

The Hidden Strength of the Sharpened Edge

*"And David shepherded them with integrity of heart;
with skillful hands he led them."*

(Psalm 78:72)

To beloved graduates, our dedicated parents, and the entire family of Faith Church, Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As the blossoms of May surround us, our hearts are filled with a special joy. We stand at a sacred threshold today, celebrating our graduates who have completed a significant chapter of their journey.

To our students: we have seen your hard work, the late nights of study, and the perseverance it took to reach this milestone. We are incredibly proud of you. I also want to address the parents and families. This achievement is yours as well. Your sacrifices, your hidden tears, and your steadfast support have been the quiet foundation upon which these young lives have been built. To our congregation: thank you for being a community of prayer. You have been the spiritual soil that nourished these seeds of faith, and today we see the first fruits of that labor.

As you step into a future filled with both promise and challenge, I want to share a powerful image that I once encountered in a pastoral column. It is the image of the **Sword and the Scabbard**.

In the journey of life, each of you is forging a **Sword**. This sword represents your **Competence**—your skills, your degrees, your professional talents, and your intellect. It is the tool you will use to make your mark on the world. To be a person of influence for the Kingdom of God, you must strive for excellence. You must sharpen your sword through discipline and dedication so that it is ready for the tasks ahead.

However, a sword, no matter how magnificent or sharp, is dangerous without a **Scabbard**. The scabbard represents your **Character** and your **Reverence for God**. It is the vessel that holds the sword, protecting the blade and, more importantly, protecting the owner and those around them.

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Pastoral Letter Continued

If a person has a sharp sword (great skill) but a weak scabbard (poor character), they eventually end up wounding themselves and hurting the people they love. We have all seen leaders with brilliant minds who collapsed because they lacked the integrity to hold their own power.

Consider the biblical example of **David**. As a young shepherd, he spent years sharpening his "sword"—his skill with the sling and his courage in the wilderness. Because he was skillful, he was able to take down the giant, Goliath. But David's true greatness was seen later, when he had the chance to strike down King Saul in a cave. David had the skill and the weapon to end his enemy, but he chose to keep his sword in the scabbard. He chose to honor God's timing rather than his own strength. He had a scabbard of character that was stronger than his sword of skill.

We see this same principle in the life of **Abraham Lincoln**. Lincoln was a man of immense "sword-like" intellect and legal skill. Yet, what saved the Union was his "scabbard." When he was elected President, he appointed his harshest critics—men who had publicly mocked him—to his own Cabinet. He had the power to crush them, but his character was deep enough to hold his ego in check for the sake of the nation. He knew when to draw the sword and, more importantly, when to keep it sheathed in grace.

Dear graduates, the world you are entering will constantly ask you: *"How sharp is your sword?"* It will judge you by your GPA, your salary, and your titles. But your Heavenly Father asks a different question: *"How strong is your scabbard?"*

As you sharpen your professional skills, I urge you to grow your character even more. Build a scabbard of humility, a scabbard of virtues, and above all, a scabbard of the "Fear of the Lord," which is the beginning of all wisdom. Your character is what determines where and how you use your talents. A great skill can get you to the top, but only a great character can keep you there.

Place your life—both the sword and the scabbard—in the hands of the Great Blacksmith, our Lord. Trust Him to refine you. When you are prepared with both competence and character, God will use you in ways you never dreamed possible to heal a broken world.

We go with you in spirit and in prayer. May the Lord bless you and keep you; may His face shine upon you as you begin this new adventure.

With much love and blessings,

Your Pastor



Announcements

Thanks For All You Do!

Many thanks to all who helped with the service and meal on Maundy Thursday, the Good Friday service and the services on Easter Sunday. There were many who helped with the preparation, set up and clean up for all of these events.

Special thanks to Mae Kingzette and Joanna Leonor for their coordination of the Easter Sunrise Service and the breakfast that followed. It was much appreciated.



Daytime Bible Study Group

The Daytime Bible Study Group will conclude their study of the Gospel of Matthew on May 19. The group will take the summer off and will tentatively resume meeting in September. All welcome to join the group. If you have any questions or for more information, please contact Jane Ahrens.



Evening Bible Study Group to Begin

Some have indicated an interest in an evening study beginning this summer. A sign-up sheet is posted on the easel in the Fellowship Hall. Please sign up if you are interested. The meeting day and time will be determined by the people interested. For more information, please see Fred Sullivan or Rod Kingzette.



Prayer Hugs

The Prayer Hugs group continues to meet on the second Wednesday of the month from 1 to 2:30 p.m., in The Makery at the Elmhurst Public Library. The group is making prayer shawls, baby afghans and lap afghans. All women are invited to join whether you crochet, knit or want to tie blankets. If you know of an organization or ministry that could use anything we make, please contact any member of the group.

If you know someone who may be in need of a prayer shawl, the shawls will be available in the Fellowship Hall. Feel free to take one to pass along. There will be a notebook there for you to sign your name, who you are giving it to (first names only are okay) and the date. We want to make these available to anyone who would like to give one of our prayer shawls away. For any questions, please contact Jane Ahrens





Announcements

Summer Prayer Group

The Prayer Group is meeting on the first Tuesdays of June, July and August from 2 to 3 p.m. in the lower level of the church. Anyone is welcome to join in this time of sharing joys and concerns, offering them to the Lord in prayer as well as a time of praise to the Lord.



Picnic for Children's Sunday school

On Sunday June 7, Sunday School children and their families and Sunday School teachers will gather after church at Berkeley Park again this year for a potluck meal. Hot dogs will be provided.



Church Council

The regular Church Council meeting will be held on Monday, June 22, at 7 p.m., in the lower level of the church. If you have any questions, please contact Jane Ahrens



4 on the 4th

The church has been asked once again to man a water station for the 4 on the 4th Race on July 4th here in Elmhurst. If you are interested in helping out on that day from 6:30 to 8:00 a.m., please contact Jane Ahrens for more information.



Church Library – Summer Reading

Summer is a great time to pick up a book to read from the Church Library in the Fellowship Hall. The Library is self-serve. Just sign your name on the card and file it under the author's name in the file box. There are many Christian fiction and non-fiction books to choose from. Happy Reading!





Announcements



Birthdays and Anniversaries

May Birthdays:

- 6 Nancy Henry
- 8 Jonathan Leonor
- 9 Alice Dvorak

June Birthdays:

- 2 Mae Kingzette
- 8 Latha Sangha
- 18 Jessie Baxter
- 19 William Galarza
- 22 Arild Egeland
- 26 Daniel Grabenhofer

May Anniversaries:

- 30 Leonard & Sandy Wiech

June Anniversaries:

- 1 John & Jane Ahrens
- 5 Jonathan & Joanna Leonor
- 11 Wayne & Bonnie Smith

FINANCIAL UPDATE

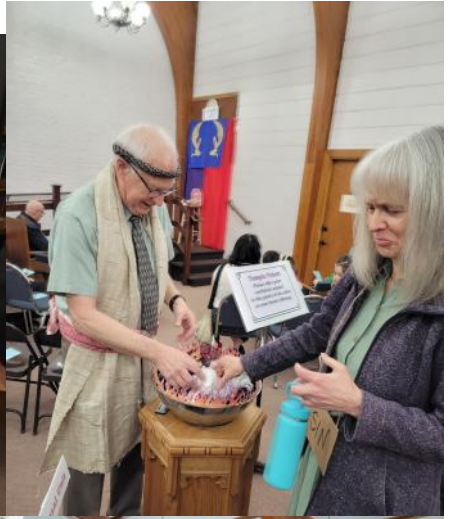
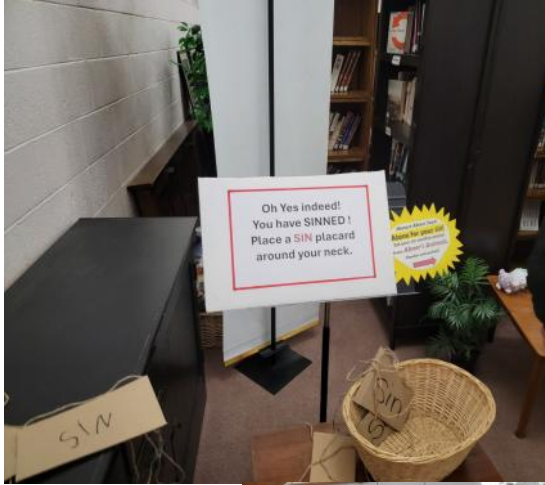
	Weekly	Income	Budget
15-Mar	2883.00	38458.17	37056.04
22-Mar	2995.00	41453.17	40424.77
29-Mar	2313.51	43766.68	43793.50
5-Apr	2165.00	45931.68	47162.23
12-Apr	6076.34	52008.02	50530.96
19-Apr	4615.00	56623.02	53899.69
26-Apr	11670.00	68293.02	57268.42
3-May	1930.00	70223.02	60637.15
10-May	5082.22	75305.24	64005.88

End of April Financial Summary:

Budget:	\$58,391
Expenses:	\$57,241
Income:	\$72,940
Surplus:	\$15,699



**Photos from the Easter Sunrise Service:
No More Sacrifice**



MISSIONS AND OUTREACH



Caring Network Baby Bottle Drive

This Mother's Day was the start of the Caring Network "Baby Bottle Drive". Fill the "Baby Bottle" with coins, dollars, and/or checks. There are flyer inserts in the sanctuary with a QR code for giving. Please return the "Baby Bottles" by Father's Day.



Sunday School Giving Project

The Sunday School class will be assembling "Blessing Bags" for Elmhurst Walk-In Ministry. Please bring travel size toiletries, and hard candy to the wooden box in Fellowship Hall by June 7th.



Congratulations Graduates!

Jose Becerra - Bachelor's Degree in Game Design with a Minor in Interdisciplinary Film Studies from Bradley University

Andrew Duback - Masters of Education in Mathematics Instruction

Skyler Kerr - Master's Degree in Public Health from Elmhurst University

Joseph Kim - Bachelor's Degree in Statistics and Economics from the University of Illinois

Siha Kim - Graduate of York High School



Love. Grow. Serve.



Come join us as we worship
online or in person on
Sunday mornings at 10 a.m.

For our online service, please go to our
Facebook page:
FGMC ELMHURST

For our in person service, please join us at
the corner of North Avenue and York Road.
Parking is available behind the church and
the entrance is on the North Avenue side with
the red double doors next to the driveway.

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"Creating Connections through Extending Christ's Love"
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Melisa Guzman, Church Office Manager
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Sunday Worship @ 10 a.m.

May/June 2026