



The Anchor

Volume 1 | Issue 3 | December 2023

Contents

- 1 Letter from the Junior Warden
- 2-4 Ring Out, Wild Bells
- 5-6 3rd Annual Caroling in Monroe Park

A Prayer for the Coming of Christmas

The day of joy returns, Father in Heaven, and crowns another year with peace and good will. Help us rightly to remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

Close the doors of hate and open the doors of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil, by the blessing that Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clean hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children. And the Christmas evening bring us to our bed with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

— Henry Van Dyke (1852-1933),
American author, educator, diplomat,
and graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary

Grace & Holy Trinity Church

an Episcopal parish on Monroe Park



8 N. Laurel Street • Richmond, Virginia
(804) 359-5628
ghtc.org

Letter from the Junior Warden

Dear Fellow Parishioners,



Watching the 22-month renovation of Monroe Park in 2016-2018, I often wondered how Richmond's oldest park looked 100 years ago when the merger that created Grace & Holy Trinity Church (GHTC) took place. I knew that it had been the Richmond Fairgrounds, with people gathering there as a community. I imagined how fitting it would be to have the park filled with vendors selling homemade gifts and food, singing carols, and sharing in the spirit of Christmas.

Then Covid-19 hit, we stopped our church routine, and my daydreaming took a back seat as the shutdown took a toll on us all. While we were experiencing such physical isolation, we were also feeling the effects of social injustice throughout the country. Even 155 years after the end of the Civil War, it seemed as though Richmond was still burning.

Once we began to gather again in the church for worship, my daydream returned. The idea for Caroling in Monroe Park responded to the question of how we might heal a splintered community. Singing together could surely be a simple step towards healing. I imagined a community standing together with joy, regardless of our origins, the color of our skin, or our political and religious beliefs.

With the incredible dedication of the GHTC staff and the committee of parish volunteers, we have for the past three years hosted the caroling event in Monroe Park. This year, we added a brass quintet, several vendors, some food trucks, and Santa in his Model T to the Grace & Holy Trinity Vocal Ensemble, Hood Temple Music Ministry, the RVA Street Singers, and the Greater Richmond Children's Choir. This collaborative effort invites us to share in community with one another.

Jesus says, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men," and asks us to open our hearts and minds to all of those that surround us, and to invite them to share God's love. In the words of one of my favorite hymns,

*Joy to the world, The Lord is come! | Let earth receive her King,
Let every heart prepare him room, | Let heaven and nature sing.*

With love and peace,

Meredith McGuire, *Junior Warden*

Ring Out, Wild Bells

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die
Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true. ...
Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good. ...
Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

— *Alfred, Lord Tennyson*

As most of you are now aware, Grace & Holy Trinity has joined the nineteen-hundred-year Christian tradition of bells in the church tower. An anonymous bequest specifically for this purpose has made this glorious addition to our infrastructure and our presence in the Monroe Park neighborhood possible. The bells were made for us at the B. A. Sunderlin Bellfoundry, just up the road in Ruther Glen in Caroline County. Benjamin Sunderlin, the foundry's campanologist (which is what the makers of bells are called), trained for many years in Britain, France, Belgium, and Croatia, learning the various European traditions of bell-making for which his operation is known.

The ten bells in our "chime" are French bells, the largest of which is 31 inches across and weighs 650 pounds. Todd Dykshorn explains that preparation of the building's tower bellfry began with Dunbar, a 50-year-old Richmond structural engineering firm, who led the effort by designing a steel support frame anchored to the tower's stone walls. Century Construction has been the lead contractor. They began with restoration of the inner tower walls and ceiling, after which they oversaw installation of the building's



Installation of the bells inside of the GHTC Belfry

new steel support frame. The rest was up to Ben Sunderlin, who had responsibility for the design and installation of the steel rack that supports the cast bells. He was also the one to install the bells themselves. The schedule depended upon Mr. Sunderlin's schedule of commitments, but the wait is finally over, the bells are ours, and they are to be dedicated on December 10th.



Pouring the bells at B. A. Sunderlin Bellfoundry

The tradition of using bells to deliver the message of community and worship to everyone within earshot is as old as the exquisitely detailed instructions from the Lord to Moses in the Book of Exodus. Everything is covered, from the architecture, furnishings, and clothing to the forms of worship in the tabernacle that was to be built. Where the bells appear is as a feature to be sewn around the hem

of the robe of Moses's brother Aaron, who was to be the first priest, so that he could be heard coming and going from the building.

Christian churches have relied on the ringing of bells to communicate with everyone within earshot since the fifth century, when an Italian bishop incorporated bells into Catholic church services. The bells tell people when to come together, ring to broadcast communal joy in times of celebration and deeply felt sorrow in times of loss, to warn of some imminent danger to the whole population, or to mark the hours established to stop for prayer. Many of us have seen the exquisite 19th century Millet painting called *The Angelus*, in which a French peasant couple pause in their field near the end of the day to bow their heads in prayer. You can almost hear the church bells ringing in the distance in this calming expression of their humble piety.



The Angelus - Millet

It is fitting that the sound of these bells will be a fixture of the church in time for the Centennial of Grace & Holy Trinity's formation on June 2nd, 1924. As most of you probably know, the parish is the result of a merger between Grace Church, which stood at Foushee and Main Streets, and Holy Trinity Church, which was founded on Monroe Park in 1874 as Moore Memorial Chapel in what was then Richmond's "far west end." Now that the bells are installed and connected, so that they can be played from the organ console, we as a parish will begin the establishment of our own traditions covering how



“

let us pray that their sound will serve to call everyone within earshot to pause in the frenetic daily pace of study, work, and family...

”



the ten bells are best used. Surely they will peal for newly married couples, toll for the losses of those we love among us, and react to moments of civic or national crisis or joy.

However we proceed with them, let us pray that their sound will serve to call everyone within

earshot to pause in the frenetic daily pace of study, work, and family, center ourselves according to our own traditions, and feel our integral connection to the neighborhood, the city, and the whole world.

— Ann Norvell Gray



3rd Annual Caroling in Monroe Park & Holiday Market

On December's first Sunday afternoon, the third annual GHTC Caroling & Holiday Market in Monroe Park drew the biggest crowd in its short history. The whole Monroe Park community was invited to join us from 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. for singing, shopping, and refreshment. Part of North Laurel Street was transformed into a holiday market. River City Wood Fire Pizza and JC Desserts were there with pizza, cronuts, drinks, and more. Visitors shopped for homemade gifts made by more local vendors. Ornament painting for the kids and photos with Santa in his Model T turned into activities for all ages. A brass quintet joined GHTC's caroling musicians to give us the beautiful music of this Christmas season as the sun set and the new tower bells rang.

None of this could have happened without the good work of our Caroling Committee, the church staff, and parish volunteers, choirs and musicians, and the purveyors of handmade things and good things to eat. The whole community's holiday spirit and enthusiasm brought joy into the streets! Thank you again to the brass quintet, the Grace & Holy Trinity Vocal Ensemble, the RVA Street Singers, Hood Temple's Music Ministry, and the Greater Richmond Children's Choir for bringing us together with music.

Everyone is so grateful to Santa and to the vendors River City Wood Fire Pizza, JC Desserts, Melt by Griffin & House, Accessories by the Passage, Nest Academy RVA, JD Knots, Hoping4pens & Lori Daniel Artwork, and Robjent Designs. Our own Sandra Hartley brought wreaths, and Betsy Featherstone and Molly Howell brought knitted hats. There were dresses made by Singith Perera, and pillows from Glenice Boykin Coombs.

Special thanks go to Meredith McGuire for leading the Caroling Committee into a great event, and to her energetic husband Billy McGuire, who pitched in for everything from handmade signage to the Model T that Santa drove. The success of this uplifting afternoon makes it safe to assume that this annual event has surely become a beloved tradition for the whole community.



GHTC HOLIDAY MARKET





Christmas & Holiday Schedule

Tuesday, December 19

4:30 PM Holy Strollers Holiday Lights Walk* (One Monument Avenue) **Light refreshments provided.*

Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24

8:00 AM Advent IV: Holy Eucharist (Spoken | Chapel)

3:00 PM Christmas Pageant & Holy Eucharist (Choral | Church)

5:00 PM Festival of Christmas Lessons & Carols (Choral | Church)

11:00 PM Holy Eucharist (Choral | Church)

Christmas Day, Monday, December 25

10:00 AM Holy Eucharist* (Choral | Church) **One service only.*

New Year's Eve, Sunday, December 31

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist* (Choral | Church) **One service only.*

On Christmas Eve, childcare will be provided for up to age 7 and will be available from 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. There will not be childcare on Christmas Day or New Year's Day. There will be no 8:00 a.m. Morning Eucharist on Wednesday, December 27th, 2023. The church offices will be closed from December 26th, 2023 - January 2nd, 2024.

For more information on upcoming events and to view GHTC's full calendar visit ghtc.org/calendar.

Grace & Holy Trinity Church



Church Staff

The Rev. Gregory Bezilla
Priest Locum Tenens (Interim)

The Rev. Paul Evans
Associate Rector

The Rev. Stephen Y. McGehee
Priest Associate for Pastoral Care

Stanley M. Baker
Assistant Choirmaster & Organist

Roland Boone
Sexton

Judy F. Bowman
Financial Secretary & Administrative Assistant

Tyler Brady
Communications Associate

Dr. Elizabeth Melcher Davis
Choirmaster & Organist

Lauren Frazier
Parish Administrator

Kate Given
Director of Formation

Barbara Hobson-Simpson
Receptionist

Kyle Reed
Communications Associate

Abigail Stinnett
Children's Choir Director

Contact

To reach a member of staff, clergy, Vestry, or a Lay Ministry leader visit **ghtc.org/contact**. There, you may use the "Choose a recipient" drop-down menu to select the destination of your email.

Office Hours

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM Monday - Friday

Vestry

David Lewis, *Senior Warden*

Meredith McGuire, *Junior Warden*

Mary Ann Blankenship, Chuck Bleick,
Jane Carlson, Judy Carlson, Maurice Cole,
Brad Davenport, Mike Hale, Terry Hathaway,
Clay Hilbert, Dan McNamara, Mason New, &
Fielding Williams

Lay Ministry Leaders

Dan McNamara, *Acolytes*

Jean Jumet, *Altar Guild*

Nancy Smith, *Christmas Ministry*

Glenn Moore, *Circles RVA*

Catherine Perrin, *Flowers for the Church*

Maurice Cole & Deborah Cole, *Foyer Groups*

Lisa Dawson, *Greeters*

Susan Hankins, *Holy Strollers*

Sandie Hale &

Karin Walker, *Hospitality Committee*

The Rev. Jack Sutor, *Lectionary Group*

Beth McClelland, *Lectio Divina*

Ann Norvell Gray, *Lectors*

Chuck Bleick, *Men's Group*

Mary Cay Kollmansperger, *Missionary Society*

Betsy Featherstone, *Prayer Shawls & Needlers*

Andrew Peacock, *Property Committee*

Mary Douglas Erikson, *Shining Examples*

Molly Howle & Porsche Pierson, *Red Door Ministry*

Shelley Thompson, *St. Andrew's School*

Cathy Saunders, *Spirited Sisters*

Judy Carlson, *Spirited Readers Book Club*

David Hetherington, *Sunday Breakfast*

Clay Hilbert, *Ushers*