



# The BELLS of GRACE

MATTHEW ♦ MARK ♦ LUKE ♦ JOHN

# THE ORIGINAL BELL

In the fall of 2013, in preparation for Grace's celebration marking our 100 years at Washington Street, research was begun on the then 148 year old bell currently residing in the St. Francis Garden. We know why it's at Grace, however nothing was known about its origins. The inscription cast into the bell "John C. Wilson Founder Glasgow A. D. 1865 No. 843" was typed into an internet search. Thanks to historians in Scotland, Michael Foulds of the Whiting Society (a group of bell ringers, or change ringers), the University of Glasgow archives, and the original foundry records, we have a general idea of the bell's history.

List of Turret Bells cast in Gorbals					Brass Foundry - Since 1 <sup>st</sup> July 1851	
Date of Casting	Dia.	Height	Number	whether finished	For whom cast	Destination
1864						
Oct. 18	1-3 1/2	89 1/2	828	without tongue	Lower Council of Stirling, for	Upper St.
Nov. 4	1-12	45 1/2	829		Hamilton & Alexander, London	Do
"	1-14	56	830	light pattern	Do	Do
Dec. 17	1-12	45 1/4	831		Edmiston & Mitchell, for ship	Calcutta
Jan. 7	1-12	165	832	Clappers not included	Smith Fleming & Co. for	Bombay
"	3-15	282	833	"	Do	Do
"	2-18	294	834	"	Do	Do
"	28 1-10 1/4	63	835	with tongue	John Bryden & sons, -	Edinburgh
March 14	1-11	37	836		Thos. Bishop for ship "Maragath"	
"	20 1-11	36 1/2	837	Polished	J.B. Campbell & sons, for Hunter, H.	
"	27 1-2 1/2	46 1/4	838	made heavier	Ally. McFerguson, for Rotton Church, Carl.	
"	31 1-2 1/4	330	839	without tongue	Smith Fleming & Co., London.	
"	1-15	92 1/2	840	Do	for St. Francis Xavier Church, B.	
April 1	1-2 1/4	328	841	without tongue	James Muirhead & son, for Innerary	
"	4 1-13	58-10	842	Polished	Thomas Bishop for vessel "Burn"	
May 10	1-2 1/4	337	843		Geo. McFerguson, for Prof. W. R. Church, B.	
"	12 1-1 1/4	67 1/2	844		Adam Hamilton & son, Black & Hand Mill	
"	16 1-12	48-12	845		Robert Craig, Caldercruix Paper Mills.	
"	22 1-20	188-12	846		Watson & Co., for Free Church, Cowden	
June 6	1-16	110-8	847		Andrew Shew, Ironmonger, Glasgow	
"	21 1-15	92 1/4	848			

Cast on May 10, 1865 in Glasgow Scotland by the Gorbals Brass & Bell Foundry (aka: Gorbals Bell Foundry), under the ownership of John C. Wilson the bell measures 24" and weighs 337 pounds per the foundry records.

It was sold to Geo: McFarlane for use as a temporary bell from 1865 to 1868 by the Ibrox United Presbyterian Church on Paisley Road, Scotland. The church at that time was a temporary wooden structure. Our bell was removed in 1868 when a new stone building was built and a larger 42" bell was installed.

On March 30, 1869 our bell was purchased from Gorbals Bell Foundry by J & D Paton & Co, Tillicoultry, Scotland. James and David Paton were owners of a woolen mill, and were very supportive of the U.P. Church, and their community.

What happens to our bell at this point in its history is not known, the 1925 or 1928 John C. Wilson & Co. Catalog lists our bell as being located at Tillicoultry, Works. It is thought when the Paton mill at Tillicoultry closed, the bell was sold, eventually making its long journey from Scotland to the states.

A letter written to Grace Church in 1992 from The Verdin Company indicates that the "preowned" bell was purchased from them in 1978 by Rosemary Dodd. It was a gift to Grace, given "to the Glory of God and in memory of Holly Rand Johnston and Rev. Harris Carmichael Mooney."

Originally located on the church grounds, the bell was installed in the steeple tower during the 1992 construction of the present Nave. In 2005, with the addition of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John to the steeple tower, a base and stand were built for the original bell in the St. Francis Garden. The bell is occasionally rung by the students of Children of Grace preschool.



# BELL BECOMES BELLS

In March of 2004 Harmannus (Harry) van Bergen, president of the van Bergen Company of Charleston, S.C., paid a visit to Grace Episcopal Church to discuss and evaluate some issues with the bell installed in the tower. That meeting resulted in a follow up letter recommending either a new tuned bronze bell, our original bell is untuned, or a peal of bells in the tower.

An article in the May 9, 2004 issue of the church newsletter, *The Evangelist*, invited parishioners with an interest in “seeing the bell of Grace become the bells of Grace” to contact the rector. That invitation was answered by Bob and Linda Fowler.

Rector Doug Dailey and the Fowlers met with van Bergen on September 1 to discuss the project. Shortly following the meeting a detailed written proposal was submitted which included two options for a peal of four tuned bronze musical bells. The bells in option one would weigh a total of 1,973 pounds with musical notes “A”, “D”, “E” and “F”. Option two was a larger set weighing a total of 2,778 pounds with notes “G”, “C”, “D”, and “E”, which would have a richer sound.

Following review and discussion of the proposal and listening to example recordings of the two options, the Fowlers agreed to fund the purchase and installation of the heavier set of bells. During a discussion about the inscriptions, Rev. Dailey suggested naming the four new bells Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.



The bells were cast in late January 2005 at the world-renowned Paccard Bell Foundry in Annecy, France, which was established in 1796. The are made of pure red copper (78%) and block tin (22%).

During this time extensive work was being done to the steeple tower, to repair water damage to the stucco, and provide framing support for the weight of the new bells. The work was performed by Richard Padgham, Inc.



The new bells of Grace were delivered to Grace Church from the Port of Charleston, S.C. on March 28, 2005, the day after Easter.





On Tuesday morning, April 19, Washington Street was closed to traffic. Under the direction of van Bergen's supervisor Chuck White and Richard Padgham, the bells were raised by a huge crane and installed in the tower. A small crowd of Grace Church clergy, staff, and parishioners witnessed the raising of the bells.

The scaffolding surrounding the tower was removed on April 29 and the first official ringing of the bells occurred the next day at the end of Mary Hemmer's wedding, as she and her new husband Derek exited the church.

# DEDICATION

The bells were dedicated following a combined 10:00 AM service of worship on a rainy Pentecost Sunday, May 15, 2005.

## The Invitatory

*said at the dedication and blessing*

Dear People of God, it is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to our God, who by water and the Holy Spirit has made us a new people in Jesus Christ our Lord. At this time, we give thanks to God for the gift of four new bells. We rejoice in these beautiful additions to our church and community, and we gather now to dedicate and bless them. May these bells ring out the message of God's redeeming love and grace, now and always. Amen!

The rain stopped briefly as the bells were blessed and then all in attendance enjoyed a long celebratory peal of the bells.







On May 9, 2010, to mark the five year anniversary of the dedication of the bells, we welcomed Philippe Paccard, the 7th generation director of Paccard Bell Foundry in France, to Grace Church. He was accompanied by Stan Christoph, president of Christoph Paccard Bellfounderies, Charleston, S.C. and the Paccard foundry's US representative.

Paccard was the guest speaker at the Sunday Forum, where he gave a visual presentation of his company's history and bronze bell casting in Annecy, France.

Following a tour of the Northeast Georgia History Center, Mr. Paccard and Mr. Christoph climbed up into the bell tower to observe the installation and take measurements for possible future lighting schemes and a bell carillon addition.



# RINGING OF THE BELLS

Since their installation, the tower bells mark the passing of each quarter hour with the Westminster chime from 8 AM–8 PM Monday–Saturday and from 1 PM–8 PM on Sunday. The familiar chime strikes four notes on the quarter hour, eight notes on the half hour, twelve notes on the three quarter hour, and on the hour chimes sixteen notes and strikes the hour.

All four bells peal following weddings and at the conclusion of some worship services, most notably on Easter and Christmas Eve. On occasion they ring following a regular service, mostly by request of the children, who love to hear them! The bells also peal on request of other organizations to recognize appropriate national, state, or local events. The bells typically do not ring in a festive manner during Lent.

Matthew, the largest bell, rings a call to worship 10 minutes prior to regular worship services. Matthew also tolls following memorial services, special memorial remembrance occasions, to recognize tragic events, or on request of other organizations in recognition of national, state, or local events.



Listen to our bells peal online at:

[www.gracechurchgainesville.org/audio/bells.m4a](http://www.gracechurchgainesville.org/audio/bells.m4a)



# MATTHEW

Inscription:

THIS PEAL OF FOUR BELLS  
IS THE GIFT OF  
ROBERT AND LINDA FOWLER  
TO  
GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
GAINESVILLE, GA.  
EASTER A.D. 2005  
DEO GRATIAS

Musical Note

**"G"**

Diameter

**39 ¾ inches**

Weight

**1,411 pounds**



# MARK

Inscription:

IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR PARENTS  
THOMAS D. FOWLER  
GERALDINE FOWLER  
MONROE GRAVITTE  
EDDIE LEE GRAVITTE  
GIVEN BY  
ROBERT AND LINDA FOWLER

Musical Note

**"C"**

Diameter

**30 inches**

Weight

**606 pounds**

# LUKE

Inscription:

IN HONOR  
OF OUR CHILDREN

ROB FOWLER

DAWN RIVAS

ROBIN WILLIS

WITH LOVE

ROBERT AND LINDA FOWLER



Musical Note  
"D"

Diameter  
**26 9/16 inches**

Weight  
**419 pounds**

# JOHN

Inscription:

IN HONOR  
OF OUR GRANDSONS

BRETT FOWLER

ROBERT FOWLER, III

WITH LOVE

ROBERT AND LINDA FOWLER



Musical Note  
"E"

Diameter  
**24 inches**

Weight  
**342 pounds**





## GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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