

The Grace Family Weekly Message

8 April 2021



WORSHIP, with communion, is this Sunday (April 11th), at 10:00 AM; the Gospel reading for this Sunday is John 20:19-31 (Worship is in the Grace parking lot)

A Congregational Meeting will take place after worship on Sunday, 18 April, to consider a proposal for restoration of the bell tower.
(details on page 4)

Prayer Concerns are listed on page 4; the March financial report is on page 5.

Grace's **Weekly Messages** are distributed by email and regular mail to all members of the Grace Family to keep everyone informed about worship services, church activities and benevolence programs. To add someone to the distribution list, send their email or mailing address (*copies are mailed to those who do not have email*) to the Church Office (graceelc@gmail.com) (or mail it to: Grace Lutheran Church, 19225 W. Witty Road, Elmore OH 43416).

This week's Bible study is a follow-up to the Passion Story scriptures that we heard and read during the last two weeks. This study looks at who Jesus' opponents were and why they wanted to kill him.

A BIBLE STUDY ON THE BAD GUYS IN JESUS' TRIAL AND CRUCIFIXION

Mark 15:1-5 (NIV)

¹Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. So they bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate. ²"Are you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate. "You have said so," Jesus replied. ³The chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴So again Pilate asked him, "Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of." ⁵But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed.

During last week's Holy Week worship services, we listened again to New Testament accounts like this scripture about Jesus' trial and execution. These stories identified Jesus' opponents and the governing officials who convicted him. They had titles and names like "high priests, Pharisees, teachers of the law, Sanhedrin, Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate and Herod." It can be confusing to understand who all of these people were and why they wanted to convict and execute Jesus. This Bible study tries to provide answers to those questions by summarizing what we know about the people who accused and convicted Jesus:

1. During the time of Jesus, the Jewish religious establishment controlled both the religious life and civic affairs of the Jewish people while acting under the authority of Roman military officials. Jewish religious leaders were variously identified as **Chief Priests, Pharisees, Sadducees, elders, scribes** and **teachers of the law**.
2. Jewish religious leaders exercised governing authority through a court called the **Sanhedrin**. The **Great Sanhedrin** of 71 elders met in the **Temple in Jerusalem**. The **High Priest**, who was appointed by the Romans, was the head of the Sanhedrin. **Caiaphas** was the High Priest at the time of Jesus' trials.
3. Jesus' radical teachings (i.e., "**whoever strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also**," etc.) placed him in conflict with Jewish religious leaders. One of the first of dozens of scriptural records of these conflicts is recorded in Mark 2:16 when Pharisees criticized him for "**eating with tax collectors and sinners**." Many times, Jesus openly attacked them (Mt 23:13ff. "**Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites!**"). This conflict reached a climax after Jesus entered Jerusalem and drove the money changers and vendors out of the Temple court.
4. The Jewish provinces of Judea and Galilee were Roman puppet states. **Pilate** was the Roman military governor in Judea, which included Jerusalem. **Herod Antipas**, who was the son of Herod the Great, was the Roman-appointed governor in Galilee.
5. Jewish religious leaders survived by staying loyal to Rome, which gave them taxing authority that made them corrupt and wealthy. Jewish religious leaders feared that Jesus, as a new Davidic king, would destroy their privileged positions. The Romans feared Jesus because they didn't want to have to put down another insurrection.
6. Jesus was betrayed at Gethsemane by Judas, who plotted to do this with the Jewish **Sanhedrin**. Jesus was arrested by **Sanhedrin** temple guards who were under the command of Caiaphas, the High Priest.
7. After his arrest, Jesus was tried in succession before a) **Annas**, a former High Priest (*this is mentioned only in John*), b) **Caiaphas** and the **Sanhedrin** (*Jewish religious court*), c) **Caiaphas** and the **Sanhedrin** a second time, d) **Pilate**, where members of the Jewish **Sanhedrin** acted as his prosecutors, e) **Herod** (*referred by Pilate because Pilate couldn't find a reason to convict Jesus and because Jesus was Galilean*) and f) finally by **Pilate** again, who bowed to **Sanhedrin** pressure and approved Jesus' execution.
8. The judgement against Jesus was corrupt and false ("**by a perversion of justice, he was taken away**" Isaiah 53:8), but Jesus' teachings, death and resurrection became the basis of our Christian faith. Indeed, "**for God so loved the world that he gave his only Son...**" (John 3:16).



Christ Before Caiaphas, by [Matthias Stom](#).

WEEKLY NEWS AND EVENTS AT GRACE

- **DRIVE-UP WORSHIP ON SUNDAY.** Worship, this coming Sunday, the 11th of April, will take place in the church parking lot, starting at 10:00 AM. Pastor Jaci and Church Musician Bobbie Bean will conduct the service. Communion will be served. This week's Gospel reading is John 20: 19-31. **WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING ALL MEMBERS OF THE GRACE FAMILY TO WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY! VISITORS ARE ESPECIALLY WELCOME!**

- **Attendance and Offerings Last Sunday.** 88 persons attended worship last Sunday. Offerings on Palm Sunday totaled only \$952, but Easter Sunday offerings totaled \$3,440. Offerings for the year remain ahead of the budget target of \$2,885 per week. Thank you to all who attend worship and contribute their much-appreciated offerings.



- © **PRAYER CONCERNS.** Please keep the following persons in your prayers:

The Family of Dawn Heisler, The Family of Tiffany Cairl, The Family of Jim Dolph, The Family of Vera Hille, The Family of Ron Schnitker.

Dana Weirich, Roseann Michel, Karen Schlievert, Jeannette Young, Ora Bipman, Sean, Bethany Collier, Delbert Weng, Earlene and Dan Van Etten, Scott Taylor, Brian Richardson, Jenny Lehman, Jody Angelone, Ruth Avers, Ron Dangler, Jen and Steve, Bob and Marge Griffin, Jeanne Haar, Jim Flick, Sandy Duty, Josh Hunker, Jeff and Laryn Wheeler, Peggy Michel Noftz, Stephen Andrew, Bertha Marquardt, Dean Crandall, Kelly Troyer, Arnold and Donna Foss, Mitzi Paule, Nadine Crisologos, Joan Dietrich, Sandy Cutchall, Cheryl Hoot, Dick and Ruth Hammel, Reed Oestreich, Heather DeWitz, Grace members who reside in nursing homes and members of the Grace family and their colleagues who serve in the Armed Forces. If you know of someone to add to the prayer list, please inform Pastor Jaci or the Church Office.

- © **Easter Vigil Worship Service.** For Holy Week worship services, Grace had in-person outdoor worship on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Pastor Jaci, Worship Board Chair Rachel Beeler, Church Musician Bobbi Bean and Cantor Joan Eckermann produced a Virtual Easter Vigil Service with readings from classical Easter Vigil scriptures. This link to the service was sent out via email early Saturday evening ( [Easter vigil Grace Elmore 2021-360p30.mov](#)). If you didn't have a chance to watch that service on Saturday evening or Sunday, you may want to open this file and take the time to view and listen to Grace's 2021 Easter Vigil!

- © **Deacon Schedule.** Deacons scheduled to serve in upcoming worship services:

- **11 April, Sunday: Rachel Beeler & Joan Eckermann**
- **18 April, Sunday: Mary and Mike Schlievert**

- **25 April, Sunday: Rachel Beeler & Pr. Dave Wietelmann**

© ***Bell Tower Restoration.*** The Grace Board of Property and Council have now recommended a proposal from Chime Master Bell Systems to restore Grace's bell tower and bell to its original operating condition at a cost of \$5,100 for approval by the congregation. Since this bid is over Grace's Constitutional limit of \$5,000, the Council has called for a Congregational Meeting to take place after worship on the 18th of April to consider this proposal. The Grace bell tower was originally erected near the sanctuary in 1980 and was subsequently moved to its present location in 2001 when the Fellowship Hall and educational rooms were built. The bell played memorable roles in many Grace worship services but in 2016 it was disabled by lightning. Original estimates for restoration were unacceptably high and no action was taken until now. Several members have expressed their desires to restore the bell and the new bid of \$5,100 appears to be a reasonable answer to those aspirations. Funds are available from the Memorial Fund. Anyone who has questions or comments should contact Steve Simkus or Gary Anderson.

- ***Call for Congregational Meeting.*** There will be a Congregational Meeting in the Grace parking lot immediately after worship on Sunday, 18 April, to consider the recommendations of the Grace Council and Board of Property to approve the Chime Master bid to restore the bell tower (see above).

- ***The motion to be submitted for Congregational reads as follows:***

That the bid from Chime Master Bell Systems (Lancaster,OH; www.chimemaster.com), dated 27 January 2021, to restore the Grace bell tower to its original operating condition at a cost of \$5,100 be approved, in accordance with the requirements of C12.05 of the Grace Constitution and Bylaw V, I to the Constitution; and

That funding for this project be provided from the Grace Memorial Fund and any contributions received and dedicated to the bell tower project.

- ***Memorial Fund Status.*** The Grace Memorial Fund currently has a balance of \$12,565, so sufficient funds are available to finance this project. There are now members of Grace who have loved ones that were memorialized with Memorial Fund contributions who have expressed their wishes for Memorial Fund money to be used for the bell tower restoration.

© ***Church Meetings.***

- ***Council.*** Will meet on 8 April at 7:00 PM (via Zoom).
- ***Witness and Mission.*** Will meet on 13 April at 4:00 PM.
- ***Property.*** Will meet in the church on 15 April at 5:30 PM.
- ***Worship.*** Will meet (via Zoom) on Thursday, 15 April at 7:00 PM. If you are interested in being a part of the Board of Worship, let Rachel Beeler know so she can send the link out to you!
- ***Congregational Life.*** Will meet on 22 April at 7:00 PM (via Zoom).

© **Call Committee.** The Grace Call Committee’s most recent meeting was a virtual (Zoom) meeting on the on the 25th of February, when it began a final review of Grace’s MSP before it is forwarded to the Grace Council.

© **MARCH 2021 FINANCIAL REPORT – A BRIEF SUMMARY**

CATEGORY	March Actual Income & Expenses	Year to Date Actuals ²	2021 Budget for three months ³
Offerings ¹	\$8,734	\$45,318	\$37,500
Unrestricted Income ⁴	\$8,510	\$41,716	\$36,050
Operational Expenses	\$9,786	\$31,414	\$32,433
Net: Income vs Expenses	(\$1,276)	\$10,302	\$3,617

Notes:

¹10% of “Offerings” are allocated to Benevolences; 6% are allocated to the Maintenance Fund.

²To determine current budget status, compare “Year to Date Actuals” with the “2021 Budget.”

³The 2021 Budget is calendarized to show the amount allocated through the current month.

⁴“Unrestricted Income” is 84% of offerings plus rental and miscellaneous income.

© **OPERATION OREO.** Please keep all of the military in your prayers, but especially: SGT Stephen Simkus and Cadet Julian Sanchez.

Anyone wishing to make a donation to Operation Oreo to help offset the cost of shipping and the contents of the Goody boxes -- Just mark “Op Oreo” on the memo line of your check.

If you have a name to add to our list or if you have any questions about Operation Oreo, please contact Jennifer Marquardt

© **Lenten Special Offering Project.** The Board of Witness and Mission selected the **ELCA Good Gifts Fruit-Tree Farm** as Grace’s special Lenten offering project for 2021. Fruit tree seedlings could be gifted for \$10 each; \$150 would buy an entire fruit tree farm. The Board set a goal of raising \$900 to donate six fruit tree farms. By Good Friday when the appeal ended, \$1,914 had been contributed to purchase ELCA Good Gifts fruit tree farms. That’s more than twice the original goal and enough to purchase more than 12 fruit tree farms. Thank you to everyone at Grace for contributing so generously to this ELCA program designed to address world hunger.

© **ELMORE FOOD PANTRY.** The Grace Food Pantry item for April is any size package of toilet paper. The Elmore Food Pantry, which is hosted at Grace, is open on the third Friday and Saturday of each month from 9:00 AM until noon. Anyone who wishes to drop off food items at the church should bring them to the church (leave them inside the north door) during the following hours when the church office door is open:

- **Monday and Wednesday: 4:30 to 5:30 PM**
- **Tuesday and Thursday: 6:30 to 7:30 PM**
- **Saturday: 9:00 to 10:00 AM**

- **Sunday: 9:30 to 10:00 AM**

© **REGULAR BENEVOLENCE ACTIVITIES:**

- **Millers Receipts.** Members of the Grace Family who shop at Miller’s New Market Grocery in Genoa should continue to keep their receipts and give them to Marilyn Crandall who will redeem them for Grace (*or send them to 9591 W Moonlight Bay Lane, Oak Harbor OH 43449*).
- **Amazon Smile Fundraiser.** Amazon purchases earn cash contributions for Grace Lutheran Church if you enroll in the Amazon Smile program and name Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Elmore OH, as your designated charity. Log in with this address: **smile.amazon.com/ch/34-1219970**. If you use the Amazon Smile program and designate Grace as your charity, 0.5% of your eligible purchases will be donated to Grace. Donations received through this program are divided evenly between Operation Oreo and the Piecemakers.

Our prayer: Merciful God, thank you for sacrificing your Son whose teachings, death and resurrection gave us our Christian faith and the promise of eternal life.

GRACE CONTACT INFORMATION		
PASTOR	COUNCIL PRESIDENT	CHURCH OFFICE
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