



The Hillside Messenger

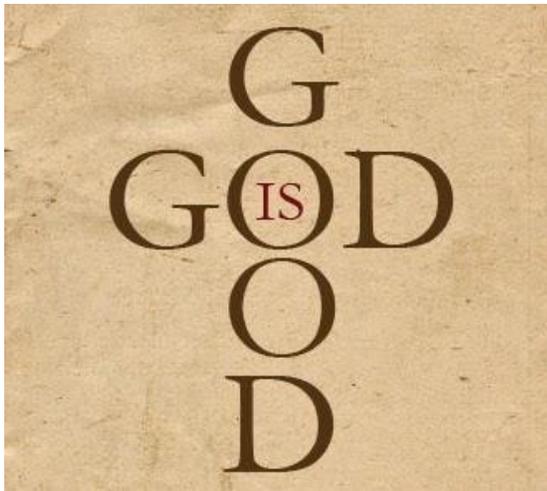
A Message from the Rector: The Fruit of the Holy Spirit: Goodness

The fruit of goodness reflects an essential virtue of God's nature. Origen (185-254 AD), an ante-Nicene Church Father, refutes the argument that the goodness and justice of God are mutually exclusive. He declares, "The God of the law and the Gospels is one and the same, a just and good God... He confers benefits justly, and punishes with kindness; since neither goodness without justice, nor justice without goodness, can display the real dignity of the divine nature" (Cap. 5.3, *De Principiis*).

Matthew 19:16-17). But this goodness that God alone has, He imparts to man through His indwelling Holy Spirit if we just trust God to do this and follow the direction given us by the Spirit as He leads us into the fullness of obedience to God the Father.

In the Lord's view, a tree is either good or bad— if good, it bears good fruit; if bad, it bears bad fruit (*St. Luke 6:43*). This is a metaphor for a human being: if he is good, he brings forth good out of the good treasure of his heart; if he is evil, he produces evil out of the evil treasure of his heart (*St. Luke 6:45*). This is a yardstick against which to measure all our thoughts, words, and deeds.

Samuel, in replying to the people of Israel after the thunder and rain that signaled the Lord's displeasure with Israel's request for a king, told them, "Moreover as for



Goodness originates from God, so much so, that when a young man questions Jesus, saying, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?", Jesus replies, "Why callest thou Me good? There is none good but one, that is God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" (*St.*

The goodness of God must be expressed in our lives by our showing love and doing good to all, even to our enemies (*St. Matthew 5:44-46*), thus showing that we are children of our Father "who causes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain to the just and to the unjust."

me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way: Only fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things He hath done for

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The Fruit of the Holy Spirit: Goodness

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you” (*I Samuel 12:23-24*). The beginning of goodness is reverence for the Lord and obedience to Him from the heart.

One of the secrets of those who represent the good soil in which the seed of God’s word is sown is to have an “honest and good heart” and, having heard the word, to keep it and produce fruit with patience (*St. Luke 8:15*).

things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

By reflecting on all that is true, honest, just, pure, lovely, reputable,

study of God’s word, the grace of God floods our being to confront sin within ourselves. Because God is good, His Law is good, too, as Holy Scripture testifies in a number of places. In *Psalms 119:68*, we read of God: “Thou art good and gracious; O teach me Thy statutes.” We also learn to be good by imitating God, who is good, and this is done by keeping His commandments. The prophet Micah expressed this powerfully and succinctly in these words, “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” (*Micah 6:8*). Just actions, a delight to show mercy, and living humbly in relationship with God comprise goodness. The goodness of God which people long for in their lives, if they want to please God, is not simply moral excellence or just behavior in itself, but it embraces mercy, kindness, gentleness, and humility in relating to God and people around us. Therefore, the idea of the virtues which comprise the fruit of the Holy Spirit as joining hand in hand is essential for a right understanding even of goodness.

Since the goodness of God leads to repentance (*Romans 2:4*), how eagerly must we be doing

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***With this in mind,
we constantly pray for you,
that our God
may make you worthy of His calling,
and that by His power
He may bring to fruition
your every desire for goodness
and your every deed
prompted by faith.***

II Thessalonians 1:11

Goodness can be described as “uprightness of heart and life”, integrity which is revealed in intentions, attitudes, words, and actions. God grows this goodness in our lives by the action of His Spirit day by day. St. Paul in *Philippians 4:8* encourages Christians to foster goodness by meditating on it:

Finally, brethren,
whatsoever
things are true,
whatsoever

virtuous, and praiseworthy, we foster such goodness and virtue in our mental habits, and our words and actions are more likely to conform to God’s goodness. In fact, we must meditate on such goodness and virtue simply because it takes great effort on our part to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in conforming ourselves to the character of the Lord Jesus Christ. Through such meditation, including the reading and

The Fruit of the Holy Spirit: Goodness

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good, and reflecting God's goodness in our own lives, so that our repentance may be genuine in God's sight, and our eternal reward be "glory, honor, and peace" (*Romans 2:10*)! When writing of how the Gentiles like a wild olive branch were grafted into the stock of Israel, the natural olive tree, St. Paul calls on his readers to note the severity and goodness of God: "Behold therefore the goodness and the severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off" (*Romans 11:22*). From this verse it is clear that "goodness" is used in the sense of "kindness." Christians have an obligation to "continue in God's goodness" by living in obedience to Him, fulfilling His will, and trusting in Him for His gifts of grace and righteousness given through Christ.

The more we consider God's goodness in all its aspects and the more we reflect that virtue in our lives, the more daunting a task it appears to be since goodness is not just kindness, but doing what is good, right, and just and standing up for what is right, good, and just. It may involve correcting those committed to our care whom we love when they are misbehaving in order to teach them to

conduct themselves properly. The cost of our firmness in standing up for goodness and the love exemplified and taught by the Lord Jesus Christ may well be that others misunderstand us or even oppose us and ridicule us.

With what picture of God's goodness, then, are we left in the end? It is the picture of the Lord Jesus Christ's goodness. This is a goodness shown in the absolute integrity of His life in all its aspects—

other virtues of the Holy Spirit which are exemplified in the life, passion, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As we celebrate our Lord's resurrection and look forward to Pentecost, let us examine how we can let God's goodness take root and grow in our lives!

— *The Reverend Christopher Parrish*

***His divine power has given us
everything we need for a godly life
through our knowledge of Him who called us
by His own glory and goodness.
Through these He has given us
His very great and precious promises,
so that through them
you may participate in the divine nature,
having escaped the corruption in the world
caused by evil desires.***

II St. Peter 1:3-4

sincerity and uprightness, devout character, overflowing with the love of God and man. His goodness is not self-righteous or contemptuous of others, not even of the woman caught in adultery (*St. John 8:2-11*); yet He stands for God's truth and goodness, not being afraid to reprove even religious leaders for their hypocrisy and unkindness to others (*St. Matthew 12:1-37*). God's goodness is linked hand in hand with all the

Two Ways to Use Old Nylons to Do Good



It has been a while since I have put out the reminder call for your used, clean nylon stockings and pantyhose for the Monkey Toy Makers of the Los Altos Senior Center. So... here is the reminder!

The Monkey Toy Makers use the nylons to stuff the sock monkeys that they make for the patients at Lucille Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford. Your donations not only reduce waste in our environment but are reused to make darling

toys to sooth children in crisis.

I am thinking, also, that you can ask for nylons from your friends, neighbors, and coworkers as a way to slide into an evangelistic conversation: Tell people that there is someone at your church, St. Luke's Chapel in the Hills, who collects used, clean stockings for the Monkey Toy Makers, and that you will be happy to collect their contributions. I collect stockings from my Chapel Family and also from my friends at my Jazzercise class and our square dance club.

Asking for donations is certainly a conversation starter, and one in which you can bring up your church connection along with the story of how the stockings will be used for such a worthwhile project.

There is a labeled manila envelope in the Narthex of the Chapel into which you may place the hosiery you collect. I am happy to take in and deliver all of the nylons that you can get!

— Lee Ann Vojvoda

Using God's Measure

As we continue to consider how making a Christmas pudding can remind us of some of the ways God works in our lives, it is time to measure our ingredients. If one wishes to follow a recipe successfully, it is important to measure carefully and accurately. God also uses measures to teach us to live as He requires¹ so that we may grow ever more Christ-like.

God is deeply concerned about justice and strictly warns us not to cheat our fellow men by

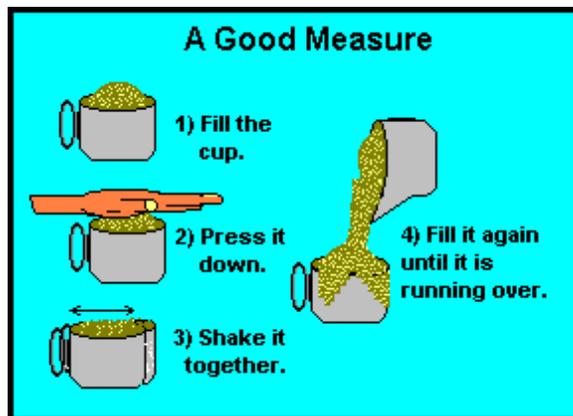
using short measures and counterfeit weights². His measures are perfectly fair, and He demands that ours be so, too, if we are to imitate the character of

blessing.

Consider just a few of the examples of God's good measure from Scripture. When God promised Pharaoh seven years of plenty, Joseph stopped keeping records of the food produced in Egypt because the supply was beyond measure³. Likewise, when Solomon asked God for the gift of wisdom to rule Israel, God gave it to him abundantly⁴. When

Jesus prayed for His disciples, He did so in order that they might have the full measure of His joy

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Christ. Because our human nature does not lead us naturally to pursue perfection, God helps us through examples, warnings, and promises of

Using God's Measure

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within them⁵. God gives unstintingly⁶, but, because He is faithful, just, and merciful, He also never gives us more than we deserve or can bear⁷.

As Christians indwelt by the Holy Spirit, we are called and commanded to mature spiritually⁸. While we are new creations in Christ⁹, God understands that, because we are living in this fallen world, we still have struggles with our old natures¹⁰. These old natures fear punishment and love rewards, and so God uses both of these in addition to His own amazing example to lead us to practice His standards.

For me, the scariest word in the Bible is *as*: "And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."¹¹ Yikes! That means God forgives me my sins to the same extent and at the same time I forgive my fellow man. As David writes in *Psalms* 51:4, "Against You, You only, have I sinned and done this evil in Your sight." Think of it this way: The sins committed against me by my fellow men compare to a scattering of dust, but my sins against God amount to every mountain range on the Earth. I want to be forgiven, and that completely and right speedily! If I want to receive forgiveness and mercy, I must also practice giving forgiveness and mercy. This is one of the great

truths of Jesus' warning that "with the measure **you use, it will be measured to you.**"¹²

If these warnings are deeply convicting, God's promises of reward abound with encouragement. As troubling as Jesus' words in *St. Matthew* 7:2 may sound, *St. Mark* 4:24 records that He also said "and even more". St. Luke describes the same teaching with these heartening promises:

"Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

St. Luke 6:37-38

Truly, God is great and good and just and merciful, and He desires that we be the same. What an incredible blessing to know that this is attainable! Through the knowledge of His boundless love and power, St. Paul assures us that we may be **filled to the measure of all the fullness of God**:

And I pray that

you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Ephesians
3:17b-19

Alleluia, and amen!

— Kim Vogel

Footnotes

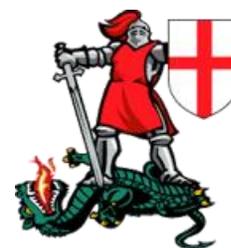
1. *Micah* 6:8
 2. *Deuteronomy* 25:15-16; *Proverbs* 20:10
 3. *Genesis* 41:49
 4. *I Kings* 4:29
 5. *St. John* 17:13
 6. *Lamentations* 3:22-23
 7. *Jeremiah* 30:11;
I Corinthians 10:13;
II Corinthians 5:10
 8. *Colossians* 2:6-7, 9-10;
I St. Peter 2:2
 9. *II Corinthians* 5:17
 10. *Romans* 7:14-25
 11. *St. Matthew* 6:12
 12. *St. Matthew* 7:2
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Parish Postings

The 2016 Synod of the Diocese of the West of the Reformed Episcopal Church will be held at St. John's Anglican Church in Boerne, Texas, from Tuesday, April 5th, through Thursday, April 7th. Please pray that:

- the Synod will be a God-honoring, Spirit-filled event;
- each delegate will seek and boldly perform the will of God in every consideration and decision;
- they will be of one mind even as we are of one family in Christ Jesus; and

- God will select and specially anoint the Convocational Vicar-General to be elected at the Synod.



St. Luke's Chapel in the Hills will host its annual celebration of our British heritage on Sunday, April 17th. Our celebration will begin with Holy Communion at 10:00 AM. Afterward, we will enjoy a potluck luncheon of favorite British treats (or other fare, as you feel inclined). Invite your friends!

The Vestry has chosen to raise funds for the America Diabetes Association's Tour de Cure as the second quarter Community Missions Project. If you wish to donate to this project, please make a note of your contribution on your check memo line or offertory envelope. Thank you!



Upcoming Events

Tuesday, April 5th, through Thursday, April 7th

2016 Synod of the Diocese of the West
of the Reformed Episcopal Church

*St. John's Anglican Church
Boerne, Texas*

Sunday, April 10th

The Second Sunday after Resurrection Sunday

Bible Study: Ruth
9:15 AM

Office of Daily Morning Prayer
10:00 AM

Holy Communion
noon

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Upcoming Events

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Saturday, April 16th

Joanna's Circle

9:30 AM

Sunday, April 17th

The Third Sunday after Resurrection Sunday

British Day

Bible Study: Ruth

9:15 AM

Holy Communion

10:00 AM

British Day Potluck

immediately following the worship service

Sunday, April 24th

The Fourth Sunday after Resurrection Sunday

Bible Study: Romans

9:15 AM

Office of Daily Morning Prayer

10:00 AM

Holy Communion

noon

Vestry Meeting

immediately following the noon worship service

Sunday, May 1st

Rogation Sunday

The Fifth Sunday after Resurrection Sunday

Bible Study: Romans

9:15 AM

Holy Communion

with Healing Service

and Blessing of the Chapel Gardens

10:00 AM





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A PUBLICATION OF
ST. LUKE'S CHAPEL IN THE HILLS
ANGLICAN CHURCH

A PARISH OF
THE DIOCESE OF THE WEST,
THE REFORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
A FOUNDING JURISDICTION OF
THE ANGLICAN CHURCH
IN NORTH AMERICA

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«AddressBlock»

Worship Schedule

St.

Luke's Chapel in the Hills is a traditional Anglican parish which uses the 1928 edition *Book of Common Prayer*. We invite you to join us for worship soon!

*"A place
where the Bible is taught."*



*Biblical in teaching.
Liturgical in worship.
Loving in practice.*

First Sunday of each month

Holy Communion with Healing Service
10:00 AM

Second and fourth Sundays each month

Office of Daily Morning Prayer
10:00 AM

Said Holy Communion
noon

Third and fifth Sunday each month and Feast Days

Holy Communion
10:00 AM