



# Galena UMC

## Recovery & ReTurn Report

### Weekly Update ... from Dale

April 7, 2021 Week #42

#### Galena's ReTurn Team

Dale Henze – Chair  
Dennis Irwin  
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Karen Hughes  
Darcy Muehliep  
Pastor Catiana McKay

Everywhere we turn, people are talking about reopening. Should churches simply follow the same guidelines regarding reopening as other institutions? I believe there are practical principles and theological reasons why reopening our church buildings requires a different kind of thinking. The church should not be looking to sidestep the guidelines. The church should not be simply reacting to what others are doing. The church should lead the way by modeling a method of safety for others to follow.

**We cannot return to the church as it used to be.** That is not possible. Nor is it responsible. Returning to the way things used to be would fly in the face of the Jesus who warned against pouring new wine into old wineskins. We are creatures of habit and adverse to change, so we will have to make every effort to create a new model of church that is fully inspired by the God who makes all things new. How will we welcome and engage the new people with whom we have connected? How will we incorporate the new technolo-

Additionally, how will we honor and give space to express the incredible loss and grief experienced in this time? To return to church as it used to be without acknowledging the grief and loss of this time would be the worst kind of denial in the very place that should be modeling honest and healthy grief work. We all want to go back to church but we cannot go back to the same church we left. Instead of returning to the same church, we should be relaunched as a new church!

*The teacher asked her Sunday School class to draw pictures of their favorite Bible stories. She was puzzled by Kyle's picture, which showed four people on an airplane, so she asked him which story it was meant to represent. "The flight to Egypt," said Kyle. "I see ... And that must be Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus," his teacher said. "But who's the fourth person?" "Oh, that's Pontius-the Pilot."*



**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.

#### **Blessings ... from Pastor Catiana**

Dale's message, a prophetic call, still resonates! "Morning has broken like the first morning." Aren't we new each morning, ready to be "inspired by the God who makes all things new?" Every morning provides opportunity to step out of the tomb of habits; of having the right answers; of fear of the unknown. A time of naming and mourning together, paves the way for the joy in the morning of life cycles. I gaze from the parsonage back window into what appears to be mangled dead wood. The spring wind dances with the daffodils scattered on the hill revealing the life that is emerging into the Christ light of new beginnings. That is us. May we choose to dance!

#### **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 ...from Dennis

CORONAVIRUS

### An Answer to a Question and a New Warning

#### The question: "How long does immunity last after I am fully immunized?"

(two weeks after the second shot for Pfizer and Moderna or one shot for Johnson & Johnson)

- Good news. There is now 6 month follow-up information for the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. Full immunity persists for at least six months. Also, the Pfizer vaccine is highly effective against the UK variant (B.1.1.7) that is now becoming the dominant strain in the US. It is somewhat less effective against the South African variant (B.1.351) but still provides very good protection. It is likely that the same will be shown for the Moderna and J & J vaccines.

#### The warning:

- The UK variant is highly contagious in children and teens. In area of the country where cases are on the rise, the UK variant is the leading cause. Children and teens are the groups with the fastest rate of new infections. This is the first time this pattern has been seen in the Covid19 pandemic. If you are not yet fully immunized, stay masked around the kids and grandkids.

In spite of the progress that has been made with vaccinating adults, we are far from the end.

We may not be at the beginning of the end. It seems likely that we are muddling through a messy middle. Stay safe. Mask up when out in public. Maintain your distance. Wash your hands... You know the drill.

## County Update ...from Jay Getting the Johnson & Johnson vaccine—- in southern Illinois

Hillary and I recently traveled to North Carolina on a spring break/college visit trip with Maya. We noticed that our path took us through Vienna, on the same day when the National Guard was planning a mass immunization clinic for the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Since we'd just become eligible to take our shot, we got online and scheduled a 4:15 p.m. appointment for this community seven hours away from Galena. We were online on a Monday morning, scheduling our appointment for a Thursday afternoon. Only one timeslot in the morning was completely full; the afternoon appointments were wide open.

That Thursday, we were a bit ahead of schedule, arriving at the Vienna church just before 2:30. We also printed out our most recent pay stubs (to prove we were, in fact, members of the most recent group approved to get vaccinated), had our driver's licenses handy, and printed out the QR codes that were emailed to us. We only needed the QR codes. The organizers didn't need proof of our employment. They didn't even care if we were Illinois residents. They simply wanted to vaccinate as many people as possible. They also got us right in. There were only a handful of people ahead of us, so we didn't have to wait until our 4:15 appointment time.

An Illinois National Guard member, armed with a cell phone, walked me through a number of screening questions. The process took only a couple of minutes, delayed a little bit as the server was moving more slowly than the Guard member cared for it to move. He apologized a number of times: this was the slowest that they'd moved people all day. I wasn't bothered by the delay, and told him so. I then told him I appreciated his efforts. As the server crawled, we talked a little bit. He and I were the same age. He works for Cook County when he's not serving in the Guard. The server finally started behaving. Then the Guard member escorted me to another room, where two other Guard members administered the shot. Shortly after that, I was seated at a waiting area to leave. They ask that you stay 15 minutes, just in case.

During this time, Hillary and I were able to talk to one of the health department workers. It didn't surprise them that we'd traveled from Galena; a number of people earlier in the day had traveled from the Chicagoland area, spending the night before. Many of the local at-risk population had already been vaccinated through the two-dose options, so there wasn't the sense that we were taking a slot that could've gone to someone else. The organizers and administrators just cared that they were administering the vaccine to as many people as possible. Aside from a little redness over the next few hours, there was no negative reaction to the vaccine. We were out of there before 3:15, and back on the road.

Officials have said that the Johnson & Johnson's vaccine's strong point is its one-dose administration. One shot, you're good to go. For those who haven't gotten vaccinated yet, if you're able to receive the Johnson & Johnson dose, I recommend it. Our experience with the Illinois National Guard was positive; even with a clunky server, the process was a well-oiled machine. There was an Illinois National Guard one-dose clinic April 7 at River Ridge; if you have the opportunity to take it, you should take it.

The National Guard also had locations in Batavia, South Holland, Carbondale, Springfield, Tinley Park, Collinsville and Des Plaines last week. Getting vaccinated in Vienna was a good way for us to start our trip. I felt like I was being safe, talking to family members on our trip. And as for the schools we saw on our trip, Appalachian State University in Boone, NC, has a beautiful campus. But it's way too far away.