

Winter 2020

# Sharing *the Story*

Wesley Freedom: Generosity in Action Magazine



Commit your work to the LORD, and  
your plans will be established.

Proverbs 16:3

# Take Hold of Every Dream

Senior Pastor Tony Love



To my Dear Church Family and Friends,

Greetings of grace and peace. As I reflect upon 2019, I give thanks to God for you and rejoice over the marvelous ways you have been in ministry and mission for the cause of Jesus the Christ. I delight in the multiple ways God has been doing good in and through you. I cannot express my gratitude enough for your faithful support of Wesley Freedom United Methodist Church throughout last year. Since my arrival in July 2019, you have seen loved ones move away and new friends join us; you have experienced joys and sorrows; you have officially and formally opened the Family Resource Center; supported community and faith partners, not to mention missionaries both near and far; as well as grown in your efforts to shape disciples who make disciples of others. You have witnessed God's grace walking the halls of Wesley Freedom and felt God's presence creating new hope and possibilities. Therefore in my spirit, I have high hopes for our church's future as we continue to pursue our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ who share the story of God's grace.

In this new year, I have invited every staff member, every committee and every ministry to dream. And to dream BIG! To imagine the greater work of ministry or mission God has placed within their minds, hearts and souls. To believe God for the vision as well as the provision to make their dreams come to pass. And now, I invite every member and friend of Wesley Freedom to dream BIG too. In 2020, I want us to show through our preaching, teaching, studying, worship, witness, fellowship and giving, that as God's people, we are living proof that God is faithful. It is God's faithfulness that has given us our rich past and it's God's faithfulness that will fuel our future mission, ministry and outreach into our homes, communities and the world. With God and God's faithfulness, together let us launch out into the deep, stretch forth into impossible possibility and reach up to take hold of every dream God has determined is ours, Wesley Freedom. I can't wait, can you?

I remain God's servant and your brother, - PTL



Over 2400 joined us at our 8  
Christmas Eve Services.



*"Give away your life; you'll find life given back, but not merely given back - given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity." - Luke 6:38 from The Message*

This Christmas Holiday Season, because of the radical and gracious generosity of our church family and friends, the Wesley Freedom Family Resource Center was able to:

provide 4 families with food and gifts for Christmas Day;

assist more than 25 persons with daily household and personal needs from our Blessings' Closet;

support Shepherd's Staff by stuffing over 100 children stockings and senior sacks, help countless individuals with hats, coats, gloves, blankets and other items to stay warm; aid a person with securing a donated car; continue offering meals to persons at our Feed My Sheep Lunch Ministry and groceries through our South Carroll Food Pantry Ministry.

THANK YOU! Your extravagant giving on Christmas Eve has allowed us to touch hearts and lend a helping hand to those who deserve it, as well as expand our Shepherd's Staff programming. Because of you, we are able to support a second Sober Living Home and to increase the number of support groups available to assist persons and families coping with addiction and mental health issues.

We are boldly looking into the future and seeking the guidance of God.

For your outpouring of love and generosity, may God richly bless you and yours.

Grace and peace,

Sharon Feldman, Family Resource Center Director



*Thanks to Brenda Bowman and her helpers for capturing the day in pictures. See more on our facebook page.*



# **DUST BEGINNING TO DREAM**

I am so excited for everything God has in store for the Youth Ministries here at Wesley Freedom. My first few months have shown just how much God is already at work here, and how passionate and committed the youth and adults within our ministry are. God is good, all the time!

Taylor Boone, Director of Youth Ministries

The remainder of 2020 will continue to be a season of observing and learning for me. I am excited to watch all the spring and summer events roll around and am prayerful that God will continue to work through our youth and community during each of them. We have so much to be thankful for in the upcoming months: Discovery Weekend, Confirmation Retreat and Ceremony, and summer Mission Trips, to name a few.

I cannot thank the people at WFUMC enough for their continued support of the Youth Ministry Program, and for their warm welcome to me and my family.



# Raising Up Followers Of Jesus

Sherry Perrine, Director of Children and Family Ministries



## All In Sunday School

We began the Season of Advent with intentionality and purpose with “All In Sunday School”. The high school and middle school classes planned and provided the worship experience and lesson for the Elementary students. Our focus was on giving instead of getting and following the lesson, students traveled to six stations where they engaged in hands on activities creating laundry kits, emergency meal kits and placemats for our Feed My Sheep guests. The kits were received by Shepherd’s Staff. It was a meaningful way to begin Advent.

## Family Christmas Eve Services

Four Family Services! Four casts and crews! One real Baby Jesus! Oh my! One of the most important things we do during the course of the year is the time we spend with the casts and crews of the Family Christmas Eve Services. Most of the services practiced all four weeks of Advent! The children and youth began to recognize themselves as worship leaders and realized the importance and privilege we have to share the very special story of Jesus’ Birth. Prayer, patience, laughter, questions, excitement, nervousness and joy went into the telling. Each service was special and the Christ Story came to life in a thoughtful and faithful manner.



**Looking ahead!** From the hymn by Richard Avery and Donald Marsh, church families often lift their voices and sing, “I am the church! You are the church! We are the church together! All who follow Jesus, all around the world, Yes, we’re the church together!” At Wesley Freedom, our Children’s and Families Ministries is committed to raising up followers of Jesus who will change the world as we study, learn and live into God’s Word.

As we continue to offer opportunities to grow up in the faith, Children’s and Families Ministries is still welcoming and nurturing children, youth and their families. We seek to expand peoples understanding that an important element of worship is service. As a community of believers, we are all in this together. We should be seeking ways to help each other, love each other and serve each other. When you are serving in the Nursery, Children’s and Family Ministries you are fulfilling one of the functions of the church.

A dream of this ministry is to sustain a second Sunday School Hour. In order to be successful in this effort, we need persons to prayerfully consider helping one Sunday a month to share in the joy, excitement and labor of love to raise up children and youth in faith, fun and fellowship.

We continue to seek more opportunities to connect children, youth and families to mission and outreach in concrete ways. We wish to expand our support and partnership with Shepherd’s Staff and the Family Resource Center. Our next opportunity will be Spiritual Easter Baskets.

We wish to expand intergenerational service opportunities, building on our “Intergenerational Pancake Supper Team”. Learning, growing and serving together enriches and blesses all.

VBS continues to be a rich and vibrant ministry. Our team of leaders is seeking individuals to grow the team and explore new ways to engage and connect with the larger community.

As we look forward to the many blessings God has in store, we would invite you to consider how you might lean into this ministry with your gifts and grace. Your contribution of time or of service and presence would be greatly appreciated.

# Wesley Freedom Family

## Witnessing the Power of Community

Sydney Scher, Liberty High School Intern



I started my internship in the Family Resource Center soon after this previous Labor Day. Prior to beginning, I had no idea I'd be witness to a period of such transition but more importantly positive, exponential growth. After being introduced to the office staff on my very first day, I was immediately updated on the progress of the Shepherd's Staff satellite office integration into Wesley Freedom's Family Resource Center. Soon after I started interning, we hosted the ribbon cutting grand opening of the satellite office, an event where many community members came to show their support. That day I spoke to several attendees eager to learn how they could contribute to the services of the resource center. Also, I showed

groups of community members the office of the Family Resource Center and the beginnings of the Blessings Closet. Little did I know that very soon the hardly-filled shelves of the closet would become an overflowing storage area. Due to the extreme generosity of the community, the Blessings Closet has expanded into the rest of the office and has overtaken additional offices by necessity. The

community outpouring of support was so much greater than anyone would have predicted that day in September. Through donations of both time and materials, the church congregation has displayed its care and support for its greater community. I've watched the volunteer calendar in the resource center

remain continuously filled, as well as the donation bins that sit outside the church office. I recall a time in December when the Blessings Closet was running low on rolls of paper towels specifically. When I returned the following week, I had found packages on top of packages of paper towels placed in the Family Resource Center donation bin, waiting to fill the needs of the community. This immediate outpouring of support is seen now nearly daily. Whether it's through the overflowing piles of clothing donated for the cold weather shelter in Westminster, or the donation of baby clothes and supplies, the community's strong sense of giving astounds me every day. Since my very first day, I've been so grateful to be able to witness the expansion of a resource center that's been generated from our tight-knit community's commitment to being there for each other.



*Hundreds of mittens and gloves were collected for the Cold Weather Shelter, Feed My Sheep and Food Pantry Guests, Shepherd's Staff and UEmpower.*



*Liberty High School Assistant Principal Meghan Brown and Carroll County Schools Pupil Personnel Worker Rose Pentz pose with Sydney upon delivering donations collected by Liberty High School students and staff for the Resource Center.*

# Resource Center

## Dare...Reach...Expect...Aim...Meet

By Sharon, Feldman, Director of the Family Resource Center

Walt Disney said, "All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them". There is one little word in this statement that I would change. I would change the word "if" to "when"; "All our dreams can come true "when" we have the courage to pursue them". That little conjunction means, in the event that, on condition, that something will only come true, "if" we do something. But, let's replace that conjunction with the noun "when"; which according to Merriam/Webster means, "The time in which something is done or comes about".

In other words when, not if, we have the courage to pursue our dreams they can come true. My dream for 2020 is that we **Dare** to dream big of the kind of impact we can make in our community through the Family Resource Center. That we **Reach** those in our community with the message of God's love through serving those that are marginalized. That we **Expect** God to show up because He is faithful; we are reminded that, "He who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." I dream that we will **Aim** high with our goals of adding resource, support, mission opportunities, etc. because with God all things are possible. Finally, when we dare to dream big, when we reach out to those in our community, when we expect God to be in our midst, when we aim high we will then **Meet** the needs of those in Carroll County who deserve resources and support.

Thank you for the support you gave to the Family Resource Center in 2019 and I pray you will **DREAM** along with me in 2020.

## Pressing On

Brenda Meadows, Executive Director for Shepherd's Staff

The word "dreams" is defined as a cherished aspiration, ambition, or ideal. From the perspective of The Shepherd's Staff ideally our dream would be that there would be no need for the programs or services we offer. Realistically, our dreams are to continue to expand our ministry in Westminster, at Wesley Freedom and throughout Carroll County, bringing programs, events and volunteer opportunities in order to better serve our guests. We'll be looking at innovative ideas to continue to help serve people where they are and empower them with the tools necessary to move toward self-sufficiency. We will have done our job if we've helped resolve short-term crisis and our guests have been able to work toward and achieve permanent solutions.



(Above) Shepherd's Staff volunteer, Connie Zumbrun, stocking the Blessing Closet.

(Left) We collected more than 100 Sacks for Seniors and Stockings for Children.

# Dreams Rooted in The Greatest Commandment

Roger DeShong, Mission Ministry

As head of the Wesley Freedom

Mission Team, I was asked to reflect on my dream for this ministry in the coming year. The answer to this question is simple. My dream is that everyone who calls Wesley Freedom home is in some way actively participating in hands on service. This is how we grow as disciples and how we grow as a church. Discipleship is rooted in following the teachings of Jesus who when asked which one of the commandments was the most important answered:

*"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.*

*All the Law and prophets hang on these two commandments" - Matthew 22:37-40.*

Jesus has given us the GPS coordinates to start our lifelong journey toward destination discipleship. If we are truly following these two commandments then we are following all of the commandments.

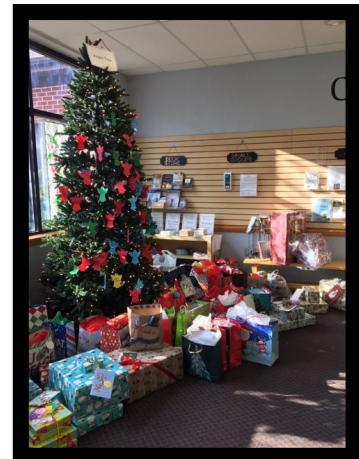


Many participated in preparing Thanksgiving boxes

On our journey however, it is important to remember that as members of the Wesley Freedom Family we have an obligation to live up to our mission statement to *Make disciples of Jesus Christ who share the story of God's grace*. This means that while we are working on our own discipleship, we are hopefully bringing others along for the ride to either start or further their own discipleship journey. I can think of no better way to accomplish this task than to engage in service to our neighbors in need.

The hard part about service is getting started. So, here are some practical tips for starting the new year with a new emphasis on Loving your God and neighbor through service. Start with prayer. Pray that God will open your eyes to the needs of your neighbors and pay attention to the opportunities that arise. Pay particular attention to that nagging thought which keeps entering your head. Some of my favorite mission experiences have happened when I listened to that little voice in my head calling me to action. Next, actively search for opportunities to serve that utilize your talents and interests. Conduct an internet search for local organizations that serve a cause which you are passionate about. Or simply, go to

**[Wesleyfreedom.org](http://Wesleyfreedom.org)** and view the many ministries we support. Finally, get involved, but do so without fear. Be ready to step out of your comfort zone and try something different or new. Trust that God will provide you with the necessary skills, words and abilities to be effective. Be flexible. Service can be as simple as asking a neighbor in need how you can help. Or join the Mission Committee, new members are always welcome. You could make it a family affair and serve as a youth leader while your child attends youth group. Ask your bible study or other small group to set a date to serve together. Go on a Mission Trip - utilize your skills or learn new ones. Ambitious? Find an unaddressed need in the community and start your own ministry. The opportunities to serve are endless. We only need to make Loving our God and Loving our neighbor as a priority in this new year. In doing so, we will be headed in the right direction toward true discipleship.



Our Angel Tree served over  
100 Families.

# Dreams that Bring Us Together

Dan Eschliman, Director of Worship

Worshipers of Wesley Freedom,  
2019 was an exciting year for worship and music at Wesley Freedom!



We welcomed  
Ela Wiswakarma  
to our staff as our  
part-time director  
of the Orchestra  
and Wesley  
Freedom Brass



Our organist,  
Rosita Treat  
celebrated her  
tenth year of  
ministry with us.

*Above 3 Photos by Brenda Bowman*



We assembled an  
intergenerational choir  
and orchestra, ranging in  
age from 4 to 80, to offer  
music for Easter worship  
and our annual  
Christmas Cantata.



We welcomed our  
two new pastors,  
Rev. Tony Love  
and Rev. Ian  
Collier, who have  
both brought fresh  
ideas and spirit to  
our worship life



A group of musicians led by saxophonist Bill Bjorkgren and vocalist Karen Stebner held the debut concert of RESILIENCE, a traveling worship team with the goal of sharing hope in Jesus beyond the walls of our church

Looking forward into 2020, there are many things I am excited about!

- \* We will be **adjusting our worship times** starting on Easter Sunday: 8:00 and 9:30 Traditional, and 11:00 Contemporary. We hope that the added time between services will help with the transition between services both in the parking lot and in the building, and give us time for fellowship as a church body.
- \* I am dreaming of a third performance of our Christmas Cantata in December 2020. I've heard of churches that take these programs "on the road" to prisons, hospitals, or rehab facilities, to spread the good news of Christmas in the community. If you have ideas of somewhere we could go, please reach out and talk to me.

I cannot wait to see what this "New Season" of ministry will bring.

# Supporting the Dreams of those Around Us

Wesley Freedom United Methodist Women

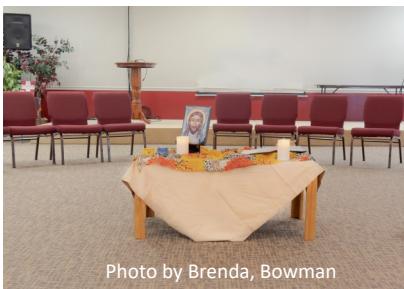


Photo by Brenda, Bowman

The Women's Retreat lead by Jackie Antkowiak was held in October and was a great experience. The women were introduced to new ways of praying, for example praying in color (coloring and drawing pictures of things or people you want to lift up to God). We also prayed for each other in small groups.

We had fabulous weather allowing us to have time in nature to pray as well. Rhodes Grove Conference Center has beautiful grounds for walking.

I hope other women in the church will consider joining us for next year's retreat the weekend of October 16-18, 2020. - JoEllen Boyer,

Retreat Committee

Blessing and Grace from the United Methodist Women. I've been involved with the UMW at Wesley Freedom for almost 20 years. It started when some choir ladies invited my sister and me to a women's retreat and I was hooked. This group of women has become my second family and sisters in Christ. They have helped me through health and family struggles and family deaths. Without their faith and strength I don't know where I would be today.



UMW Dinner at Becks

At Wesley Freedom our UMW does a lot to help out our church, the community and our District with assistance, funds when needed and especially our hands. We raise funds to help support the *Board of Child Care Auxiliary*, who help enhance the lives of the children served by the *Board of Child Care* and educate the church community. We support *Human Services Programs of Carroll County*, which gives HOPE, inspires CHANGE, and provides OPPORTUNITY, by mobilizing our community in the fight against poverty. Additionally, we assist the *Rape Crisis Intervention Center of Carroll County (RCIS)* which provides free counseling and other support services to victims of sexual violence and their families as well as education programs and professional training.



More than 100 Operation Christmas Child boxes were donated this year.

If you're looking for friendship and something that has history, not only at Wesley Freedom, but in the United Methodist Church, then we welcome you to join us. This sisterhood dates back to the 1884's as the Women's Missionary Society. In 1940 they incorporated with *The Ladies Aid Societies* and then through reorganization and denominational mergers, these various groups were brought together. In 1973, United Methodist Women became the women's mission organization of The United Methodist Church. That's a long history of women working together to further the mission that got us started so long ago.

UMW is open to women of all ages who would like to help take us into the next century and help us create some new adventures. So, as the choir ladies invited me, I invite you to join me at our next event or at a UMW meeting.

- Lynda Wilhelm, UMW Treasurer



Trunk-or-Treat & Chili Cook-Off.



# Dreaming Starts at Home

Pastor Ian Collier, Congregational Care & Small Groups



*A few of the studies done this year by our groups.*

With your support, Congregational Life Ministries continue to be vital parts of the life of disciples here at Wesley Freedom. We have over 15 active small groups with focuses that range from parenting to empty-nesting, and from scriptural study to faith & science fiction. For many people, in addition to a place for discussion, Wesley Freedom small groups have become a source of friendship and support. "Our group has become my second family and a "safe place" where we each can share our innermost thoughts and feelings without any judgment," said Carol Zmarzly, a member of one of Wesley Freedom's life groups. She continued, "It has been one of the best experiences and I hope it continues for a very long time. I feel like I have made friends for a lifetime!"

Your support allows these groups to have access to the highest quality study materials that make all topics accessible so that everyone can participate fully without financial burden. In addition, your tithes and offerings make it possible to offer two nights of childcare during the week for these ministries. This allows parents



*Some members of "Parents of Kids in College" at their Christmas Party*

of children to take the time to be in groups with other parents to take a time of spiritual renewal and mutual support. It fills my heart that this congregation is living into the promises it makes at a child's baptism by supporting parents as they try Christian faith.

As we look to a new year of programming, I have a few dreams bubbling up! While I have made hospital and home visits a vital part of my ministry since my arrival, I am preparing to train and equip more persons in this congregation to extend the Communion Table to those unable to make it to our location.

On the small groups side, I would like to actively encourage anyone who might want to lead a group or who has an idea for something they would want to read and talk about with other Christians to let me know! I know it can seem intimidating at first to facilitate a group conversation, but we are here to equip you with skills, provide materials to help you, and support you in forming community. I give thanks for all the ways this congregation has supported Congregational Life ministries, and I pray that if God is calling you to a deeper stage in your faith journey, you might consider becoming involved with one of our Care or Small Group programs.



*"Reflecting God's Light" on a group outing to the Strawbridge Shrine*

to raise their children in the

## FINANCIALS

Year-End Financial Statement Wesley Freedom Budget	YTD <b>1/1/19-12/31/19</b>
Weekly Contributions	\$964,957
EYLC Contribution	\$90,000
Other Building Usage	2,741
Interest	129
Fundraising activities	26,533
Total Income	\$1,084,360
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Salaries & related costs	\$516,262
Mortgage interest payments	87,350
Building expenses (1)	148,291
Ministry area costs (2)	60,509
Administrative costs (4)	44,310
Conference payments	118,680
Designated Reserve (5)	26,000
Total Expenses	\$1,001,402
Net Income	\$82,958
Mortgage principal payments	\$42,230
Net Income for Cash Flow	\$40,728

(1) Includes electricity, water, oil & natural gas, insurance, phone, custodial services, & maintenance

(2) Includes education, worship, youth council, care of members

(4) Includes Stewardship - mailing and other costs

(5) Reserve to be put in Mortgage Reserve Account

## OPPORTUNITIES

**Easter Choir**—Wednesdays 7:00-7:45pm during Lent (March 4-April 8). This choir will lead Easter Worship on April 12 with the orchestra.

**March 8: Vacation Bible School Adult Sign-Up**

**March 15 @ 7 pm: Service of Prayer and Healing**

**March 31 @ 1pm: VBS Open Online Registration Opens**

**April 5 Palm Sunday Worship.** Easter Set-up begins at noon. Please consider helping.

**April 18: Rise Against Hunger Meal Packing Event**

We will package 20,000 meals in just 2 hours! The meals will travel to school children in our country and around the world. Servants of all ages are welcome and needed. Service hours will be awarded to students. Contact Betty Evans to sign up 443-604-6027 or [nanabte@gmail.com](mailto:nanabte@gmail.com).

**April 9 @ Noon and 7pm: Holy Thursday Worship**

**April 10 @ Noon and 7pm: Good Friday Worship**

**April 12 Easter Worship @ Wesley Freedom**

6:30am – Worship with Communion  
8:00am, 9:30am, 11:00am – Easter Worship

**Vacation Bible School: July 13-17, 2020.** Currently registering adult volunteers. Email [vbs@wesleyfreedom.org](mailto:vbs@wesleyfreedom.org) if you are interested in serving.

**Middle School Mission Trip: June 28- July 3.** Our MSM youth are headed to Pittsburg. Contact Taylor Boone ([tboone@wesleyfreedom.org](mailto:tboone@wesleyfreedom.org)) for more information.

**Adult Mission Trip: June 21– 27, 2020** to Summersville, West Virginia. Contact Tim Boyer ([tjjzboyer@comcast.net](mailto:tjjzboyer@comcast.net)) for more information.

**Our Mission at Wesley Freedom:**

To make disciples of Jesus Christ who share the story of God's grace.

Our Vision: To see the lives of people in our community forever changed by God's grace.