



COVID, THE RESURGENCE

- Current vaccination percentage of the total population as per the CDC:

St. Lucie	41.9%	Palm Beach	50.0%	Miami-Dade	60.4%
Martin	49.8%	Broward	51.1%	Monroe	58.8%

 Insurance Journal

Florida COVID Cases Jump 65% From Previous Week

Florida's numbers had been falling since mid-January when 100,000 new cases per week were reported and 8,200 were hospitalized just as the ...

15 hours ago



WSJ The Wall Street Journal

Florida Leads U.S. in Covid-19 Cases as Hospitalizations Surge

Driving the rise are the Delta variant, large numbers of unvaccinated, relaxation of preventive measures and more indoor time. Florida's weekly ...

Blog · 21 hours ago



 WPLG Local 10

Florida COVID numbers surge again, with 10K+ new cases

...

MIAMI – More than 73,000 new COVID-19 cases were reported in the past week in Florida, which is over three times the number of new cases ...

2 days ago



- The state accounts for one in five new infections in the U.S. and logged 73,181 cases over the past week, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Florida had 341 cases per 100,000 people over the past week, second only to Louisiana. The weekly total of new cases reported by Florida jumped more than fourfold between July 1 and July 22, reaching its highest point since mid-January.
- Deaths in Florida totaled 319 over the past week, the most among states, with a rate of 1.5 per 100,000 people, the fourth-highest, according to the CDC.

Wall Street Journal, July 25, 2021

- As we have said, decisions are more like a rheostat than a on/off switch. The data is showing a marked rise in cases and hospitalization.
- ***Given the rise in cases and hospitalizations how are you and your session considering what may be between on/off or open/closed?***
- ***As you make plans for fall ministries, have you considered contingency plans in the likely event that COVID continues to worsen?***

COMMENTS:

- Our task force has suggested to our session some in-between decisions based on CovidActNow.com – our plan has room for pivoting when necessary. We are holding off on communion, beverages, prayer partners, etc. We are also highly encouraging the online worship.
- We have suspended fellowship during August.
- We are offering worship via Zoom. This is an incredible real time experience.
- We are maintaining our protocols: social distancing, masks, sanitizers, etc.
- I just got news that Jackson Memorial is completely full with non-vaccinated patients.
- Everything has a question mark on our Fall calendar.
- Hospital visitation policies are changing again and effecting ministry.
- We are struggling to have a crowd larger than 100, which is lower than Maundy Thursday. People are going back to online naturally. Personally, I'm back to wearing three masks on Sunday.
- Our crowd is also thinning, and more are using online services. I am saying to everyone who is not vaccinated, "It is your moral imperative to wear a mask."
- We have someone with a seven year old son who is infected with Covid.
- We have an employee who's position will be eliminated who happens to be non-compliant for the vaccine.

TECHNICAL VS. ADAPTIVE CHANGE

Perspectives on Change: Ronald A. Heifetz

- Heifetz identifies two types of challenges in change: adaptive and technical. The technical is defined as those that can be solved by the knowledge of experts, whereas adaptive requires new learning. When the problem definition, solution, and implementation is clear, Heifetz calls this technical change. For the adaptive, change must come from the collective intelligence of the employees at all levels. So, together they learn their way toward solutions.
- ***How have you moved from technical change, to the work of adaptive change? Remember this is not about technology but new learning and discernment.***

COMMENTS:

- Our next question is: “How do we integrate our online people into the life of the church?” Not just worship, but mission buy-in and participation.
- The technical solves problems, adaptive is cultural adaptation – that gives new life.
- The last year has been one huge lesson of adaptive change with some technical challenges.

THE BIG CHURCH LEADERSHIP MISTAKE OF 2021

The Big Church Leadership Mistake of 2021 (That You Can Still Avoid)

by Cary Nieuwhof

[\[LINK\]](#)

The biggest mistake most leaders made comes from the emotional rush to get back into a facility, see everyone again, and assemble their teams and get back to ‘normal’. That said, it’s just too easy to embrace a model of ministry designed to reach a world that no longer exists.

*So, what’s the danger as you gear up for full, post-pandemic services in your facility? Simple. Thinking that when you walk back into your building things will be just fine. In other words, you don’t really need to change anymore. Which is the fastest path to irrelevance? Things have changed. **Radically**. The world has changed. **Radically**. Getting back to where you were doesn’t actually move forward.*

Your innovation curve will come to an abrupt stop.

- But the crisis has shown us that while some churches struggled deeply, others started thriving. Change is hard. I’m tired too. But don’t waste this moment. Don’t waste the progress you’ve started.
- Don’t let a sudden lack of creativity around methods limit your mission.
- Crisis is a cradle for innovation. And the future belongs to the innovators.
- ***Given the reality of being fatigued, how are you fostering creativity in your church’s ministry?***
- ***What are you doing to ensure that you don’t give up on what you have started?***

COMMENTS:

- I relate to Moses who needed his elders to hold up his arms.
- Book: Church Refugees – Our retirees feel safe in our church.
- Our in-person fellowship is very valuable to our people. How can we substitute that during this time? Should we buy tablets?
 - Gallop: Under 50% are attending church.
- We continue to understand that we are in a both/and world – having a plan for many options.
- Great time to re-imagine ministry and to shed what does not work. We will always be hybrid going forward.
- The tendency to “go back” is based on fear.
- The fear is: “Where is everyone?”
- It’s hard to get people back, let alone expect them to give offering.

You’ll stop pivoting.

- Almost everyone pivoted since the crisis, and those who didn’t have already disappeared or are on their way out.
- But pivoting is probably here to stay for a while. If you study the history of change and progress, you quickly realize the future almost always belongs to agile leaders who adapt and change.
- ***Have you considered the many places you have pivoted during the pandemic and what traction has come from your pivots?***
- ***What does agile leadership look like in your church?***

COMMENTS:

- Last year was an entire year of pivoting. My ballerina slippers are very worn.
- We have to think about this constantly. Our numbers are down, our giving is down. We don’t have a dynamic church.
- With these meetings, I hear this dialogue in my head constantly.
- It should be modelled by the by the leadership. You always have to move, or you’ll get moved.
- I feel more rope-a-dope with my congregation. It’s hard to get the pivoting message across.
- This article made me tired when I read it.
- Pivoting for me, is to partner with other organizations and apologize to those in the community who are church-hurt.
- Agility means to remain in the conversation through the Gospel – it should free us from institutional rigidity.

You'll see online as an add-on, not the future.

- As you settle into old patterns, all your energy will go back into in-person ministry.
- And in the same way remote work will become the new normal for many people in the wider economy, online church might become a default option for many people. Hating that doesn't make it go away. Leaders, just because you don't like something doesn't mean it isn't happening.
- Everyone you want to reach is online. It's time for the church to finally act like it.
- ***Have you embraced the adaptive change of online ministry or is it only a temporary technical change?***

COMMENTS:

- I challenge this generationally. Retirees will not respond to online. I guess you have to do both.
- We don't want two separate congregations. It's like two separate churches. What is the cross-over?
- What is the church's reach in sharing the Gospel?...is a better question. Building community amongst the service hours, ethnic groups, generational split is not the main objective.
- The language should be less "church" and more "community."
- We have always had an online presence. There is anger from people who don't want people only doing online.
- When we started doing in-person, we continued to recognize online participants.
- I'm interested in using online to reach new people. I'm considering using an online greeter.
- I wonder about the anonymous people. Some people prefer to be anonymous. How to connect with them better?

You'll get crushed by unpredictability.

- While it's amazing to think about the re-opening as a universal, permanent change, it's more probable that it will be different than we think, more unstable than we think, and perhaps involve quick changes more often than anyone wants.
- That kind of unpredictability will crush those looking for stability.
- ***How do you spiritually prepare your congregation to embrace the unpredictability rather than seek stability?***

COMMENTS:

- We need to frame this time spiritually, not just technically.
- God only, has not changed. What is your foundation...shifting sands? Even I am looking for stability.
- Regularly monitoring how our lives are, we can manage stability better.

You'll miss that legal permission is different than social behavior.

- What's even more significant, long-term, is that culture shifted.
- Many leaders are discovering that there's a measurable group of people who have simply 'checked out'. And another group that hasn't left but are accessing things online far more often. Even if they're fine with going to a concert, they're not as anxious to get back to church. Their patterns and attitudes toward church have changed.
- ***How are you helping your congregation understand and adapt to the new patterns of participation?***
- ***What adjustments need to be made to your ministry plans?***

COMMENTS:

- Our new musician is using more contemporary music, and people are really enjoying that.
- Worshiping outdoors has helped us to be more relaxed and apt to speaking out change.
- We were seeing the patten prior to the pandemic. With the emphasis on technology, there seems to be more participation.
- When there are no more precautions needed, that's when things will feel unstable.
- Hybrid is the future.

ALONG THE WAY...

1. Breathe deep. "Smell the roses and blow out the candles."
2. Keep moving – Explore a new path.
3. Eat Good... Feel Good
4. Ask: Where do I see God in all this?

**Let's all keep talking –
Every Tuesday at 10am and 3pm**
www.vibrantpresbytery.org

