Dear friend
I enclose this week's virtual service, celebrating the feast of St James.

A couple of hymns on the theme of discipleship from north of the border.
'Will you come and follow me' (John Bell) enthusiastically sung by a Glaswegian congregation:
https://youtu.be/zk6IUalJ3sk

'Jesus calls us, o'er the tumult', this time from Aberdeen:
https://youtu.be/idAoS7at3nQ

A Latin setting of psalm 126, In convertendo Dominus, by the renaissance composer Leonhard Lechner, sung by the Mirandola consort:
https://youtu.be/m46J3L4CXNw

Or a version of part of the psalm in English by William Byrd (Turn our captivity O Lord), sung by the Cambridge Singers under John Rutter:
https://youtu.be/lO6rWtLvkNA

'When the Lord brought us back', Graham Kendrick's version of psalm 126:
https://youtu.be/w09JttaMf6g

Finally, an inspirational contribution from Martin. A 6-year-old girl who is blind and autistic plays guitar for the first time. This is not a worship song but God is at the heart of it. Lacie is blind and autistic, when she hears the sound of the music coming from Grimsby busker TenkCliff she is drawn to the music, and her Grandmother seeing her excitement wheels her over to where the busker is playing:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iw86MN39h60

Happy listening!
Chris

VIRTUAL SERVICE 25th. July 2021
JAMES the APOSTLE

Lord, come to our throw-away society and give us a greater care for your gifts, that the resources of your earth may be used for the needs of your family, and all may have enough. *Susan Williams*.

CONFESSION O God, whose nature it is to be generous; we confess to you our share of the guilt for a world of hungry families and homeless peoples; forgive us for our self-centred living and spending; forgive those who blame you for their failures.
Grant that this week some who have given nothing may start to give; those who have given something may give more; that both our Church and our nation may give due place to the cries of those who have nothing to eat and nowhere to live; for the sake of Jesus Christ. *Christopher Idle*.

COLLECT Merciful God, whose holy apostle St James, leaving his father and all that he had, was obedient to the calling of your Son Jesus Christ and followed him even to death; help us, forsaking the false attractions of the world, to be ready at all times to answer your call without delay; 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 Jeremiah 45.1-5, Psalm 126, Acts 11.27-12.2, Matthew 20.20-28.

REFLECTION In today's passage from Acts, we read how the fledgling church in Antioch, the first to be named Christians, responded generously to fellow believers in Jerusalem. Agabus had come from there, telling of a great famine; this would have affected the city dwellers particularly, many of whom were poor. The Gentile Christians entrusted the gifts to Barnabas and Saul, giving the latter a chance to return to those in Jerusalem as a friend, not a persecutor.

Clearly this dangerous sect needed to be stamped out at an early stage, and Herod Agrippa (grandson of Herod the "Great") had James, one of the ringleaders, beheaded. This would appease the Jewish authorities and his Roman masters. James, an eye-witness to the resurrection, became the first disciple to be martyred. Herod's grand plan failed spectacularly, and the loving witness of the early church continued to spread, despite violent attempts to curb it.
The selfless giving of James and the other disciples, inspired by the Holy Spirit, contrasts with Herod's greed and status-seeking. Like many since, James forfeited his life in courageous service of his Master.

PRAYERS Faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead. *(James 2.17)*
Lord, open our eyes, that we may see you in our brothers and sisters. Open our ears that we may hear the cries from the hungry, the frightened, the oppressed. Open our hands, that we may reach out to all who are in need. Open our hearts, that we may love each other as you love us. *Women's world day of prayer.*
We pray for the many nations of the world governed by fear and intimidation. We pray for the refugees, the migrants risking their lives in search of something better. Help us to be good neighbours to those in need.
We bring before you those who are sick and suffering, especially naming……
May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy. *(Psalm 126 v5).*

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



O Lord Jesus, make us such that we will be fit to be your closest friends. Make us such that we may ever see your vision and share your work….. Make us such that you will be able to use us as voices to speak for you and hands to serve you. *William Barclay*.