



# FREEDOM<sub>CHURCH</sub>

**"...where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Freedom."**

**2 Corinthians 3:17**

**Service Time: Sundays at 10 am**

## **Pastor Mark's Remarks**

I recently read an article summarizing the findings of a study commissioned by the United Nations to explore and rank the levels of happiness of the people living in 156 different countries. I won't bore you with the six different metrics used in this study, but suffice it to say that this is a legitimate annual attempt to find where on earth people are the happiest. I assumed that people would be happiest in the sunniest places on earth where the weather is best or where life is the most comfortable. But I was very wrong.

For starters, the U.S. came in at number 19 on the list. That was a bit of surprise since some of the metrics used involved such things as finances and certain freedoms. Now for the real surprise. The top five countries with the happiest people in 2019 were: 1.) Finland, 2.) Denmark, 3.) Norway, 4.) Iceland, and 5.) the Netherlands. And in case geography isn't your thing, let me point out some things that these five countries have in common. They are all very cold northern countries with extremely long, harsh, dark winters. (Finland is known for its frequent stormy weather!).

So how in the world are these people in such cold, stormy, and frequently dark places so happy? Some of the researchers have come to interesting conclusions. I'll mention three observations about people in Finland that caught my attention: 1.) People are frequently outdoors interacting—even in bad weather. Since the weather is bad so often, people don't wait for "sunny days" to get out and enjoy life with others. 2.) Much time is spent in the evenings with neighbors and playing sports...with little time devoted to TV. 3.) Life is simplified and scaled in such a way that people often walk or bike to where they are going, choose jobs which do not require a lengthy commute, and do not allow life to revolve around transporting children to and from activities.

As I read these findings, I sensed that God was saying, "Pause and learn some lessons from your Scandinavian neighbors." They don't allow long, cold nights or stormy days to dictate the quality of their lives. How many times have I let circumstances such as the weather, my schedule, the humidity, or my disdain for sweating prevent me from getting out to enjoy the wonderful world and people around me? How many evenings do I settle for mindless TV time rather than being active or creative about how to engage with my family and friends? How can I simplify my life so that I spend less hours per week under a roof or in a car and spend more hours outdoors enjoying nature, people and God's presence?

The Christian life is meant to be so much more than "Read your Bible and go to church." God wants us to discover real joy and happiness. And getting there will likely require some changes in our perspective, our schedule, our habits, our circle of friends, and our pace of life. We can't just wait for sunny days to make us happy. May we discover again the ability to find happiness in the world God has made for us and in the people He has put around us!



You Are Loved!  
Mark

## **April 2019 Special Dates**

- **March 31: Core Team (3:45); Small Group Leaders (4:45); Freedom Night (6:00)**
- **March 31—April 3: No Small Groups**
- **April 14: Palm Sunday**
- **April 17: No Youth Service (Spring Break)**
- **April 19: Good Friday Service (6:00)**
- **April 20: Spring Family Fun Day (10:00-noon)**
- **April 21: Resurrection Sunday**
- **Celebrate Recovery every Thursday at 6:15 pm**
- **Freedom's youth meet on Wednesdays, 6-8 pm**

## Food Collection for the Needy



Freedom Church has volunteered to supply all of the food for people in need in our area for the month of April through Ecumenical Ministries. One of the ways that Jesus said that we show ourselves to be His followers is by feeding the hungry among "the least of these" around us. So throughout the month of April we are asking that you bring non-perishable items and drop them off at the collection point in the church foyer. Items needed include the following:

Canned meats (critical need)

Peanut Butter

Jelly (critical need)

Powdered Milk

Macaroni and Cheese

Dry Pasta

Rice

Coffee and Tea

Cereal (critical need)

Oatmeal, Grits, Cream of Wheat

Canned and Dry Soups

Canned Fruit (critical need)

Pasta Sauce (critical need)

Pork & Beans (critical need)

Dry Beans

Muffin & Biscuit Mixes

As a kickoff to the food drive, we are asking everyone who attends Freedom Night on March 31<sup>st</sup>, to bring one or more of the items above with them that evening.

## New Student Pastors

With Charlie and Katie Lemon preparing to soon launch a new church in their home in Robertsedale, they will be stepping away from their role as student pastors at Freedom Church at the end of March. We are excited to see what God has in store for Katie and Charlie and we are grateful for what they have poured into our students over the past year. And we are very blessed to have Stone and Caroline Keener stepping up to take over as our new Student Pastors as of April 1<sup>st</sup>. Stone and Caroline both love Jesus and our students! They have served faithfully as interns in this area for nearly two years, and we are thrilled see them bring their enthusiasm and passion to this vital ministry area of Freedom Church. Please join me in extending our appreciation to Charlie and Katie and in congratulating Stone and Caroline for the new role that God has called them to serve in at Freedom!

## Student Ministry

It might seem like it's a long time until June, but it's already time to register for the summer youth trip to Student Life Camp at Lookout Mountain in Georgia. We are asking that all students register by April 30<sup>th</sup> to attend the camp, which will be held June 2<sup>nd</sup> - June 6<sup>th</sup>. If you have any questions about the camp, ask Stone or Caroline or email Stone at [stone@myfreedomchurch.net](mailto:stone@myfreedomchurch.net).



Our new series, "The Journey of Joseph," will kick off in April. We look forward to diving into this series with our students!

**Freedom Church • 101 Ecor Rouge Place • Fairhope, AL 36532**

## Nigeria Giving Update

We were honored in March to host our good friend, Isaiah Kadiri, from Nigeria. Pastor Isaiah shared how they are hoping to plant their 14<sup>th</sup> church in Nigeria in April, and you were faithful to give toward making that a reality. On that one Sunday morning, you as a church gave almost \$2,400 to go toward the church-planting work in Nigeria. Thank you for giving generously!

## Spring Family Fun Day Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 10-noon

Hey kids! Hop on over to the Davison's home on April 20<sup>th</sup> from 10-noon for some Easter family fun! There will be an egg hunt, a water slide, and more. Lunch will be provided. Bring the whole family for some outdoor fun!

Be sure to bring an Easter basket, swimsuit, sunscreen, and a towel. We look forward to a wonderful time with you all! The Davison home is located in Spanish Fort at 10758 Old Spanish Fort Hwy. If you have questions, call Mrs. Lyn at 251-454-2561.

Keep Smiling,  
Sabrina and Lyn



## Freedom Night on Sunday, March 31<sup>st</sup>

On Sunday, March 31<sup>st</sup>. at 6:00 pm, we will have a time of music, devotion, and prayer. You'll hear hymns played on hammered dulcimer, Praise and Worship songs played by a variety of different folks, and some songs you might not expect - and will think differently of afterwards!

## Celebrate Recovery on Thursdays

At Freedom Church, we believe that everyone is recovering from something. Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered recovery ministry for anyone struggling with hurt, habit or addiction of any kind. It is a safe place to find community, encouragement and freedom from the issues that are controlling your life or the life of someone you love. We meet at 6:15 on Thursday nights in the Grace Room and we would love to have you join us. Supper and child-care are provided by the church.

***Come, let's talk this over, says the Lord; no matter  
how deep the stain of your sins, I can take it out  
and make you as clean as freshly fallen snow. Even  
if you are stained as red as crimson, I can make you  
white as wool! - Isaiah 1:18 TLB***

Like us on Facebook and check our website at [www.myfreedomchurch.net](http://www.myfreedomchurch.net)!



## Bible Readings for April

<b>April 1-7:</b>	<b>Mark 2-6; Psalms 37-39</b>
<b>April 8-14:</b>	<b>Mark 7-11; Psalms 40-42</b>
<b>April 15-21:</b>	<b>Mark 12-16; Psalms 43-45</b>
<b>April 22-28:</b>	<b>2 Cor. 1-5; Psalms 46-49</b>
<b>April 29-May 5:</b>	<b>2 Cor. 6-10; Psalms 50-52</b>



### Freedom Staff

<b>Pastor</b>	Mark Price	<a href="mailto:mark@myfreedomchurch.net">mark@myfreedomchurch.net</a>
<b>Student Ministers</b>	Stone and Caroline Keener	<a href="mailto:stone@myfreedomchurch.net">stone@myfreedomchurch.net</a> <a href="mailto:caroline@myfreedomchurch.net">caroline@myfreedomchurch.net</a>
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<b>Secretary</b>	Beth Osborne	<a href="mailto:beth@myfreedomchurch.net">beth@myfreedomchurch.net</a>
<b>Preschool Minister</b>	Sabrina Ankerson	<a href="mailto:sabrina@myfreedomchurch.net">sabrina@myfreedomchurch.net</a>
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Not able to be with us on Sunday? Join us live online at 10 am!