Dear friend,
Herewith this week's virtual service.

To start with, two traditional hymns that reflect themes from the Ephesians reading.

'God is working his purpose out', sung enthusiastically, if a tad slowly, by the Melharmonic virtual choir and instrumentalists, mostly based in Nigeria, with lyrics:
https://youtu.be/Ms9Fu-O8ZHU

'Praise my soul, the king of heaven', sung by the choir of Westminster Abbey:
https://youtu.be/sx1eMwlDFb8

For choristers, here is a rolling score for that great warhorse of the church repertoire, SS Wesley's setting of 'Blessed be the God and Father', sung by the choir of St Paul's Cathedral, based on the beginning of the Ephesians text and words from 1 Peter 1:
https://youtu.be/389leQkiGgk

'God's plumbline', words from today's passage from Amos, set to music by Ron and Patricia Owens:
https://youtu.be/Ao_7onnOwQs

An instant summary of the story of Amos for kids of any age:
https://youtu.be/PwH9Y49ZqFs

Finally, from Martin, CeCe Winans: 'Goodness of God' (Live). The song was written by Ed Cash, Ben Fielding, Jason Ingram, Brian Johnson and Jenn Johnson of Bethel Music. CeCe Winans has a lovely clear voice in this version of the anthem:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y81yIo1_3o8

Enjoy!
Chris

VIRTUAL SERVICE 11.07.21
THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven!
To his feet thy tribute bring;
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
who like me his praise should sing?
Praise him! Praise him! Praise him! Praise him! Praise the everlasting King! *Henry F Lyte*

CONFESSION Forgive us, Lord, for the things we have failed to do, when we have been ungenerous with sharing your gifts to us, when we have failed others and you.
The Lord .. will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts. Psalm 85 v 8.

COLLECT Merciful God, you have prepared for those who love you such good things as pass our understanding; pour into our hearts such love toward you that we, loving you in all things and above all things, may obtain your promises, which exceed all that we can desire; 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 Amos 7.7-15, Psalm 85.8-end, Ephesians 1.3-14, Mark 6.14-29.

REFLECTION In its original Greek, today's passage from Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus is one long sentence. This is reflected in the King James version, conveying a sense of breathless excitement. In this hymn of praise for all that God has done for us, Paul broadens his message to not just the Ephesian church but to all of us, to the whole world transformed by God's love.
God the Father chose us as his adopted children. Adoption was a common practice in ancient times; the adopted son or daughter gained the social status of their adopting parent. Paul, writing as a Jew, recognized that Gentiles were equally part of God's plan from the beginning. God the Son, Jesus Christ, paid in full our ransom; we are no longer slaves to sin, but fully forgiven and set free. This can be difficult for us to grasp; we are painfully aware that we fall short, that we fail to measure up to the plumb line depicted by Amos. However, we don't have to go it alone! God the Holy Spirit supports and nurtures us on our spiritual journey; nothing can escape God's loving plan, to "gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth".

PRAYERS In the rush and noise of life, as you have intervals, step within yourselves and be still. Wait upon God and feel his good presence; this will carry you through your day's business. *William Penn*.

We praise you, Lord, for your countless gifts to us, for the privilege of being your children. We confess freely that we fail to measure up, that our greed and selfishness create barriers; set us free from our guilt and shame, and enable us to live for your praise and glory.

We pray for all who are punished unjustly, for prisoners of conscience, for those who speak out for what is right, and for those who feel the need to use violence to repress them.

We pray for those who are crushed by natural disaster or man's negligence or cruelty, the forgotten people, the dispossessed and the refugee. Empower us to show loving care.
We bring before you the sick or distressed, especially……; enfold them in your love.

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

For so long, dear God
I stared with dreadful fascination
At the thick heavy chains
Binding my burdened life
When all the while you were waiting
For my personal consent
To break the chains and set me free.
Oh, what liberating joy
When I finally said Yes! *Ruth Harms Calkin*

