



Visit Dublin GA announces historic bell at First African Baptist Church to ring again after decades of silence.

July 10th, 2026 - Dublin, Georgia - On Sunday, July 19th at 1 PM the public is invited to witness a remarkable moment in Dublin's history as the bell at First African Baptist Church rings for the first time in nearly thirty years.

In March, when members of Leadership Georgia's Class of 2026 visited Dublin during the St. Patrick's Festival Super Saturday, their multi-stop itinerary included "One Day: Dublin's Civil Rights Experience," a reader's theatre presentation that shares pivotal moments in Dublin's Civil Rights history, including the story of First African Baptist Church and Martin Luther King Jr.'s childhood visit to Dublin in 1944. During the reader's theatre, participants also learned about the church's historic bell and how it had remained silent for decades.

Moved by the experience and inspired by the church's story, several members of the Leadership Georgia class began exploring ways to help restore the bell's voice. What began as a conversation among visitors soon became a collaborative effort to bring new life to a treasured piece of Dublin's history. Seventy-seven individual private donors, assisted by support from local Home Depot-Dublin store #8954, joined together to help the First African Baptist Church return its bell's voice.

For generations, the bell stood as a symbol of faith, perseverance, and community. Installed in 1920, the 54-inch diameter bell was cast by the C.S. Bell Company of Hillsboro, Ohio, and is the largest bell produced by the company. The bell assembly weighs approximately 3,150 pounds, with the bell itself weighing 2,060 pounds, and is the largest production bell in the world! Tim Koehl, author of *The Bells Heard Round the World: C.S. Bell and His Secret Formula* stated "Dublin Georgia and the First African Baptist Church is in the history books for a number of reasons. The C. S. Bell number 54 bell, as restored, will keep on ringing for a hundred more years keeping the stories alive."

The July celebration will mark the culmination of that effort as the bell rings once again across the community. "There's such excitement finally realizing the culmination of a wishlist project, and to hear a bell that has been a fixture in the tower that was silent for almost thirty years...and now ring out for all to hear." said Deacon Jerry Davis

More than simply the restoration of a historic artifact, the event represents the power of storytelling, preservation, and partnership. It is a reminder that history is not only something to be remembered, but something that continues to inspire action in the present.

The public is invited to attend the July 19th bell-ringing celebration at First African Baptist Church, located at 405 Telfair Street. This historic occasion is an official Georgia US250 event. Georgia's 250th anniversary is about all of us - our stories, our history, and our culture.

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