



Galena UMC

Recovery & ReTurn Report

June 23, 2021 Week #53

Galena's ReTurn Team

Dale Henze – Chair
Dennis Irwin
Charlene Price
Patricia Allen–Stewart
Bill & Sherry Marc
Jay & Hillary Dickerson
Dave & Judy Biegon
Karen Hughes
Darcy Muehliep
Pastor Catiana McKay

Weekly Update ... *from Dale*

Has the pandemic permanently changed the way we think about church?

There is no question that the yearlong church shutdown because of the COVID-19 virus changed a lot about doing church. Pastors who had never taken livestreaming seriously were suddenly asking about video cameras and the best streaming platforms. Pastors who had never looked twice at social media started connecting regularly with their followers.

The conversation at the forefront of church leaders today is

“What will church look like after COVID?” When this is all over for good, will things change? The good news is that churches have discovered two important themes over the last year:

- 1. Church does not just happen in a building. It happens anywhere and anytime.*
- 2. Instead of spending so much money and effort getting the community to come to the church, maybe it is time the church went to the community.*

Too many churches have devolved into social gatherings where like-minded people enjoy each other and make no effort beyond the doors. But to make a real impact we need to become a blazing fire that changes the world. It is time we re-kindled the New Testament church passion—not just for evangelism and sharing the story of Jesus—but for ministering to every need in a person’s life. People do not need to be church members for us to help—we just need to step out there and make it happen.

The future of the post-COVID church will not be the status quo, and that is a good thing. Maybe it’s the perfect time to show the world what we can become.

A woman approached the minister after the sermon and thanked him for his discourse.

“I found it so helpful,” she said.

The minister replied: “I hope it will not prove as helpful as the last sermon you heard me preach”

“Why, what do you mean?” asked the astonished woman.

“Well” said the minister, “that sermon lasted you three months.”

REMEMBER: June 27th and July 4th In-Person Worship at Galena Rec Park at 10:30 am.

And

JULY 11th 10 am summer hours In-Person Sanctuary worship!

Notes ...from Charlene ... As we continue our in-persons gatherings, let us not forget how important our phone calls and notes are. "Staying in touch" truly blesses both the giver and the receiver in all times. Heart connections never grow old. Hold our church family close.

Blessings ... from Pastor Catiana & United Methodist News Service

United Methodists in parts of the world are beginning to feel hopeful as vaccines become more readily available. Yet, we know many across the connection have limited or no access to COVID-19 testing and vaccinations. With our hopefulness, we may also feel tired, frustrated, anxious and disheartened.

The Bible says that we are not alone. "Be strong and bold; ...because it is the Lord your God who goes before you. God will be with you; God will not fail you or forsake you." (Deuteronomy 31:6,8)

Donate to the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) Covid-19 Response Fund.

Our faith is an inspiration for resilience. It provides a lens through which we gain perspective on that which threatens. The Psalmists felt threatened. Within their same songs of fear come notes of reassurance and truth:

For God did not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted;

God did not hide God's face from me, but heard when I cried to God. ([Psalm 22:24](#))

Blessed be the Lord, for God has wondrously shown God's steadfast love to me when I was beset as a city under siege. ([Psalm 31: 21](#))

For you have delivered my soul from death, and my feet from falling,

So that I may walk before God in the light of life. ([Psalm 56:13](#))

The verses are recognition that we do not hide alone in our fears. They are not a barrier between ourselves and God. Rather, as we name our fears and trepidations, we invite God to join us in our concern and affliction. God with us. The Psalms refuse to leave us alone. In them, we find space and opportunity for naming the fears, inadequacies and shames, which might keep us locked in place. Even when we lack the words to name fears for ourselves, the Psalms express our felt fears and desires. Fear seeks to isolate us. It tells us we must be the only ones. Our faith reminds us that we are not. We are not the only ones to struggle against feelings of isolation and uncertainty.

Can you name the anxieties you carry today? If not, perhaps reading through the testimonies present in the Psalms will give you the words you lack today. In so doing, may you find a reminder that you are not, in fact, isolated in your fear.

Ryan Dunn, author, is the Minister of Online Engagement, Rethink Church, for United Methodist Communications.

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