Dear Friend
Herewith the virtual service for Sunday. The readings include Psalm 23 and Philippians 4, both rich sources of musical inspiration, and for once the problem is what to leave out!

To start with, a couple of well-known hymns to sing along to…

Charles Wesley's take on the Philippians passage, to Handel's rousing tune, sung at St Albans for Songs of Praise: Rejoice the Lord is King (Gopsal):
https://youtu.be/aDFAv0eh-s8

For the metric version of Psalm 23, sung to Crimond by the choristers at Winchester under David Hill:
https://youtu.be/kbGsIVeKU_E

Another tune, sung by the talented one-man band Acapeldridge:
https://youtu.be/lTHr9UcvWko

Of the many choral settings, I like this astringent setting of Psalm 23 by the rather neglected 20th century British composer Lennox Berkeley:
https://youtu.be/Lhu5FgwodX4

And, of course, for Dibley fans, Howard Goodall's setting, sung by Wells Cathedral choristers with lush orchestral accompaniment, conducted by Matthew Owens:
https://youtu.be/yLxdb3ov-zE

Jeannette suggested Stuart Townend's folksy setting a few weeks ago, here is a Thankyou version of it:
https://youtu.be/pN4tPkX0MG0

Returning to the Philippians passage, Purcell's setting of "Rejoyce in the Lord alway" (the Bell Anthem), is elegantly performed by Collegium Vocale Gent and Capriccio Stravagante under Skip Sempé:
https://youtu.be/y6fNcuvRbjo

And finally, a meditative piece from Martin, Blinded by Your Grace Pt 2. – Stormzy. Stormzy is the global rap superstar from London but he is a Christian and it is worth taking a listen to a surprisingly lyrical track and feel proud of a man who isn't ashamed to hide his religion and offer it to mainstream youth culture:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YsxBrb_uXNg

Enjoy!
Chris

VIRTUAL SERVICE 1.10.20; TRINITY 18

Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere? We should never be discouraged: Take it to the Lord in prayer. *Joseph Scriven.*

CONFESSION. Give us grace, dear Lord, to receive forgiveness from others when we have wronged them. Take away our pride and resentment and give us the humility and courage to accept fully and freely the forgiveness that they offer to us. We offer also for all those whom we have in any way grieved, vexed, oppressed and scandalized, by word or deed, knowingly or unknowingly; that thou mayest equally forgive us all our sins, and all our offences against each other. For Jesus' sake. *Thomas More*.

May the Father forgive us by the death of his Son and strengthen us to live in the power of the Spirit all our days. Common Worship.

COLLECT. Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us your gift of faith that, forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to that which is before, we may run the way of your commandments and win the crown of everlasting joy; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

READINGS. Isaiah 25.1-9, Psalm 23, Philippians 4.1-9, Matthew 22.1-14.

REFLECTION. It is easy to look back with a touch of envy at the freshness and energy of the early church, assuming that everything was sweetness and light between its members. However, today's passage from Paul's letter to the Christians at Philippi refers to a conflict between two members of the young church, who had worked alongside him in spreading the gospel. Wisely, Paul doesn't take sides, but appoints a mediator to arbitrate in the dispute. It's human nature to want to assert one's own views even, or perhaps especially, when trying to do work for God (church council meetings are not always frictionless). Debate is good, and we may have to "struggle", as Paul puts it, for what is right. However, he urges them, and us, to be of the same mind in the Lord, to follow Jesus' example of humility and gentleness. Where things concern us, where there is a difference of opinion, we need, in the words of the old hymn, to "take it to the Lord in prayer".

PRAYERS. Let us rejoice in the Lord; let us give thanks for the beauty of His creation, for the abundance of harvest, for the love of our families and friends, for the great privilege of being able to worship safely. We pray for the many areas of the world where religious freedom is denied.

We hold before you the leaders of this world, that they may govern with integrity and seek what is right for their peoples. We give thanks for those who actively strive for peace.

Comfort and heal the sick in mind, body or spirit, especially those who are coping with long term effects of Covid 19. We pray for those awaiting surgery, results of tests or undergoing difficult treatments.

We bring before you the many who have lost jobs or income, and who are concerned about making ends meet. We pray for households where there is increased tension, and those facing domestic abuse.

We pray for our own life of witness, that we may seek to imitate you in our dealings with others, that, in humility, we put others first.

We say the **LORD's PRAYER**
We share the **GRACE**

FINAL PRAYER. Bring to fruition, creator God, the work of your kingdom. Make us part of that joyful harvest in which your loving purpose is completed. Help us to realize how important the smallest words and deeds are in the context of eternity. At harvest time, when we remember your goodness make us grateful also for all we have received from the labour of others who have sown the seeds of faith, hope and love in our lives. *Anon*.