

**Reset Your Church Again After Quarantine - Webinar**  
**Individual or Small Group Study Guide**

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***“Reset is to set again: back to the original factory settings; or to set differently. And so, God is setting us back to doing church like the first century Christians (our factory settings?) AND God is setting us to new things.”***

Definition of *Reset* by Rev. Dr. Dee Stokes, pastor and former Div. I basketball coach

We are being offered, through the circumstances, changes and new realities, the opportunity to RESET – to go deeper and wider in our relationship with God, in how we make/grow as disciples in the body of Christ, and in joining Christ’s mission in our communities and world.

Isaiah 43:19: *“See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.”* (NIV)

**Matt Lake – Senior Pastor at First United Methodist Church, Williamsport PA**

1. Alvin Toffler: “The illiterate of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will not be those who can’t read and write, but those who can’t learn, unlearn, relearn.”

Reflect: what we have learned that needs to be **unlearned** (i.e. is not bearing fruit, not working, was based on a way of life, of doing church...that has changed) or needs to be **relearned** (our core mission & calling lived, done in *new* ways, serving, connecting with new people )?

2. Psychologist and Organizational Theorist, Carl Weick, noted that when we are faced with unfamiliar situations, we regress to that we know best; we go back to, cling to, our most familiar tools rather than drop them.

Matt tells the stories of firefighters in 3 horrific wildfires who were reluctant to drop their heavy tools and backpacks, could not move quickly, and perished.

- Reflect: what your church considers to be ‘tools’ that are essential and cannot be dropped.

- What might be the ‘tools’, backpacks which should be dropped?

3. God's people are BOTH gathered AND Sent. "The future will be defined by BOTH/AND". This church is made up of BOTH the inherited, traditional church AND a wide range of smaller house church groupings of "fresh expressions" of the church, planted by a person or persons from the original church, who gather on their own as well as together with the more traditional church. Reflect on this.

The disciples understand and are equipped to be doing *their* ministry (Eph 4:11,12), not expecting the "do it for me, professional pastor/staff".

Further information about this church and another like this is share in the Resilient Church Academy Master Class and the Academy track on Transforming Congregations @ <https://resilientchurchacademy.com>

**Josmar Alvarez – District Superintendent in the United Methodist Church,  
Lexington KY and Church Planter**

1. In the Book of Acts we find three elements in the church, meeting mostly in homes:  
Witnessing—Proclaiming the Good News  
Fellowship---with fellow worshipers and the community (Koinonia) Acts 2, 4, 5  
Service/help---in the community, serving the poor

Reflect on these three elements of church. How do you see them in your community?  
What is effective? How could you do it differently?

2. House Church and Church Building: The *first century church* met *both* in the temple *and* in the homes (Acts 2:42-47; 4; 5:42; 20:20). There are times one needs the church building; there are times when the church needs to be in the small community, a house church.

Reflect on ways you can begin small group house (zoom) church arrangements, with existing people and in community, and other ways of being church, not in “the building”.

3. Josmar underscored *the first century church was filled with the work of the Holy Spirit*. How is the Holy Spirit moving in your community? How are you asking the Spirit to fill and guide you?

**Heather Jallad – Lead Cultivator, Fresh Expressions in North Georgia Conference, United Methodist Church, Community Engagement Pastor @ Mount Pisgah Church**

This time is packed with possibility! As we look at the seasons there is NOW—Next—New

1. What can we do NOW to continue AND, simultaneously, to prepare for NEXT?

Reflect on what your church is doing now, how it is going (be realistic)? How your congregation/community is being cared for? Note her suggestions.

Reflect on what may not have been happening now and ask yourself if it is OK, can it be left behind?

2. What comes NEXT? Scarcity can bring clarity.  
Reflect upon what adaptations have been made or will need to be made to lean into the future and be fruitful. How build community, disciple online? How will you go deeper rather than wider?

3. NEW means that we use the imagination we receive from the Holy Spirit.  
Reflect: what would be different if you “started over” like the scattered church in Antioch with Gentiles? What NEW thing(s) is God saying to you?

4. What new ways, things will you try? Experiments are for learning.

How are you equipping, empowering, folks to identify passions and gifts, needs in your community/region, to love and serve communities –i.e. address food instability, neighborhood networks, healthcare, become a person of peace, help parents, businesses...?

**Dr. Susan Harper –Former church history professor at Harvard, now American Bible Society**

1. Church revivals often happen when people:
  - Seek transformation based on a reformist or restorational vision they perceive from scriptures
  - Leave behind habituations to status quo practices
  - Pray seriously together in community
  - Invite God’s Holy Spirit to lead and guide
  
2. The core Biblical narrative of God’s purpose is to dwell within a community of all people. What did that look like:

**Garden of Eden** in Genesis 1

**Moving Tabernacle** in Exodus 40

**Temple** in First Kings, II Chronicles, Ezekiel 10

**Ecclesia** now/future

3. What is “The Way” according to Jesus?
  - John 13 Love one another
  - John 15:12 Love each other as I have loved you
  - John 15:17 Love each other

“The only hermeneutic of the gospel is a congregation of men and women who believe in it and live by it.” (*Leslie Newbigin*)

Reflect on the ways that your church/community *models* “The Way” of Jesus, on how those outside your church, those not of the Christian faith, in your community would say they experience the way of Jesus in you, individually and as a community.

4. Radical Christianity modeled by the early church in Acts

Example of the church at Corinth:

*“When you gather for worship, each one of you be prepared with something that will be useful for all: Sing a hymn, teach a lesson, tell a story, lead a prayer, provide an insight...Take your turn, no one person taking over. Then each speaker gets a chance to say something special from God, and you all learn from each other...This goes for all the churches---no exceptions.”* 1 Corinthians 14:26-33 , *The Message*

Reflect: how might your church/community embrace these elements of Radical Christianity –story telling, sharing what God has said/done, teaching, taking turns.

5. Dr Harper provides 3 insights/opportunities to reset:

- To live the Word, not just read or know it
- In *Thick Community*, not just professionally orchestrated weekly meetings in “church” buildings
- Led by the power of the Holy Spirit