

United Church family,

A few quick updates. First, I'm holding some "virtual office hours" on Zoom from noon to one today. If you'd like to join, you can click the link below. If you'd like to join by phone instead of by computer, you can dial one of the numbers below and enter the meeting ID. I hope to see and hear from you today!

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/722952624>

+1 253 215 8782 US

+1 301 715 8592 US

Meeting ID: 722 952 624

Second, this Sunday is Palm Sunday and the first Sunday of the month, when we celebrate communion together. If you've been watching the daily videos I've been posting on Facebook and YouTube, you may know that I've assigned to brief pieces of homework for everyone. Throughout history, many Christians couldn't celebrate with palms because their local climate didn't allow for palms to grow. Instead, they would grab whatever branches they could find on the ground and use those for the celebration. Because we can't distribute palms this Sunday, I invite you to head outside and find a branch or two for you to celebrate with. Take a picture or video of yourself or your family with your branch, and be prepared to post it when the right time comes in worship on Sunday. We may be apart, but we can still celebrate "Branch Sunday" together!

For communion, I invite you to find what you have on hand and have it prepared near you before worship begins. That may mean a piece of bread and a cup of grape juice, but it's OK if you don't have that normally in stock in your house. You can find whatever works for you, and you can even be creative with it. For your cup, you might use another kind of juice, or water, or even soda. For your bread, you might use a large piece of bread, or a tortilla, or a cracker of some kind. You can even get a little exotic and use milk and cookies, or chips and salsa, or waffles and syrup. I have a clergy friend who said she was ready to use donuts for her bread this week. Don't worry about whether what you have is the right thing or not; do what works for you, and we'll do the important thing by celebrating together as we remember Jesus.

We'll have a virtual coffee hour again after worship, at 11 am Sunday. It was so great to see the faces of everyone that joined us last week, and I hope we can add more this week! Until then, stay home and stay safe, and let us know how you're doing and if you need any help from the church.

Blessings,

Rev. JT Hills

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