



# Galena UMC

## Recovery & ReTurn Report

March 10, 2021 Week #38

### Galena's ReTurn Team

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### Weekly Update ... from Dale

Our “recovery/return” team just completed our weekly meeting this afternoon and it is wonderful to feel that there is definite hope lurking as we now make plans to be physically together again. Our current plan calls for utilizing the pavilions at recreation park to hold services prior to meeting indoors. The current plan is to hold our May 23rd Sunday service at the park and several Sunday services after that as well. Pastor Catiana has reserved a pavilion for Sundays throughout most of the summer. We felt that we may be using the pavilion for Sunday services, but also wanted any of our church committees, small groups, or families to utilize this meeting place as they wish. Please remember, these are our current plans and plans could change as we move ahead with “reopening”.

In the task of reopening our church, we are seeking the advice and counsel of public health experts. This valuable input can help us

balance safety and faithfulness while making these difficult decisions. We do seem to be holding more hope recently as more and more of our friends and family are receiving the vaccine that will hopefully help us move away from the devastation caused by covid19. We do feel that the tough decisions are ahead of us as we decide exactly when and how we move forward with reopening our church building.

We must have hope as we continue to confront the reality of this pandemic. God has empowered each one of us to be part of his work in the world, including working toward ending this pandemic. We all have a part to play, whether we are frontline healthcare workers, stocking grocery store shelves, or simply putting on a mask as we walk out the front door (hopefully joyfully rather than begrudgingly!). We realize this pandemic has been devastating for so many of us, whether we have been sick ourselves or lost a loved one, lost a job or financial security, or suffered loneliness and isolation.

We have found the last months to be extraordinarily difficult and have had many anxious thoughts and sleepless nights as we have watched this disaster unfold across the world. Speaking as Christians, we are called to hold fast to hope no matter how hopeless things seem. So let's pray and work with **God, and with hope.**



### Notes ...from Charlene ...

If you have ideas around our future sanctuary worship, do let us know. In conversations with our members, most would still be uncomfortable attending sanctuary services so watch for beginning outdoor service opportunities. “Staying in touch” through phone calls, notes or emails, bless both the giver and the receiver especially in this time of pandemic. The more we can hold our church family close, the better it feels. We really are all in this together.

## Medical Tip of the Week ...from Dennis

### We Should Continue to Avoid Shared, Indoor Spaces

This week's issue of the Morbidity Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) from the CDC presents a new study confirming the importance of avoiding non-essential indoor spaces during the pandemic. The scientists studied the impact of reopening restaurants and bars last year on the rate of transmission of Covid-19.

"Community mitigation measures can help reduce the transmission of SARS-CoV-2. In this study, mask mandates were associated with reductions in COVID-19 case and death growth rates within 20 days, whereas allowing on-premises dining at restaurants was associated with increases in COVID-19 case and death growth rates after 40 days. With the emergence of more transmissible COVID-19 variants, community mitigation measures are increasingly important as part of a larger strategy to decrease exposure to and reduce transmission of SARS-CoV-2. Community mitigation policies, such as state-issued mask mandates and prohibition of on-premises restaurant dining, have the potential to slow the spread of COVID-19, especially if implemented with other public health strategies." Reference: CDC Morbidity Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), March 5, 2021. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7010e3> external icon

Many of us, hopefully all, will be fully vaccinated by the end of the spring. Without a doubt we will be safer. But until the impact of Covid-19 variants on previously vaccinated people is known, it will be prudent for us to avoid non-essential, shared indoor spaces such as restaurants and bars. The current CDC guidance on non-essential, shared indoor spaces can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/community-based.html>.

## Update from the County ...from Jay

There are 750 individuals on the county's wait list with 100 of those names being pulled for the Friday, March 5 vaccination clinic.

According to public health administrator Sandra Schleicher, Hartig Drug has over 1,000 on its wait list.

Schleicher also noted that the county only received an allocation of 200 first dose vaccines for the week, but had been told that they may receive 400 this week and is hoping for that volume to remain or increase in the foreseeable future.

Schleicher also reported that the state has received 100,000 doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine this week with most of those doses being used for the mass vaccination sites in Chicago. She estimated Jo Daviess County would receive the Johnson & Johnson vaccine until the first week of April at the earliest. Next week, Schleicher is hoping to reserve 100 of its doses for vouchers to be used for school personnel as it was directed by the federal and state governments to try to vaccinate as many teachers and education staff as soon as possible.

## Blessings ... from Pastor Catiana

from on-line article by Pastor Karl Vaters

### "What have we learned – and what are we still learning?"

If all we do at the end of this is try to get back to "normal", we will not just have missed an opportunity to learn, we will have failed Jesus. Going through this and not learning from it is like the third servant in Jesus' Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30). After refusing to invest what he received, the master treated him with some of the harshest words and actions in the entire Bible. There's a lot to learn through this. Those lessons are like great treasure. Don't bury them, invest them in kingdom work.

### "How can we better serve the people at home?"

Many of the folks who won't come back to the physical building have all kinds of reasons for it. From being at-risk physically to not being ready emotionally, and more. Don't criticize people who aren't ready to come back to church yet. Reach out to them. Lovingly, kindly, and compassionately.

Blessing people where *they* are is more important than getting them to show up where *we* are.

**Remember: Do No Harm ... Do Good ... Stay in Love with God!** May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13