Dear Friend
I am pleased to enclose this week's virtual service, prepared by Judith. She suggests two hymns:

'Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us', this is a recording of the hymn sung at the Queen's 90th birthday celebration:
https://youtu.be/Wqzau4v23m0

'Love divine', sung this time to John Stainer's tune, Love Divine, by King's College under Stephen Cleobury (we had the setting Blaenwern recently):
https://youtu.be/vpKP2sa1ZRM

Howard Goodall's tuneful setting of 'Love Divine', sung by the National Youth choir of Scotland:
https://youtu.be/aTpKuWJbe-k

The final chorus of Mendelssohn's Elijah, "and then shall your light break forth" sets verses from Psalm 8, sung by Edinburgh Festival Chorus under Paul Daniel:
https://youtu.be/8xJ1IxElx6k

Finally, an inspirational video from Martin: Blessings - Laura Story.
Laura Story married her partner, Martin and two years later he was diagnosed with a brain tumour. In an interview, Story said that during his illness she realised there was one choice - to judge God based on circumstances not understood, and another based on God's loving nature, with her choosing to trust God. Martin survived, but he and Laura have discovered what it means to live according to God's grace. After several years of some of his disabilities not improving, they had to come to terms with the reality that their challenges weren't a detour, but the road itself:
https://youtu.be/ICnct8THNag

With every blessing
Chris

SERVICE FOR SUNDAY 3rd OCTOBER –
THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

God of all grace, good beyond all that is good, fair beyond all that is fair, and loving beyond all that is loving; grant us to be of one mind in our faith, of one hope in our calling, and of one heart in our loving; through Christ our Lord. Amen.
(Dionysius of Alexandria, c.200-265)

CONFESSION
Eternal God, human yet divine; we come to you as a united Christian family. Lord, forgive us when we ignore the ones we love, when petty disagreements escalate, bringing sorrow and tears. Help us to learn from creation's source, our Lord Jesus Christ, who teaches us how to love. *(Susan Barker)*
May the God of love bring us back to himself, forgive us our sins, and assure us of his eternal love in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (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 for ever. Amen.

READINGS Genesis 2:18-24; Psalm 8; Hebrews 1:1-4,2:5-12; Mark 10:2-16

REFLECTION 'What are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?' These words, from Psalm 8**,** are quoted in the passage from Hebrews. Jesus, in the verses from Mark's gospel, speaks of his care, when he addresses the problems besetting two sections of human society. Mark constantly matches and balances themes and ideas; the words about divorce and about children's place in God's kingdom are put deliberately in close proximity. Jesus isn't mincing his words in either case, and we are reminded that he, fully human, lives in a world of imperfections. A challenge from the Pharisees gives rise to a direct answer, relating to the interpretation of Mosaic law on divorce. Women could be cast off indiscriminately, with a simple note of dismissal; in Roman law, a woman might divorce her husband, but this was not the case for the Jews, so it was a matter of controversy, then as now. Arranged marriages were the norm, and concerned property and status rather than love, and failure of such a contract could leave a woman in dire circumstances, even cast out onto the streets, since divorce implied that she was at fault. Jesus speaks of marriage as a binding gift from God, founded in his love. Turning to the children, Jesus speaks not only of God's love for them, but of the dire consequences for those who reject them, or treat them indifferently. Love lies at the heart of Jesus's words; it's how he deals with everyday life.

PRAYERS
Visit, we beseech thee, O Lord, and drive from them the snares of the enemy: let thy holy angels dwell therein to preserve us in peace: and may thy blessing be upon us evermore; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *(Book of Common Prayer)*
We pray for all who join in worshipping you today, whether in a place of worship, or in the quietness of their homes. We pray for all who cannot worship you safely, because of prejudice or political pressure. Be with them in their hearts, and help them to know your constant presence in their lives.
We pray for the world, with all its sorrows and its joys, thinking especially of all who live in poverty, hunger or fear.
Make us worthy Lord, to serve our fellow human beings throughout the world who live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them, through our hands this day, their daily bread, and by our understanding, give them peace and joy. (Mother Theresa)
We pray for the sick; those who suffer in body, mind or spirit, for those whose relationships have broken down, and for children who are treated with indifference or unkindness. In a quiet moment we bring before you those near to us who are in special need……
We pray for peace, in our lives, in our homes, in our world.
In the depths of my being I become quiet and still; I wait for you, my God, source of my salvation.
(Jim Cotter)

We say **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

We share **THE GRACE**
Grant, Lord, that I may not for one moment admit willingly into my soul any thought contrary to your love. (Edward Pusey)