



Galena UMC

Recovery & ReTurn Report

May 26, 2021 Week #49

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Weekly Update ... from Dale

What Will Church Look Like Going Forward?

This is the current million-dollar question. What will church look like as we move forward? The answer? Well, “reopening” church could look very different for everyone in the upcoming weeks, months—possibly stretching into next year.

With that in mind, we’ve been reading and listening in on a lot of conversations from ministry leaders, publishers, magazines, and researchers.

From what we’ve heard, reopening rural churches will look different from urban churches, large churches will look different than small churches ... you get the picture. It will even look different for different segments of each congregation.

Upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it.

Matthew 16:18 (NLT)

However we choose to move forward, it’s important that we look at each individual within our congregation in order to meet their needs. It will take planning, innovation, planning again, making some mistakes, and extending and receiving a lot of grace for us to really get it right. No matter what—we know that God is with us. He goes before us, He is in the middle of these messy times, and He will remain faithful.

The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.

Deuteronomy 31:8 (NIV)

Notes ... from Charlene

Let us continue our phone calls and notes.

“Staying in touch” truly blesses both the giver and the receiver especially in this time of pandemic. Hold our church family close. We are all in this together.

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

Medical Tip of the Week ... by Dennis

Up to Date Guidance from the CDC. Hint: the vaccines really do work!

On May 13, 2021, Dr. Rochelle Walensky, Director of the CDC announced a sweeping change in the CDC guidance for fully vaccinated people, "If you are fully vaccinated, you can start doing the things that you had stopped doing because of the pandemic. Anyone who is fully vaccinated can participate in indoor and outdoor activities, large or small, without wearing a mask or physical distancing." At the end of April, 101,000,000 Americans had been fully vaccinated with 10,262 documented breakthrough infections (0.01% of those fully vaccinated). Most of these infections were mild with few or no symptoms. Only 10% of the people with breakthrough infections required hospitalization (0.001%) and 2% (0.0002%) died and of those that died, most were in their eighties or older and not all died of Covid19.

Over 50% of Americans over the age of 16 have now received at least one shot of the Covid19 vaccine. Given how effective the vaccines are, all of us should be reaching out to those we know who are not yet vaccinated to encourage them to get their shots. Variants will continue to pop up around the world as long as there are unvaccinated populations. A resistant variant could arise that puts us right back to square one. None of us are safe until all of us are safe. Let's do what we can to see that this does not happen.

Update ... from Jay

With meeting in person now a possibility, Communion has changed a little bit. Here's a step-by-step guide to what's going on!



1. The new Communion container is about the size of the small cups you're used to. What's different: There's a Communion wafer also included in the pre-sealed container.
2. To get at the wafer, peel off the thin, clear plastic cover. The wafer is about the size of a dime.
3. There is a second tab to pull back to get to the juice.
4. And we're done! The new Communion cups are about the size of coffee creamer packets.

Blessings ... from Pastor Catiana

With a year plus of digital ministry because of covid, many congregations recognize the importance of making their online worship a permanent element of their ministry, as do we. Lewis Center for Church Leadership suggested some "dos and don'ts" that may offer clues about our best way forward. I will share some suggestions over the next few weeks.

1. Do translate the personality and values of your worship into the digital context.

But don't try to replicate in-person worship practices.

There is a wealth of knowledge and research on digital faith practices, but few churches are making use of what researchers and scholars already know about the practice of religion online. What does your congregation hold most dear? What does it value? What is the personality of your faith community? What makes it different than other places of worship? These are the core elements that need to carry forward into the digital context. Other details can be left to the side. It's very difficult, if not impossible, to try to do in a digital context exactly what you do in in-person worship. When things don't go well in digital worship, it's often because leaders are trying to do just that. So, concentrate on "translating" what's most important rather than trying to recreate it exactly.