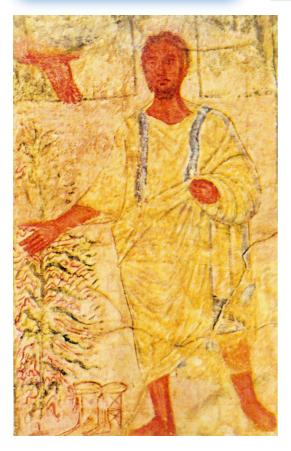


Worship resources Trinity 11



The journey continues and this week, following on from God's gift of salvation, we encounter God's call for us to be agents of God's grace, compassion and love to the world. It's not easy. It will ask of us great sacrifice. But it also promises life for us and for our world, if we will but take up our crosses and follow Christ.

Worship will probably not be comfortable this week. May we thank God for God's call, and respond willingly and sacrificially, laying down our comforts, our needs, our preferences and even our lives to live as people of all-embracing love.

INTRODUCTIONS

For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines

Exodus 3:1-15: Moses encounters God in

a burning bush while feeding the flocks of his father-in-law, and is called to be God's messenger to tell Pharoah to release God's people. When Moses asks for God's name, God tells him that he must say that "I Am" has sent him. OR <u>Jeremiah 15:15-21</u>: Jeremiah pleads with God to save him from his persecutors and to end his suffering, for which he can find no reason. God replies with the assurance that he will not be overcome, and that God will save him.

<u>Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45c</u>: A song of instruction for God's people to praise God and to remember God's wonders when God made the Israelites greater than the Egyptians and sent Moses and Aaron to them.

OR <u>Psalm 26:1-8</u>: A plea for God to test the Psalmist and declare him innocent because he has not joined with the wicked and has remained faithful to God's love and truth.

Romans 12:9-21: Paul encourages the believers to be committed to a life of love for one another and even for enemies – seeking to bless and not curse, and to conquer evil with good.

Matthew 16:21-28: Jesus tells the disciples about his coming death to which Peter responds with a rebuke. Jesus in turn corrects Peter and calls the disciples to take up their crosses, to follow Jesus (in his suffering) and to give their lives in order to save their souls.

Click on the readings above for Bible gateway.

Or -

http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=Exodus %203:%201-15%0Acw%20Psalm%20105:%201-6,%2023-26,%2045c%0A %2BOR%0Acw%20115%0ARomans%2012:%209-21%0AMatthew %2016:%2021-28

COLLECTS OF THE DAY

Collect One

O God,
who declarest thy almighty power
most chiefly in shewing mercy and pity;
Mercifully grant unto us such a measure of thy grace,
that we, running the way of thy commandments,
may obtain thy gracious promises,

and be made partakers of thy heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Collect Two

O God,

you declare your almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity:
Mercifully grant to us such a measure of your grace, that we, running the way of your commandments, may receive your gracious promises, and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Because of God's great mercy we are bold to call out our needs and hopes in prayer. Let us offer our prayers for the Church, for the world, and for ourselves as

we strive to follow Christ, praying, "O God of mercy," and responding, "Hear our

prayer."

For the Church in an increasingly secular world, that we might be a welcoming

home for those who have grown up outside of the faith community and an expression of God's grace to all.

O God of mercy,

Hear our prayer.

| For our governme | nt, especially our Prime Minister/ First |
|--------------------|--|
| Ministers | , and our <i>local member of parliament</i> _ |
| that they may prov | vide intelligent and compassionate health care for all those |
| who need healing | • |
| O God of mercy, | |
| Hear our prayer. | |

For all parents with children who have unique physical or social needs, that they

might find in God a source of love and strength, and find in us a source of support for their struggle.

O God of mercy,

Hear our prayer.

For the sick and the dying and those who watch over them, especially _____, that they may be comforted.

O God of mercy,

Hear our prayer.

For ourselves as we work to be faithful, that we might be open to the surprises of

our relationship with God and always ready to see God with new and fuller knowledge.

O God of mercy,

Hear our prayer.

O God, your son responded to the faithful boldness of the Canaanite woman.

Help us to pray and live with courage like hers that we may experience your grace

as fully as she did and discover the unexpected abundance of life that trusts in you.

We pray trusting in your mercy. Amen.

POST COMMUNION

Lord of all mercy,
we your faithful people have celebrated
the memorial of that single sacrifice
which takes away our sins and brings pardon and peace.
By our communion
keep us firm on the foundation of the gospel
and preserve us from all sin;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

PRAYERS

In the flaming bush you promised deliverance to your people, O God, and in the cross of Jesus you embraced our suffering and pain. In times of misery, show us the transforming power of your love that we may know the hope of your glory. Amen.

Faithful God, you are the hope of all the oppressed, and the source of freedom for those held captive. Make us strong to witness to your liberating power, in generosity of life and in humility of spirit, that all the world may delight in your goodness. Amen.

God, you are the power of liberation, calling your servant Moses to lead your people into freedom, and giving him the wisdom to proclaim your holy law. Be our Passover from the land of injustice, be the light that leads us to the perfect rule of love, that we may be citizens of your unfettered reign; we ask this through Jesus Christ, the pioneer of our salvation. Amen.

Through the waters of oppression and death, Lord God, you led a people into the burning presence of your love. As you fed them in the desert, now feed us with the finest of wheat, that we may know the liberating power of the paschal feast. Amen.

Your voice burns within the depths of our being, O God of our ancestors, and draws us into your presence and service. Hear the cries of your people and speak a word of comfort, that we may proclaim to all the earth the glory of your name. Amen.

On this day of rejoicing, O God of our ancestors, as we gather to break the bread, we remember that through the blood of the Lamb you redeemed us and made us pass over from death to new life. Grant that, as we celebrate your mighty deeds, we may be one with Jesus in offering you this sacrifice of praise. Amen.

Friends in Christ,
God invites us to hold the needs of our sisters and brothers as dear to us as our own needs.
Loving our neighbors as ourselves,
we offer our thanksgivings and our petitions
on behalf of the church and the world.
Hear our prayers, God of power,
and through the ministry of your Son
free us from the grip of the tomb,
that we may desire you as the fullness of life
and proclaim your saving deeds to all the world. Amen.

As you heard the prayer of Isaac and Rebekah, O God, and guided them in the way of your love, so listen now to those who call upon you. Move us to praise your gracious will, for in Christ Jesus you have saved us from the deeds of death and opened for us the hidden ways of your love. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God of salvation,
who sent your Son to seek out and save what is lost,
hear our prayers
on behalf of those who are lost in our day,
receiving these petitions and thanksgivings
with your unending compassion.
Redeeming Sustainer,
visit your people
and pour out your strength and courage upon us,
that we may hurry to make you welcome
not only in our concern for others,
but by serving them
generously and faithfully in your name. Amen.

LECTIONARY NOTES 1

Exodus 3:1-15:

"Here I am." These are three of the bravest words in the Bible, don't you think? And yet, so simple, such easy, uncomplicated words. Will we utter them? Dare to say such simple words to God?

"the place on which you are standing is holy ground" - What places in life have you come upon holy ground? What makes it holy? How do you act when you are on Holy Ground?

"Who am I that I should go out to Pharaoh?" Moses asks God. So much for his initial brave response;) - who do you think is better equipped to judge your abilities - you or God? Do you question what God has called you to do? What would it take to convince you?

"I AM WHO I AM." Maybe the best name for God - the one God claims for God's self. We like to describe God, paint God into corners, but God into boxes with our theological language - but God says I AM WHO I AM.

Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45c:

This Psalm is appearing for the third time this summer - showing up in some variation three and five weeks ago. It has corresponded to some extent with the Old Testament lesson, though this week, it is less directly related.

Verses 1-5 are right on target for me: Remember to praise God all the time, because God has done some pretty amazing things for you. It is

amazing how easily we forget God's role in all that we claim as our own goodness.

"whose hearts he then turned to hate his people, to deal craftily with his servants." I don't warm to the idea that God makes us hate, or hardens our heart, a theme in the Moses story we'll follow in the Old Testament. Why would God do that?

45b makes a nice end, while skipping many verses: "praise God!"

Romans 12:9-21:

This is a great passage of little bits of advice that work together separately or together

"Outdo one another in showing honor" - Wouldn't it be great if humans' competitive natures worked for good this way?

"do not claim to be wiser than you are" - great advice for pastors, theologians, and church-people in general.

"so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all" - words for today. And it does depend on us.

The heart of this passage - the most words are spent on advising us to love our enemies, even at cost to ourselves.

Matthew 16:21-28:

Just before this, Peter had named Jesus as the Messiah. Now Jesus names Peter as Satan. What's happened here?

I think Peter has said the right words (earlier), but he doesn't yet understand what that means for Jesus, or doesn't want to believe it. Choices. Jesus tells us we have to make some hard choices, big choices, life and death kind of choices. The way he phrases his questions, the answers should be obvious. But our actions suggest otherwise, don't they?

"who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man . . . " Lots of people have theories about this verse. I don't have a good theory. I think - it's not the point of the passage, and if we focus on that verse, it means we're not paying attention to all the meaty stuff before it.

By Beth Quick

LECTIONARY NOTES 2

REFLECTIONS ON THEME:

What does God's call mean for us? What can we expect when we receive God's call? These are the questions at the heart of this week's Lectionary, and they flow beautifully out of last week's challenge. If you are following the Moses readings, the clear progression is from Moses' own personal salvation

(last week) to his call to go back and save God's (and his) people, in spite of his fears, uncertainties and the struggles which will come (this week). If your focus is the Gospel, the movement is from Peter declaration of who Jesus is, and, the foundations of Church in bringing Christ to the world (last week) to Jesus' embrace of the cross and call for us to follow (this week). Jeremiah's plea for God's vindication echoes Jesus' own suffering in spite of his innocence, and the Romans reading supports both the Gospel and the Moses story as it calls God's people to live in love for one another & for enemies, giving themselves for the well-being of others in practical ways. Finally, the Psalms both express praise for God's salvation and the plea for God to recognise the innocence of the Psalmist and God's people – even as Jesus suffered though innocent. So, what God may be wanting us to hear this week is that we are all called to follow Christ to be liberators of others, serving and loving all people, including our enemies, and that as we respond to this call we must be willing to lay our lives down and embrace the inevitable suffering that and sacrifice that will come. Yet, even in the midst of this tough word is a light of hope. It is in this self-giving love that we find our 'souls' (our true, Godgiven selves) and we discover true, abundant life.

CONNECTING WITH LIFE:

GLOBAL APPLICATION: In our pain-avoidant world, the idea that we should embrace sacrifice and suffering as a response to God's call sounds ridiculous. Yet, as we seek healing and sustainability in our world, we cannot but see the wisdom in this call. We may not be a Moses or a Jesus, but as each of us embrace our "calledness", we can have global impact in our own small way – but it will require us to release our places of privilege, to turn away from our consumer, accumulation mentality, and to embrace the sacrifice of simple living, of greater financial contribution (if we are among the more wealthy - which if you're reading this, you are, because you have access to a computer and internet connection), of greater vulnerability to global forces, and of personal relinquishing of comforts and luxuries. We may find ourselves choosing to walk more or to ride a bicycle instead of using our cars as much. We may need to reduce our meat intake. We may need to allocate more of our income to giving and support of those with less. We may have to take stands in uncomfortable ways among our friends and families over issues like inclusion of the marginalised, and loving our enemies. It may mean choosing to give our vote to a difficult and unpopular cause. We may need to learn more about a foreign culture and seek to understand people we would normally consider "enemies". It may mean giving up on certain clothes, foodstuffs or sweets in order to ensure we don't participate in the oppression or slavery of others. One thing is certain, though: God's call will lead us to take our global citizenship seriously and to contribute sacrificially in whatever way we can to the healing of our world and its inhabitants. And as we as

individuals and groups respond to God's call, we become part of a movement of grace, healing, love and sacrifice that has the power to really change things for the better.

LOCAL APPLICATION: The old adage, "Think Globally, Act Locally" is relevant to today's message. The global healing that is required in our world today will come about as individuals and communities embrace the call to sacrifice and to "losing our lives" in our local settings. As we feed the hungry, clothe the naked and reconcile with our enemies, we contribute to a more compassionate, connected and whole world. As we give ourselves in small practical acts of love for one another and for those who are hurting, marginalised and different from us, we help to bring equity, connectedness and peace to our world. It is a pity, when we recognise the difference that we can make to the world, that we have reduced the call of Christ to a passive one – waiting for a heavenly evacuation when we die. It is sad that we have made Christ's message about little more than praying a prayer and joining an exclusive group in the wait for the afterlife. There is little impact on people's lives and little sacrifice required of us when we approach our call in this way. We would do better to look around us at the people we worship with, live with and share a neighbourhood with, and see where we can give of ourselves be it our time, our expertise, our financial resources, our friendship, our network, our forgiveness, our open-heartedness, our commitment to peace or our willingness to learn – and make a commitment to act in small, practical, loving ways – as Paul described – to serve them and bring life to them in whatever we can, even (or especially) when it hurts us to do so.

SERMON OUTLINE 1

Matt 16:21-28 he must go to Jerusalem..

From this point in his ministry there is a new emphasis as Jesus seeks to prepare the disciples for the final days of drama/trauma in Jerusalem - that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

- **1. The Startling Statement:** The disciples were shaken and Peter acts as spokesman: *took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, 'God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.'* It was unthinkable! Jesus replies equally strongly: *Get behind me, Satan!* Strong words of rebuke! To oppose the will of God is to be an agent of Satan.
- **2. The Stumbling Block:** You v23 are a stumbling-block to me liable to trip him up. Peter's intentions were honourable, but he was really leading Jesus from doing the Father's will from completing His plan of salvation which was to be accomplished at Jerusalem.

1. The Sacrificial Death 24-28: - the cost of discipleship... a) forgetting oneself: 24 Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me – prepared to die... b) forfeiting one's soul: 26For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? – material gain at the expense of spiritual treasure and eternal life. Jesus will return again - 'For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, v27 and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. What will our reward be on that day?

By Norman Porteous

SERMON OUTLINE 2 Matthew 16:24-25

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it."

The following excerpt was originally published in <u>The Hungering Dark</u> and later in <u>Secrets in the Dark</u>.

Maybe Jesus Saves written up there on the cliff or the abutment of the bridge is embarrassing because in one way or another religion in general has become embarrassing: embarrassing to the unreligious man because, although he does not have it anymore, he has never really rooted it out of his soul either, and it still festers there as a kind of reproach; embarrassing to the religious man because, although in one form or another he still does have it, it seldom looks more threadbare or beside the point than when you set it against very much the same kind of seventy-five-mile-per-hour, neon-lit, cluttered, and clamorous world that is represented by the highway that the sign itself looks down upon there.

And maybe, at a deeper level still, Jesus Saves is embarrassing because if you can hear it at all through your wincing, if any part at all of what it is trying to mean gets through, what it says to everybody who passes by, and most importantly and unforgivably of all of course what it says to you, is that you need to be saved. Rich man, poor man; young man, old man; educated and uneducated; religious and unreligious - the word is in its way an offense to all of them, all of us, because what it says in effect to all of us is, "You have no peace inside your skin. You are not happy, not whole." That is an unpardonable thing to say to a man whether it is true or false, but especially if it is true, because there he is, trying so hard to be happy, all of us are, to find

some kind of inner peace and all in all maybe not making too bad a job of it considering the odds, so that what could be worse psychologically, humanly, than to say to him what amounts to "You will never make it. You have not and you will not, at least not without help"?

And what could be more presumptuous, more absurd, more pathetic, than for some poor fool with a cut-rate brush and a bucket of white paint to claim that the one to give that help is Jesus? If he said God, at least that would be an idea, and if you reject it, it is only an idea that you are rejecting on some kind of intellectual grounds. But by saying "Jesus" he puts it on a level where what you accept or reject is not an idea at all but a person; where what you accept or reject, however dim and far away and disfigured by time is still just barely recognizable as a human face. Because behind the poor fool with his bucket there always stands of course the Prince of Fools himself, blessed be he, in his own way more presumptuous, more absurd and pathetic than anyone has ever managed to be since.

Jesus Saves And the bad thief, the one who according to tradition was strung up on his left, managed to choke out the words that in one form or another men have been choking out ever since whenever they have found themselves crossed up by the world: "Are you the Christ? Then save yourself and us." With the accent on the "us." If you are the savior, whatever that means, then why don't you save us, whatever that involves, save us from whatever it is that crosses us all up before we're done, from the world without and the world within that crosses us all out. Save us from and for and in the midst of the seventy-five-mile-per-hour, neon-lit crisscross of roads that we all travel in this world. And then the good thief, the one on his right, rebuked the bad one for what he had said angrily, and then in effect said it again himself, only not angrily, God knows not angrily - said, "Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingly power." And finally the words of Jesus's answer, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise," which are words no less crude than the ones trickling down the cliff side, in their way no less presumptuous, absurd, pathetic; words that express no theological idea as an idea, but words that it took a mouth of flesh to say and an ear of flesh to hear. I can imagine that the guards who had been posted there to see that the execution was carried out properly might themselves have felt something like embarrassment and turned away from the sheer lunacy of the scene.

Such a one as that save me? That one - the spindle-shanked crackpot who thinks he is God's son, bloodshot and drunk with his own torture, no less crossed up, crossed out than any other mother's son. Such a one as that - Jesus, scrawled up there on the concrete among the four-letter words and the

names of lovers? Only somehow then, little by little, a deeper secret of the embarrassment begins to show through: not can such a one as that save me, but can such a one as that save me? Because I suspect that at its heart the painful wincing is directed less to the preposterousness of the claim that Jesus saves than it is directed to the preposterousness of the claim that people like ourselves are savable - not that we are such sinners that we do not deserve saving, but that we are so much ourselves, so hopelessly who we are - no better, no worse - that we wonder if it is possible for us to be saved. I suspect the reason why the name "Jesus" embarrasses us when it stands naked is that it inevitably, if only half consciously, recalls to us our own names, our own nakedness. Jesus saves ... whom? Saves Joe, saves Charlie, Ellen, saves me, saves you - just the names without any Mr. or Mrs., without any degrees or titles or Social Security numbers; just who we are, no more, no less. I suspect that it is at our own nakedness that we finally wince.

By Frederick Buechner

ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

Ministry Matters

Sermon starter on: Do you have it in you? Based on the marks of a True Christian in Romans 12, the writer comments, "I am struck by the overwhelming sense of what we are called to be as well as what we are called to do.... ook at this list. Is there one entry there you would disagree with, one action you could not imagine yourself doing? Loving sincerely. Hating evil. Loving one another. Holding on to what is good. Serving God. Rejoicing with hope. Accepting suffering with patience. Praying. Contributing to others. Sharing with others. Welcoming others. Blessing others. Rejoicing and weeping with those who do likewise. Living in harmony. Associating with the lowly. Leaving vengeance to God. Living in peace to the best of your ability. Treating your enemies with kindness. Overcoming evil with good.

"That last one seems especially important for the church. We are people saved by grace, positioned in a world that has fallen from grace. Are we satisfied to show the world how much we are like them? Or should we be different? Should we not be working on overcoming the evil of the world by means of the good we do? That cannot happen unless we truly subject ourselves to God's transforming touch."

He concludes, "Jesus said that with God all things are possible. We need to stop trying to do all things ourselves, being disappointed when we fail, then assuming we are incapable and expecting God will just have to take us the way we are. God knows better than that."

http://www.ministrymatters.com/preach/article/entry/1447/sermon-starter-do-you-have-it-in-you

Day 1 - Eye contact

Excerpts: "We don't make eye contact, we remain safe and untouched. We trade the potential for the richness of relationship, for the security of isolation, and, most profoundly, we deny each other's humanity. We are more easily drawn into the seductive trap of treating each other as objects to be manipulated or avoided....

...In Luke's Gospel Jesus holds up for us the example of the Good Samaritan, who cared for the dying man on the road when others of more respected station passed him by. It's an easy story to package as a tidy morality play, which is why we've heard it 7,000 times in Sunday School and since. Jesus says we're supposed to help those in need no matter who they are. Case closed..... That reading isn't wrong. But it only scratches the surface of the life to which Christ calls us. And, not surprisingly, it is all about making eye contact. In his story Jesus sets up the priest as a Levite, a temple assistant as the villain. But really they were only doing what was practical and expected."

Conclusion: "Christ calls us to make eye contact because it gives our life a breadth and depth of meaning we can't get any other way. Christ calls us to make eye contact because the way of the cross, the way of radical vulnerability and radical love, is the most powerful, most incredible, most liberating force in the universe, and he longs for us to know it and to feel its joy. Christ calls us to make eye contact with each other because he longs to make eye contact with us, to share our gaze, to feel the charge of excitement, to know that in that moment that his eyes touch ours that together we really do touch eternity."

http://day1.org/1126-eye_contact

Day 1 - Trusting God to settle scores

Maybe you've used the expression before or had it used on you, "I have my scruples and I'm going to stand on them." We rely on that phrase when we're getting ready to stand against someone. "Hey, I've got my scruple!" Most of us assume "scruples" here to mean "principles." To be scrupulous, we reason, is to be concerned with what is honest and right. "I am going to do what is honest and right and nothing less." But a scruple is really a sharp stone. You can look it up in the dictionary. The phrase "to stand on your

scruples" comes from the idea of being bothered by the nuisance of a small sharp stone in your shoe.

That small stone in your shoe may feel problematic, but you stand there anyway. You stand there faithfully. "Standing on your scruples" means to stand firm. It implies--because of that little stone--that we are going to stand with sensitivity or with tender feet. Jesus teaches a kind of walk through life that involves tender feet and sensitivity ... not just a stubborn tromp believing that we are always right. Read the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew sometime--all three chapters--and you'll see Jesus' tendency to encourage tender-footed walking.

http://day1.org/3047-trusting god to settle scores

America - Costly Grace

"Denying one's self" is more profound than daily acts of "mortification." It means displacing one's self from the center of our consciousness while looking to the true self embodied by Jesus' teaching. The self that is lost is the autonomous individual so dear to western consciousness. The self found is true life in a community of brothers and sisters who take up the challenge of discipleship by speaking and living from that fire that burns within their hearts. Such discipleship embodies a life of "costly grace," as described by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who carried his cross to death in opposing Nazism. He describes costly grace as "the Gospel which must be sought again and again, the gift which must be asked for...such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs him his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life." Peter, firm rock and stumbling stone, learned this only after he failed and even denied Jesus."

http://www.americamagazine.org/content/article.cfm?article_id=2444

CHILDREN

Worshipping with children

Continues with the Moses story, but with adequate other resources for talks to children based on the other Bible passages.

http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.com/2011/08/year-proper-17-22nd-sunday-in-ordinary.html

Sermons4kids

The theme is putting first things first. The text is: What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? Matthew 16:26 [NIV]. Needed - a toy whistle.

Conclusion: Is there something that you want so much that you are willing to do almost anything to get it? Jesus once asked the question, "What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet loses his soul?" Are you paying too much for your whistle?

http://www.sermons4kids.com/whistle.html

HYMN SUGGESTIONS

When I Survey The Wondrous Cross

Take My Life And Let It Be

I Surrender All

O Thou Who Camest From Above (Also works really well to the tune of "The Water Is Wide")

Hail, Thou Once Despised Jesus

O, The Wonderful Cross (Link to YouTube video)

I Give You My Heart (Link to YouTube video)

Lifesong (Link to YouTube video)

In Your Crucifixion

Love: Chord Chart; Mp3 Download (Amazon Mp3 Store)

Please commend this resource to colleagues - they simply send an email to churchnewsireland@gmail.com with the message Passwords in the title