



Galena UMC Recovery & ReTurn Report

July 14, 2021 Week #55

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

Over the past months, most of you have shared the joyous news that you have received both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. Your church family rejoices with you at the tangible sign of hope that vaccinated persons in our community offer to a pandemic-weary world. The guidance for reopening our church has been based upon medical advice from reliable sources. We are delighted with the response for our church services at recreation park and finally, the response to our first service in our sanctuary last Sunday. It was truly a joyous occasion.

Our return committee met again this week and have decided that we will not be meeting weekly but will instead remain a committee "on watch". If things change concerning this virus, the variants, etc., we will again gather to make any necessary adjustments

to what we are currently doing as an "open church".

Many thanks to the return committee members who have been diligently meeting weekly for over sixteen months. We never imagined that we would be meeting for this extended time when we began this journey. I must state that the group has been a true joy to work with.

Special thanks to several persons who consistently provided their help with the return committee's work: Sherry Marc for putting together our weekly reports, Dennis Irwin for offering his medical expertise, Jay Dickerson for remaining in touch with the health department and sharing that information, Pastor Catiana for meeting with us and arranging the meetings (electronically and in-person), and Charlene Price for her diligence in staying in contact with so many of our members throughout this pandemic. GOOD JOB!!!!

Our church is optimistic that we will continue our in-person fellowship and worship this year and for many years. It is our task as followers of Jesus to persevere in hope, thanking God for the progress we have made with the vaccine, and praying for all those who are instrumental in its manufacture, delivery, and administration. Each one of those people are agents of God's mercy and healing in our broken world. May we strive to be agents of mercy and healing, too.



HOW COME THE WAITRESS GETS 15% AND GOD ONLY GETS 10%?

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

“Let’s Be Careful Out There”

Sgt. Phil Esterhaus ended the morning briefing at the Hill Street precinct with, “Let’s be careful out there.” And yes, everyone who will read this is old enough to have watched Hill Street Blues. This is a fitting way to end over a year of medical advice that I hope has helped you stay safe during the Covid19 pandemic. With the Delta variant rapidly running through the unvaccinated population the opportunity for another variant to arise is enhanced. The next variant could be the one resistant to the vaccines. This is the greatest fear among public health experts. If that happens, we could end up going right back to square one. Keep your fingers crossed. Say a prayer. As the great philosopher Yogi Berra was fond of saying, “It ain’t over until the fat lady sings”. Keep looking over your shoulder. If a resistant variant pops up anywhere in this country, mask up immediately and go back to your well-practiced and highly effective Covid19 prevention routine. With a little luck, this is the last one of these that I will write for a long time.

Update from the County ...from Jay

As of the week beginning Monday, July 12:

- There are zero positive cases in Jo Daviess County.
- 13,141 Jo Daviess County residents are fully vaccinated.
- That makes up 61.9% of the population.
- There are 6,170 Jo Daviess County residents 65 and old fully vaccinated.
- That makes up 99.9% of Jo Daviess County residents 65 and older.
- 15,495 county residents have at least one dose.

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 Thank you all!! Sunday was joyful!

From the Bishop's Office: Dear Friends in Christ: What a year this has been. With God’s grace, we have found our way through the maze of a global pandemic, not a journey any of us claim lightly. You and your congregation have been part of this accomplishment. You have found ways to be a community to one another from a distance. You have found ways to be in your community as a witness of Christ's love. Our goal these past 14 months was to “Do No Harm”. We have learned new things about ourselves, we have learned new things about our congregations and now we take the next steps in our return to full functioning as we continue to “Do No Harm” while also doing good.

Vaccinations are still key to our future. We know that variants of COVID 19 continue to emerge and that it will be some months before our younger population of children will be eligible for vaccination. Vigilance is still our watchword as we resume more and more activities.

Each church community will move back into in-person worship and gatherings at their own pace, in their own way, given local guidelines and comfort levels in your congregation. We continue to encourage those who are able, to be vaccinated. I encourage you to continue utilizing your church’s health team as you move into the future. This team has offered a great way to look at how the church conducts activities in a healthy manner. The pandemic has taught us that we cannot ignore the health and wellbeing of our members and community. I join you in celebrating this milestone as we look to the future. I invite you to “stay in love with God” as we find our way forward. **In Christ, Bishop John L. Hopkins**