



Lutheran Church Extension Fund

> where investments build ministry

FAITHFUL AND FRUITFUL STEWARDS

Tasting the Spirit's Fruit

(Note: Lutheran Church Extension Fund offers this devotional reflection for congregation committees, stewardship partners, families, and individuals. May the Spirit's fruit bring a sweet taste to the church.)

"The fruit of the Spirit is . . . goodness." Galatians 5:22

"This dessert is really good." "Did you see that good movie?" "You are really a good piano player." "If you are good, we'll take you to the park." There are many situations in which the word "good" is used. The reference to goodness in the fruits of Galatians chapter 5 has no basis on our character or performance. In the life of the Christian goodness is a fruit of the Spirit.

The Spirit directs us always to God's goodness. *"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good." (Psalm 136:1)* God's goodness manifests itself in the person and work of Christ. When the rich young man sought to justify himself by his own goodness, Jesus responded, *"There is only one who is good." (Matthew 19:17)* The goodness of God is finally and completely revealed in Jesus Christ. Jesus' earthly ministry was marked with His goodness to the hungry, diseased, and disheartened. Jesus' ultimate act of goodness was His going to the cross for the eternal good of the sinful world. Only through the sacrifice of Jesus could we be seen as good by our Heavenly Father.

Gifted in God's grace and the Spirit's power, we respond with goodness. The Spirit places us His fruitful trees in the contexts of our lives. We are blessed to be good and faithful stewards. We are instruments of His goodness in the home, church, community, workplace, and every context in which the Spirit leads us.

Lutheran Church Extension Fund is a good ministry partner of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. LCEF ministry representatives give good service. Investors receive a good interest rate. Young Investor Club is a good opportunity for children to learn how to save and share. LCEF investments provide good loan rates for churches and schools to expand and update facilities. The motivation for LCEF ministry is to celebrate that God is good in Christ. In His name we seek the good of the Kingdom together.

More information on the good resources, services, and investment opportunities of LCEF can be received by contacting LCEF Vice-President, Carole White (carole.white@lcef.org) or visiting www.lcef.org.

Prayer: "Lord of all good, our gifts we bring You now; Use them Your holy purpose to fulfill. Tokens of love and pledges they shall be, That our whole life is offered to Your will." Amen. LSB #786