Dear friend
Herewith Sunday's virtual service.

Today's hymn, "The strife is o'er", sung by a virtual Episcopal choir – join in the Alleluias!
https://youtu.be/JAyi64eagTI

Picking up Mark 13. 13b, here is "He that shall endure to the end", a serene chorale from Mendelssohn's Elijah (Seattle Pro musica).
https://youtu.be/Uh4MRy902r4?list=RDUh4MRy902r4

An "Alleluia" from Taizé.
https://youtu.be/x0i5vFQwBQE?list=PLXO94X2-I17Vu6uT_LSxguqNy_coN0QJH

Eric Whitacre's "Alleluia" is a popular, meditative choral piece.
https://youtu.be/Rak_rJLG49k

Mark is sometimes portrayed as a lion, as is God, the lion of Judah. Here is a worship song on this theme from Martin; The Lion and the Lamb – Tauren Wells live from Lakewood Church, USA, (yes, this is a church, but not as we would know it). The song was written by Leeland Mooring, Brenton Brown and Brian Johnson and was initially released by Bethel Music and performed by the group, Leeland.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4tAJqEqzyZc

Happy continuation of Easter!
Chris

VIRTUAL SERVICE 25.04.21
MARK THE EVANGELIST

We give thanks, O God, for your servant John Mark, for the grace by which he triumphed over early failure, and for the inspiration by which he penned the story of the strong Son of God. Teach us through his life and writings the secret of victorious living, and deepen our faith in your redeeming love and power, made known to us in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Frank Colquhoun.

CONFESSION O God, bring new life, where we are worn and tired, new love where we have turned hard-hearted, forgiveness where we have wounded, and the joy and freedom of your Holy Spirit where we are the prisoners of ourselves. *John Bell*
The Saviour of the world, refuge of the repentant, forgives and strengthens all who truly seek his grace. He accepts us as his sons and daughters, and sets us free from the bondage of our past. For Christ died and rose to new life that we might all share his wholeness and abundant life.
(United Theological College, Bangalore).

COLLECT Almighty God, who enlightened your holy Church through the inspired witness of your evangelist Saint Mark; grant that we, being firmly grounded in the truth of the gospel, may be faithful to its teaching both in word and deed; 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 Acts 15.35-end, Psalm 119.9-16, Ephesians 4.7-16, Mark 13.5-13.

REFLECTION Although experts are divided, it seems likely that Barnabas' young cousin John Mark was the author of the first gospel to be written. In today's passage from Acts we read how Mark had deserted Paul and Barnabas in a previous missionary journey; it is not clear whether this was through fear of persecution or disagreement with Paul. Later, however, Paul appreciated Mark as "profitable to me for the ministry". Mark subsequently accompanied Peter in Rome, and Peter's oral teachings were the basis of Mark's written account. The simplicity and freshness, even clumsiness, of Mark's writing contrast with his quotations of Jesus' own teaching. From a rather shaky start, Mark displayed courage and perseverance; he has played a major role in carrying the Gospel to the world.

PRAYERS O God, we thank you for all those in whose words and in whose writings your truth has come to us. For the historians, the psalmists and the prophets, who wrote the Old Testament; for those who wrote the Gospels and the Letters of the new Testament; for all who in every generation have taught, explained, expounded and preached the word of Scripture; we thank you, O God… Grant that we may never listen to any teaching which would encourage us to think sin less serious, vice more attractive, or virtue less important. *(William Barclay)*.

We pray for your church here on earth, that we may live out and proclaim the message of your Gospel in love and humility. Guide and support our teachers and preachers, those who translate and disseminate the scriptures.

We pray for the many parts of the world where your message remains hidden or distorted, where human pride and aggression replace your self-effacing love for others.

We bring before you all who suffer physically, mentally or spiritually, the lonely, the bereaved, those in chronic pain or distress. In the silence of our hearts we pray for……

We say the **LORD'S PRAYER**
We share **THE GRACE**

FINAL PRAYER O Lord, you have given us your word for a light to shine upon our path, inspire us to meditate on that word, and to follow its teaching, that we may find in it the light that shines more and more until the perfect day, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
(St Jerome)