that “Jesus is Lord” is still: “And _____ is not.” (Fill in the blank with whatever “Caesar” holds your mind, heart, and will in its relentless grip.) We are right back where we started: “You shall have no other gods before me.”

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, the Lord’s invitation comes to us with urgency in these days. Will we *name* the other loyalties that we have allowed to become primary in our lives and in our churches? Will we humbly *repent* of the ways those misplaced allegiances have divided us and weakened our witness? With the help of the Holy Spirit, will we boldly *abandon* every last “broken cistern” and immerse ourselves in the fountain of living water? This long season of lament can birth a period of revival, awakening, and transformation—and I believe that the Lord’s purpose is to do immeasurably more than we could ask or even imagine as we pray for that outpouring (Eph. 3:20). But this will only happen to and through a church that has been purged of all secondary loyalties and whose unhindered witness proclaims that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father!

Dr. Rachel Coleman lives in Elida, Ohio. She is an adjunct instructor and course writer (Biblical Studies) for Indiana Wesleyan University, Bethel University, and Asbury Theological Seminary, and serves as the regional theological education consultant (Latin America) for One Mission Society. Rachel blogs at writepraylove660813036.wordpress.com.

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CHRISTMAS QUESTIONS

By Dave Veerman

How could you LOVE
creatures of shame
defying your word,
defiling your name?

How could you LEAVE
heavenly throne,
descending to earth
to make us your own?

How could you LIVE
here, in Mary's womb,
perfect baby, boy, man
from manger to tomb?

Overwhelmed with the truth
of your humble submission
coming in flesh
completing your mission

I ask, how can I LOVE
those far and near



praying and telling
your truth made clear?

And how can I LEAVE
comfort and ease
at Spirit's urging
just you to please?

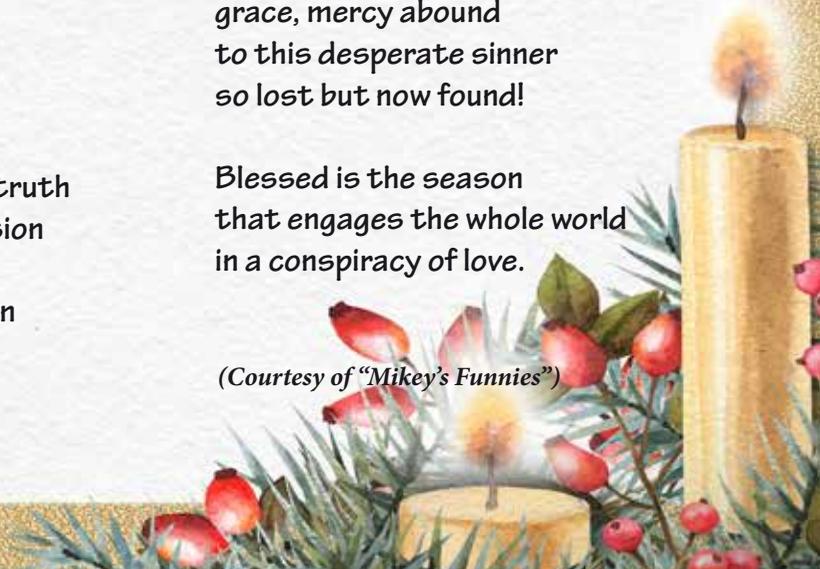
And how can I LIVE
the gospel reveal,
in values and actions,
transparent, real?

O Jesus, the Christ
incarnate Word,
crucified, risen
my Savior and Lord

Christmas reminders
grace, mercy abound
to this desperate sinner
so lost but now found!

Blessed is the season
that engages the whole world
in a conspiracy of love.

(Courtesy of "Mikey's Funnies")



RECIPE CORNER

CLASSIC FRENCH PUMPKIN SOUP

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 3 medium shallots (or substitute white portion of scallions) chopped
- 2 garlic cloves (finely chopped)
- 5 cups chicken or vegetable stock
- 1 medium pie pumpkin (around 3 pounds, peeled, de-seeded, and cubed)
- 3 large potatoes (around 2 pounds, peeled and cubed)
- 1/2 cup heavy cream or half & half
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- Salt (to taste)



Directions

Gently heat the olive oil in a large saucepan.

Add the chopped shallots or scallions and sauté until they turn slightly translucent.

Add the minced garlic and gently sauté for a few minutes more (be careful not to burn the garlic or the soup will be extremely bitter).

Add the stock, pumpkin, and potatoes to the

pan and bring to a boil.

Allow the vegetables to simmer gently for 35 to 50 minutes or until they're tender when pierced with a knife. It is important that the pumpkin is tender, or the resulting soup will be lumpy.

Puree the soup in a countertop blender, an immersion blender until it is completely smooth.

Return the soup to a large pan, place back on the heat and simmer down to reduce a little and thicken the soup.

Stir in the cream and heat through.

Season the soup with salt and pepper to your taste.

Serve immediately in hot soup bowls with a crusty baguette of French sourdough on the side.

(This soup freezes well. Let cool completely. Measure portions into freezer bags, Freeze up to three months.)

PASTOR MARGOT'S OFFICE HOURS

Banks Community UMC

- Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. - noon
1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Thursday - 10:00 a.m. - noon
1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

(At all hours, and any day Sunday through Thursday, please use her cell phone number.)

She is also available for urgent or emergency matters at all times via cell.

BANKS TELLER

All submissions to the *Banks Teller* are **DUE BY THE 15TH OF THE MONTH** preceding the month you wish it to run. The *Banks Teller* is published every two months.