



## Bells for Remembrance

Bells for Remembrance is a Breast Cancer Awareness event that many congregations have chosen to hold on Mother's Day. The goal of the Bells for Remembrance campaign is to encourage all women aged 40 and older to get annual screening mammograms.



On Mother's Day, we mark the Bells for Remembrance celebration by ringing a bell or striking a piano key to emphasize the importance of breast cancer screening and to remember those who have struggled with the disease.

This event strives to raise awareness of mammography benefits for women and to help us remember those lost to breast cancer. Congregations participate by ringing the Bells for Remembrance:

- One** time for the women who take care of their breast health
- Two** times for survivors and those fighting breast cancer
- Three** times for loved ones who have died of breast cancer

### MYTH vs FACT

I am too young to get breast cancer		Many women who are under 40 are diagnosed with breast cancer
Men can't get breast cancer		1 in 1 249 men have a lifetime risk of breast cancer
Alcohol is not linked to breast cancer		Alcohol use increases the risk of breast cancer
Only women with a family history of breast cancer are at risk		All women are at risk, but family history increases the risk
I have never had children, so I can't get breast cancer		Women who have never had children, or only had them after 30, have increased risk of breast cancer

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### Myths & Facts about BREAST CANCER

MYTH	vs.	FACT
Breast cancer is a death sentence.		If detected and treated early enough, breast cancer need not result in death. Early detection can help save lives and breasts.
If I have bigger breasts, I have a higher chance of getting breast cancer.		This has not been proven by research. Someone who is well endowed has an equal chance of getting breast cancer as one who has smaller breasts.
All breast lumps are cancerous.		9 out of 10 breast lumps are NOT cancer.

**EARLY DETECTION SAVES LIVES, SAVES BREASTS**

## *A Sample “Bells for Remembrance” Service*

**Leader:** We are grateful for all those who have worked to make this “Bells for Remembrance” day a possibility. It is our hope that, as a result of today’s efforts, the lives of many women will be spared, and the lives of many families enriched.

**Leader:** Blessed be God, source of all mercy and comfort, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. As we share in the suffering of others, so by God’s mercy do we share abundantly in comfort also.

(Name) will ring the first bell for the importance of Mammography and good breast health.

🔔 RING BELL 🔔

(After a pause, the person who rang the bell says)  
Let us pray: Ever-loving and caring God, we are humbled by the mysteries of life and death. Help us to accept what we cannot understand, to have faith where reason fails, to have courage in the midst of disappointment. Comfort all who grieve with the knowledge that you also grieve in the face of death, but are the Lord of life and Conqueror of death. Amen.

**Leader:** (Name) will ring the second bell in honor of breast cancer survivors and those who are still fighting the disease. After the bell is rung, we will pray silently for these persons and their families.

🔔 RING BELL 🔔

(After a pause, the person who rang the bell says)  
Let us pray: Almighty God, we pray your blessing of healing for these whom we name aloud or before you in our hearts (pause). We come

humbly to you, believing that you want to know the desires of your children, but recognizing that the mystery of healing is beyond our understanding. We pray for these whom we’ve named, that they may have courage when they’re afraid, strength when they are weak, patience when they are afflicted, and hope when they are lost and alone. Amen.

**Leader:** Name will ring the third bell for lost loved ones and their family and friends. After the bell is rung, we will pray silently for these persons and their families. \*\*

🔔 RING BELL 🔔

(After a pause, the person who rang the bell says)  
Let us pray: Holy God, we are most afraid of the unknown. You cannot heal what we do not share with you. Heal us Lord, of our fears. Help us to welcome as partners in healing from fear these who are survivors, whose lives are filled with such love and laughter. Pour out your grace on all of those who seek to find a cure for cancer, and for those whose lives are dedicated to this effort because of personal loss. Strengthen us as we leave this place to do what we can to live lives of wholeness, so that all in the world may know the wholeness that comes from you. Amen.

**Leader:** Now, go in peace, and may the God of peace go with you.

\*This is a sample service, adapted from the Christian service used by St. Luke United Methodist Church of Columbus, Georgia in May, 2000. It was based on Prayers for healing from a variety of sources. Special thanks to Reverend Cindy Gerrard for sharing this with the Breast Health Connection of Georgia.

\*\*The person asked to ring the bells were: The adult child of a victim of breast cancer, a survivor, and the spouse of a survivor.

## Breast Cancer and Mammography Myths & Facts

<b>Myth:</b>	<b>Facts:</b>
I don't have to worry about getting breast cancer. I don't have any of the risk factors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Just being a woman and getting older are the greatest risk factors for breast cancer.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Additional risk factors include: family history, early menarche, late menopause, late age at first pregnancy or no pregnancies, diet and alcohol consumption.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Breast cancer is one of the most common cancers in women.</li> </ul>
Now that I am in my fifties, I no longer have to worry about getting breast cancer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Women don't outgrow the risk of breast cancer. As women get older, their risk of getting breast cancer increases.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> More than 75% of breast cancers are found in women aged 50 and older.</li> </ul>
No one in my family has been diagnosed with breast cancer, so I won't get it either.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> About 90% of the women who develop breast cancer have no family history of the disease.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Having one first-degree relative with breast cancer approximately doubles a woman's risk.</li> </ul>
If I get breast cancer, I'll die from it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A mammogram can find breast cancer in its earliest stages, before it can be felt.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ninety-seven out of 100 women will live for five years or more if their breast cancer is found at its earliest stage.</li> </ul>
I can't afford to have a mammogram.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If you have Medicare and are a woman aged 40 and older, Medicare will help pay for you to have a mammogram once every 12 months. The woman does not have to meet a deductible first.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Most insurance companies help pay for mammograms.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If a woman doesn't have health insurance, often the American Cancer Society can help recommend resources. Call the American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345.</li> </ul>
Mammograms are unsafe and too painful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mammograms give only minimal exposure to radiation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Some pressure on the breasts is needed during the mammogram to get a clear x-ray, but it only lasts a few minutes.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A woman can tell the mammography technician to decrease the pressure if it becomes too uncomfortable.</li> </ul>
I've had one mammogram; that's all I need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Breast cancer can occur at any time. That is why it is so important to get regular mammograms – not just one.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The American College of Radiology, the American Medical Association and the American Cancer Society recommend that women aged 40 and older have a mammogram every year.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> When a woman has annual mammograms, her doctor can compare the x-rays from year to year. This makes it easier to find changes in the breasts and detect breast cancer in its earliest stages.</li> </ul>
All women have an equal risk of getting breast cancer and dying from it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There are differences in rates of detection and survival outcomes between women of different races.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Although Caucasian women have a higher incidence of getting breast cancer, African American women with breast cancer are more likely to die from it.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cancer is the leading cause of death for African American women aged 30-54.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> African American women are 30% more likely to die of breast cancer than white women.”</li> </ul>