Dear friend,
I enclose the virtual service for Sunday 13th September.

The beginning of psalm 103 (and 104) is reflected in the Taizé chant 'Bless the lord, my soul':

https://youtu.be/3IC2XWBxktk

If you fancy a gentle work out, here is Matt Redman's worship song, 'Bless the Lord, oh my soul':

https://youtu.be/TZYjCwbg2Cc

Verse 15 of the psalm (behold, all flesh is as the grass) is set by Brahms in his German requiem, here sung in English by an American choir:

https://youtu.be/ph8lM4Fqj3E

On the theme of forgiveness, the contemporary composer James Macmillan's 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do' is the first of his Seven last words on the cross, set for choir and strings. The strings start with slow music from his clarinet quintet but become more agitated when the men sing 'Hosanna to the son of David,' this is followed by a plainsong responsory from Good Friday, when the music resolves in relative calm:

https://youtu.be/bMO7x9C9GVA

Finally, from Martin, 'Great Are You Lord' - All Sons & Daughters.

A popular group with one of their hits which is often covered by worship bands in churches.

https://youtu.be/uHz0w-HG4iU

Enjoy!
Chris

Sunday 13th. September. Trinity 14.

O Lord, the house of my soul is narrow, enlarge it, that you may enter in. It is in ruins, please repair it. It is displeasing to you; I know and acknowledge it. But to whom can I call for help, to clear and repair it, but you? Cleanse me from my secret faults, O Lord, and spare your servant. *Augustine of Hippo*.

CONFESSION. Almighty, forgive my doubt, my anger, my pride. By thy mercy abase me. By thy strictness raise me up. *Dag Hammarskjold.*

If we confess our sins to God, he will keep his promise and do what is right; he will forgive us our sins and purify us from all wrongdoing.
1 John 1.9

COLLECT. Almighty God, whose only Son has opened for us a new and living way into your presence; give us pure hearts and steadfast wills to worship you in spirit and in truth; 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, Amen.

READINGS. Genesis 50.15-21, Psalm 103.1-13, Romans 14.1-12, Matthew 18.21-35.

REFLECTION. One of the saddest phrases in the English language is "I'll never forgive…" There are times when it can be easy to forgive someone when they apologize for what they have said or done, when they make strenuous efforts to repair the damage. It's much more difficult when they seem to be unrepentant, or when they continue to cause us pain. According to Jewish law, one should forgive on three occasions, and Peter thought he was being generous when he suggested seven times! God forgives us "seventy times seven", in other words an infinite number of times because of his unqualified love for us, even when we let him down, time and time again. Can we fully forgive others who hurt us, can we fully forgive ourselves when we hurt others, and by doing so, hurt God? If not, we can be, like the unjust servant, "handed over to be tortured" by bitterness and resentment. True forgiveness can be very difficult; it is not the cowardly way out - it requires strength. To forgive is not to forget, but it gives a chance to rebuild our relationship with the other person, healing around the scar of what has been said or done. It can be liberating for both parties.

PRAYERS. Loving Father, we give you thanks that when we were still far off, you met us in your son and brought us home. We pray for the courage to forgive others when they hurt us by word and deed. Help us to forgive ourselves, to receive your loving acceptance of us as your children. We pray for those who are crippled by the inability to forgive.

We pray for the nations of this world, for the many areas torn apart by man's greed and pride, for conflicts due to fear and mistrust.

We bring before you the sick in mind, body or spirit, those who are undergoing tests or treatment. Especially we remember those having to cope with long term complications of Covid19 infection. We pray for the victims of natural and man-made disaster. Especially we bring before you those known to us…… Comfort and heal them in their distress.

We give thanks for our many blessings, for our communities, our families and friends, for the many times we receive loving forgiveness.

We pray the **LORD'S PRAYER**.
We share the **GRACE**.

God forgives unconditionally, so can we.
The thief on the cross still dies on the cross, but forgiveness will set his spirit free.
And what of you and me standing on the ground with our piles of hurts mounting so high,
will we die a thousand deaths before we die?
Yearning for revenge, will we die of that thirst?
Will the rage that fills us be the stake on which we burn? Will we stumble over every resistance placed in our way, stay stuck in the misery of it all?
Or will we take the chance that we might break free by following this path where it leads past the whys and lies about how it cannot be?
Here is our chance, take this chance, break free.
Desmond and Mpho Tutu.