

# Minnesota leads the way on National Bell Ringing during the Pandemic

Bells across the country are invited to ring at noon (Central time) starting April 13 for up to 15 minutes

For Immediate Release:

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City of Bells, a local non-profit committed to coordinating, restoring and celebrating bronze bell installations in MN, announces that hundreds of bells will ring out in the Twin Cities and statewide

Daily bell ringing across Minnesota and the United States will begin on Monday, April 13 at noon. Churches and institutions with bells are encouraged to ring out in unity at noon for up to 15 minutes through the pandemic.

**“Bells have a sacred role to play in society and a civic role. In these days of on-line worship, the bells will be the Church Without Walls in our communities.** Bells remind us of our shared humanity. Bells remind us that we are not alone. Bells point us to the divine. And bells remind us that we are one community,” according to Jorgenson Sundquist.

Bell ringing has a long history in America. Kimberly Schafer, founder and partner of Community Bell Advocates, LLC, in Chicago writes, “Early tower bells served many more functions than calling the faithful to Sunday service. The bells told community members to wake up, to prepare dinner, and tolled for deaths, for example. School bells, from one-room schoolhouses to colleges, directed students to class. Bells in courthouses rang the time and alarms for fire. Other bells rang signals on ships, trains, wagons, and sleighs. Plantation bells rang signals to workers and slaves spread out over the estate. Handbells were used by schoolteachers, peddlers, and town criers’ with the news.

Bells have rung for important events, in joy and in mourning, in our land. Paul Revere rang church bells to signal the invasion of the British military at the beginning of the American Revolution. The bell in the Old State House in Philadelphia, later called the Liberty Bell, announced the public reading of the Declaration of Independence on July 8, 1776. The courthouse bell in Chicago tolled incessantly during the devastating 1871 fire, until the bell melted in the building’s inferno. In modern times, bell ringings commemorate important anniversaries, such as of 9/11 and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WWI in 2018.”

According to Jorgenson Sundquist, Minnesota is home to some of the largest bell installations in the country and some of the largest bells by size and weight. City of Bells has organized Community Bell ringing dates (Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup>, Veteran’s Day November 11, and New Years Day). Working with the Minnesota Legislature, City of Bells was successful in advocating for the first ringing of the MN Liberty Bell, located on the campus of the MN Capitol, on Memorial Day 2019 by Gov. Walz. City of Bells is working with the Minnesota Orchestra on an outdoor concert with bells. A future 5K Bell Run throughout the Twin Cities is in the planning stages.

“Our goal is to get all 54 of the Liberty Bells across the United States operational by July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020. In these days of upheaval, bells will ring out with freedom and hope.”

Questions?

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