

# OVERTONES

Spring 2026

The Official Journal of Handbell Musicians of America

## National Seminar 2026



July 14-18  
Cincinnati, Ohio



Also: National Board  
Election



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# OVERTONES

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF  
HANDBELL MUSICIANS OF AMERICA

## Uniting People Through a Musical Art

The American Guild of English Handbell Ringers, Inc., dba Handbell Musicians of America, is a nonprofit organization established in 1954 to promote the art of English handbell ringing.

### OUR MISSION

Handbell Musicians of America is dedicated to advancing the musical art of handbell/handchime ringing through education, community, and communication.

### OUR VISION

Uniting people to create a diverse community in which handbell musicians of all skill levels realize their full potential through a musically-respected art form.

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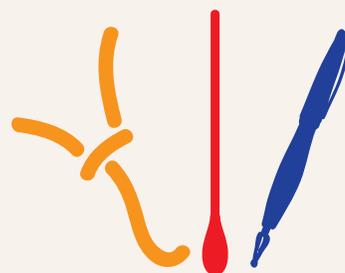
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## Handbell Musicians of America NATIONAL SEMINAR

## National Seminar Heads to Cincinnati • July 14-18

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## My Favorite Job at HMA National Seminar

Every year, as the HMA National Seminar approaches, I feel much anticipation. There are performances to experience, engaging sessions to attend, and friends to reconnect with—but what I look forward to most as an HMA staff member is the time I experience working at the HMA booth in Handbell Commons. That space is more than just a table with signage and handouts. It is a gathering point, a welcome center, and, in many ways, the “family room” of our handbell community.

Serving at the booth gives me a unique vantage point. Throughout the days of the event, attendees flow past—some arriving with detailed questions, others simply stopping by to say hello. Longtime members return year after year, greeting HMA staff and Seminar volunteers like old friends. First-time attendees sometimes approach with curiosity and a bit of nervous excitement. I enjoy being there to meet them all.

There is something energizing about those face-to-face interactions. In an era when so much communication happens through email and social media, the HMA booth at Seminar offers real one-on-one conversation. I get to hear about someone’s ensemble back home, the challenges they are navigating, the successes they are celebrating, or the reasons they decided to attend maybe even for the first time this year. I hear stories of growth, of creative steps taken, and new ideas discovered. Those conversations remind me why the work we do in HMA matters.

Working the booth also allows me to help people find their way at the event. Maybe someone is looking for a specific resource, maybe they are curious about leadership opportunities, or ways to become more involved. Sometimes they simply need reassurance that they belong here. Being able to listen, guide, and encourage is one of the most meaningful parts of the event for me.

I especially enjoy noticing the smaller details that help start conversations. A familiar name on a badge or the many selected name-badge ribbons that signal an attendee’s particular role within HMA or their own organizations. Those details give me insight into their interests and experiences, but they are just the beginning. What matters most is the dialogue that follows—the chance to ask questions, to learn about their journeys, and to share in their enthusiasm about the event and their own experiences at home.

At the same time, the HMA booth becomes a listening post. I hear what is working well and where people feel stretched. I hear creative ideas for the future and honest feedback about current programs. Those conversations are invaluable. They shape how we grow, how we serve, and how we strengthen the experience for everyone involved.

By the end of the conference, my feet may be tired and my voice a little hoarse, but my spirit is renewed. Each conversation adds another layer to my understanding of our community. Each handshake, smile, and shared story reinforces why this annual event is so important.

National Seminar is filled with memorable performances and inspiring sessions, but for me, the heart of it all happens at the HMA booth in Handbell Commons. It is where connections are formed, questions are answered, ideas are shared, and relationships are strengthened. Year after year, I return grateful—not just for the event itself, but for the people who stop by, introduce themselves, and remind me that our organization is, above all, about community.

**Learn all about  
National Seminar 2026  
on pages 21-29 and on our  
website at  
[Seminar.HandbellMusicians.org](http://Seminar.HandbellMusicians.org)**



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# Handbell Musicians of America *Sustaining Partner*

Sustaining Partners play an important role in ensuring the future of Handbell Musicians of America. We are very grateful to our current Sustaining Partners for their support:

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## Your Vote Matters

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” This is a quote from Helen Keller, and it is profound and true, especially for handbells. Not only am I referring to playing our instrument, but also our organization and its structure.

We have a board of directors, who are an important part of how we function. Our board shares their expertise, creativity, and ideas, and works collaboratively to help guide our work and fulfill our mission. An HMA board member serves for six years—a significant commitment—and on behalf of our staff and membership, I share our thanks to those who have served or are serving in this role.

The election for Handbell Musicians of America’s national board is occurring now through March 15, 2026. There is a strong slate of candidates for president-elect and members at-large, and I encourage you to take the time to learn more about them. You can read their bios and answers to provided questions, and watch short videos on our website, [handbellmusicians.org/election26](http://handbellmusicians.org/election26).

The election is online, and when you visit the page mentioned above, in addition to the candidate information, you will see a “Vote Now” button on the right side of the page. After clicking that, you will be prompted to log in to your account and once logged in, you will be able to vote. Don’t fret if you forgot your login or if your membership has lapsed. You can reset your password by clicking the link that says, “Having trouble logging in?” and if your membership has expired, you can renew and then vote. If you need help with any part of the process, give us a call at 937-438-0085 or send an email to [info@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:info@handbellmusicians.org).

I would like to share my profound thanks to Greig Ashurst, Tracey Bowers, and Gillian Erlenborn, our board members whose terms



Executive director Linda Onorevole with current board president Greig Ashurst at Pinnacle 2025.

end on September 30, 2026. They are an integral part of the evolution of HMA over the past years, and I thank them for their commitment, kindness, and knowledge. And some extra special thanks to Greig, who as president for the past three years, has been so very helpful to me. He is always willing to give his time, and his enthusiasm and energy for handbells is inspiring!

Please do vote in the election for Handbell Musicians of America’s board of directors—your vote matters!

# Ringin' season is here!

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# Membership Matters

Thoughts from Your **Regional Membership Coordinators**



Mya Dundzila  
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## When Do You Need a Neighbor?

On a midsummer afternoon, I suddenly realized our rescued, indoor-only cat, “Puffy,” had escaped outdoors during an electrician’s visit. Puffy is untouchable, holding tightly to his earlier feral status, so I began calling and searching around our rural neighborhood in a panic. The next morning, one neighbor mentioned that she had seen a gray cat sitting near her shed. I found Puffy huddled underneath it, as untouchable as ever. Another neighbor then offered the use of his small animal trap. I placed some smelly canned sardines in the back of the trap, and Puffy was caught the following morning. Those of you with pets can easily imagine my trauma and subsequent relief. Fortunately, no handbell rehearsals were missed during Puffy’s Great Escape.

During the November ThanksRing online video presentation, HMA interviewed Martha Lynn Thompson, a retired church musician in Little Rock, Arkansas. For more than 30 years, Martha Lynn directed multiple church handbell choirs for all ages. In the interview, she explained her technique for helping parents of young handbell musicians understand the importance of attending every rehearsal. She gave each parent a couple of random words from the Lord’s Prayer and then asked them to recite the prayer, with each parent reading only their assigned words. In these introductory meetings, it quickly became apparent how every word was crucial and how each reader relied on their neighbor to read their words at the correct time and in sequence. I loved the imagery of this example: eager (perhaps non-musical) parents who could recite the Lord’s Prayer backward and forward in their sleep, trying to form an ad hoc, unrehearsed team of readers. I suspect Martha Lynn had an excellent attendance record in her choirs.

In both of these situations, it really struck me how interdependent we are, whether we realize it or not. Until Puffy’s Great Escape, I never imagined I would need a small animal trap, and my neighbor probably never thought he would need to loan his trap to someone else.

We have probably all relied on our ringing neighbors for the usual favors—helping with a page turn, covering an accidental, or whispering a measure number. Some of us should probably rely on our ringing neighbors a lot more.

This past Christmas holiday season, one handbell musician in my community group could attend only one of two concerts, so a neighboring handbell musician (geographical “neighbor” distances are relative in rural Maine) agreed to shadow the traveling musician for several rehearsals and perform in the second concert. What a generous neighbor.

Do you need help finding a handbell neighbor? As an HMA member, you have access to the Member Directory. Once you log in to the national website ([handbellmusicians.org](http://handbellmusicians.org)), find “Member Directory” on the left side under “Resources and Downloads.” You will see a range of search criteria, including name(s), state, and Area. Back under “Resources and Downloads,” you will also find “Membership Directory Profile,” where you can review how your own information appears in a Member Directory search. Please keep in mind that this tool is available only to active members.

I do have one more neighborly example involving a USPS truck stuck at the bottom of a hill on my icy driveway and a neighbor’s personal tracked vehicle coming to the rescue, but I will tell that story another time.



# Join Handbell Musicians of America and

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**ENGAGE** with members of an organization that is the principal voice for the art of handbell and handchime ringing



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Receive group rates for your affiliated choir at HMA events

Receive *Overtones*, HMA's quarterly journal

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Access health insurance plans via Lighthouse Insurance Group

\*70 per year/\$6 per month for retired directors no longer actively leading a choir or handbell ensemble

\*\*Subject to event eligibility





Greig Ashurst  
HMA National Board  
President

gashurst@  
handbellmusicians.org

## Ringling in the Future

### The Louisiana All-State Handbell Ensemble Shines in New Orleans

The energy in New Orleans this past January wasn't just coming from the jazz clubs in the French Quarter—it was actually in the ballrooms of the Hilton Riverside during the Louisiana Music Educators Association (LMEA) Annual Conference. For the second year in a row, the Louisiana All-State Handbell Ensemble took the stage, proving once again that the future of our instrument is bright, loud, and incredibly talented.

This year's ensemble brought together 24 gifted young musicians from across Louisiana. With a 5-octave set and a 4-octave set of handbells and handchimes, the students had an intense rehearsal schedule through the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday weekend. This year, LMEA was privileged to have Gillian Erlenborn, HMA National Board member, as their conductor. Gillian's leadership was nothing short of phenomenal. Her ability to keep 24 teenagers fully engaged through hours of rigorous rehearsal is a testament to her incredible teaching style. She didn't just teach notes; she taught musicality, passion, and the "why" behind every ring. Under her baton, the students didn't just play notes on a page, they played incredible music.

If you are a music educator or a state or Area HMA chair, I have one message for you: Start an All-State Handbell Ensemble. Handbells are a unique "secret weapon" in music education. They provide a high-level musical experience that is accessible yet challenging. Consider the benefits I saw firsthand in New Orleans:

**Kinesthetic Learning:** Students aren't just reading; they are moving. The physical nature of ringing creates a deep connection between the body and the beat.

**Social Emotional Learning (SEL):** In a handbell choir, no one is a "third chair." Every ringer is essential. If one person misses a note, that note is gone. This fosters a profound sense of individual responsibility and communal support.

“

*In a handbell choir, no one is a "third chair." Every ringer is essential. If one person misses a note, that note is gone. This fosters a profound sense of individual responsibility and communal support.*

”

**Unmatched Team Building:** It is the ultimate team sport. You cannot succeed alone; you must breathe, move, and listen as one.

The most rewarding part of the weekend? Hearing the students themselves. By the end of the Monday concert, many were already asking, "How can I find more opportunities to play?" This is exactly why we do what we do. We are putting handbells in the hands of the next generation. My hope is to see these students continue their journey by joining HMA activities like Distinctly Teen. They can continue to push their boundaries and meet other young ringers from across the nation.

Indiana and Louisiana have set the tone. Who's next? Let's make sure that every student in every state has the chance to experience the joy, the challenge, and the absolute FUN of a high-level handbell ensemble

## National Board Election 2026

Voting runs through March 15

For candidate information and  
voting instructions, go to  
**HandbellMusicians.org/election26**

Voting is online only. For assistance call 937-438-0085  
or email [info@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:info@handbellmusicians.org)

### Candidates for President-Elect

(Choose 1)



Susie  
Amos



Shannon  
Casey

### Candidates for At-Large Directors

(Choose 2)



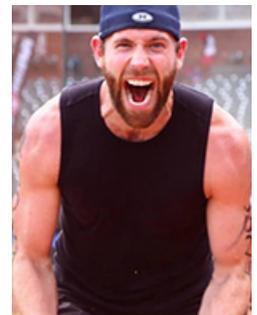
Gini  
Rainey



Carlene  
Ruesenberg



Karen  
Van Wert



Justin  
Wooten



# Solo, Ensemble, Bell Tree

Coordinated by **Linda Krantz**

## Flexible Bell Tree Ensembles

A practical approach for ensembles with changing numbers of handbell musicians

by **Bethel Strawser**

My bell choir has been playing bell tree ensembles for a flexible number of handbell musicians for several years.

### WHY BELL TREE ENSEMBLES?

Bell tree ensembles were born out of a perennial problem: not enough handbell musicians. One year, all of the youth in my bell choir—more than half the ensemble—quit handbells during the first week of school after encountering increased academic demands. This left us with a pressing question: what music can we play with only five handbell musicians who mostly do not want to learn solo-style ringing?

My handbell colleagues advised me to purchase a bell tree. A bell tree musician can easily cover an octave or more of bells as melody or countermelody, while table musicians play additional bells in a traditional style.

Barbara Brocker organized a demonstration of this concept at Into the Forest 2025, using several pieces, including a Linda Lamb arrangement of “While By the Sheep” and my arrangement of “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee.” She noted an added benefit for bell tree musicians who do not wish to play a solo and are more comfortable performing alongside other musicians.

The next step was developing bell tree ensembles for a flexible number of handbell musicians, addressing another common challenge: last-minute changes in ensemble size. This happened in my bell choir while preparing a piece for April with seven musicians when one person fell and broke a leg. We simply dropped one stand and played the piece anyway. Later, while preparing a May piece for six musicians, one person was unexpectedly called out of town for business.

Again, we dropped a stand and played the piece successfully.

I suspect many bell choirs have faced similar situations. While these pieces sound better with additional bass parts, they can still sound satisfying with as few as three or four musicians.

Because directors who are short of handbell musicians are constantly recruiting, the situation can also reverse. I have had to integrate a new musician with little or no notice. On one occasion, someone arrived at rehearsal unexpectedly, with no opportunity for advance planning. In those situations, it is helpful to have a piece with additional bass stands available.

### HOW FLEXIBILITY IS ACHIEVED

Many of the bell tree ensembles I have arranged place the melody entirely on the bell tree, while the table musicians play chordal accompaniment with rhythmic overlay. “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee” provides most of the examples for this discussion.

A bell tree musician plus two table bell musicians can create pleasing music with a reasonable amount of harmony. These table musicians are designated in Example 1 as “core.” A third table bell musician, designated as “helpful,” can complete the chords. Four additional bass stands are marked as “optional.” The more bass bells that are played, the richer the music sounds, but the piece remains viable with a minimal number of musicians.

The arrangement can be performed with three to eight musicians: one bell tree musician plus two to seven table bell musicians. As suggested by Barbara Brocker, the bells-used chart is marked to allow a director to see at a glance how many musicians are required.

Bethel Strawser retired from Petroleum Engineering to go more or less full time into music. She directs the handbell choir for Pines Presbyterian Church in Houston, Texas, and plays solos and duets. Her musical training has been largely “on the job,” supplemented with handbell clinics and workshops. Childhood piano lessons laid the groundwork. She then learned folk and classical guitar, plus mountain and hammered dulcimer, handbells, and a smattering of other instruments on her own. She sings in the sanctuary choir, enjoying the rare opportunity to not be in charge.

She arranges and composes music largely to find ways to make pleasant music with less than a full bell choir. She holds her first copyright on an original vocal piece (not yet in print).

## CHORDAL ACCOMPANIMENT

The use of chordal accompaniment makes this music accessible to musicians with a moderate level of skill and training, including beginning musicians, youth, and children. At the other end of the spectrum, the excellent musicians at Into the Forest prepared this piece in a single twenty-minute rehearsal.

Maggie Tucker has been an inspiration for my use of chordal accompaniment, although many directors undoubtedly employ this technique. My background as a guitarist may also influence this approach.

Chord patterns typically repeat with each verse, allowing musicians to apply different rhythmic patterns once the harmonic progressions are learned. In some pieces, more complex rhythms in later verses may require greater granularity in the chord progressions.

## RHYTHMIC OVERLAY

Rhythmic overlay can add energy and excitement to well-loved hymn tunes. Since many hymn tunes originated as folk songs—or even drinking songs—modernizing them in this way feels appropriate. These arrangements may also support “blended worship,” combining traditional and contemporary elements that resonate across age groups.

In “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee,” the table bells are malletted throughout, emphasizing rhythm and making bell changes and rhythmic shifts easier for the musicians. My ensemble appreciated the accessibility of an all-malletted arrangement, which helped build confidence for tackling more advanced techniques later.

In Example 2, eighth notes on beat four drive into beat one of the following measure, energizing the music. In Example 3, triplets add a majestic character. In Example 4, the music shifts into 6/8 time to suggest a swing feel, giving the hymn a jazzy quality. These examples represent only a few of the many available possibilities.

## ARTICULATIONS

The combination of chordal accompaniment and rhythmic overlay also lends itself well to the use of articulations, which congregations typically enjoy. As a former director once said, “It’s loud and it has shakes. They’ll love it.”

### EXAMPLE 1

Score

# Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

For Bell Tree and Table Bells 3-8 ringers Beethoven/Hodges  
arr. Bethel Strawser 8-27-2024

3 Octaves  
Handbells Used: 25

Bell Tree

Table Bells

optional ringers C4 - C5

### EXAMPLE 2

6 7 8 9

### EXAMPLE 3

45 46

### EXAMPLE 4

22 23 24

Continued on page 19



Dr. Paul Berryman is the Technology Communications Leader at Brown & Brown Insurance. He has a passion for technology, education, and bad puns, bringing them together whenever possible. Paul has spent the last two decades protecting people from the usual suspects of hackers, criminals, and bored teenagers. He helps people with technology through storytelling and energizing presentations. He enables organizational success through user training and awareness thereby reducing human risk. Prior to working in security and education, Paul had six years of swashbuckling adventures with the US Navy. A big fan of colleges, he's attended seven different ones. He's earned a doctorate in education and teaches security courses to graduate students. It isn't rocket science, but just in case, he has a degree in that, too.

# Community Connections

Coordinated by **Lauran Delancy**

## Handbells and High-Tech

### Practical Ways Digital Tools Can Help Handbell Groups Stay Organized and Connected

by **Paul Berryman**

A handbell group is more than a collection of talented musicians—it's many moving parts: calendars, music files, group chats, and volunteer lists. As much as we love making music together, the administrative side can be busy. There are several ways we can use technology to collaborate outside of rehearsal and maintain our connections.

Over the past decade, I have tried different platforms and tools, some successfully and some not. In this article, I hope you learn ways to offer technology to your bell choirs regardless of their skill level.

#### START WITH A LOW INVESTMENT AND BE READY TO EXPERIMENT

Before we look at the different tools you might implement, you should first consider how you will encourage your groups to adopt them. Everyone has a different perspective on technology, and some will love or hate a tool because of personal experience or something they heard in the news.

#### TIPS TO INTRODUCE NEW TECHNOLOGIES:

- Start with minimal applications. As you go through the list of possible technologies to use, start with only a few—or even one—like the calendar or online chat.
- Don't add something new until you know your team is comfortable with what they are already using.
- Let the people using the application decide what works and what doesn't. Listen to their concerns and be ready to explain why a tool was selected or how to use it.
- Start with trials and free accounts. The sales literature and demos may look slick, but you

won't find out how well something really works until the rubber hits the road. Let people try it before you buy it to avoid wasting money or feeling obligated to use something even if you know it's not working.

- Testing with your group is critical. No matter how great the application is, if they won't use it, it's worthless. It starts at the top. Someone in a leadership role who regularly speaks to the group, like the director or group president, should constantly be reminding members to use the selected tool, such as the team calendar, file-sharing site, or communication channel. If you introduce a new tool but continue to use the old one, communication and content will be disjointed and eventually lead to problems. One tool for one purpose.
- During the early adoption period, don't let anyone circumvent the selected tool. If a ringer asks when the call time for the next concert is and that information is in your selected calendar tool, don't give them the answer—direct them to look at the calendar. If a shared document is the place to record planned absences and someone texts you that they will be out in two weeks, reply with a link to the place for them to record it. If you do the work for them, they will not try.

Let's look at a few everyday tech solutions that may make life easier for ringers, directors, and everyone else who helps the group run smoothly. I will refer to the most common products, like Microsoft and Google. These are not necessarily what is best for your group but will give you a good starting point if you are looking for something new to try.

#### THE CALENDAR CONUNDRUM

Once rehearsals are set and concerts are planned, you must be able to share this

information with your group, track any changes, and announce adjustments as needed.

Calendaring has evolved from paper to texts and emails and now to tools that sync across the cloud. It's great to not only have the schedule shared, but newer tools also allow ringers to report absences and enable you to communicate last-minute time and location changes. Let's focus on a few cloud-based tools.

**Simple solution** – Create a shared document that one person sets up with headers for each event followed by notes. For example, a rehearsal on January 15 may have a list from the director of what songs will be rehearsed, followed by a space for ringers to note if they are going to be absent. This makes the information visible for everyone to see immediately and eliminates single points of failure like missed texts or messages sent to only one person. This will not work for communication that should be private, such as board-level discussions.

**Moderate work** – Use a Google Calendar shared with all ringers. This requires everyone to share an email account and know how to add a shared calendar to their phone or computer.

**Advanced teams** – For ensembles made up of people who are comfortable with technology, such as creating and accepting calendar invites, consider Microsoft Outlook and Teams with the built-in calendar. This can be challenging for non-technical individuals, as Microsoft offers many calendar options for flexibility, but it can be overly complex.

## **COLLABORATION OUTSIDE OF REHEARSAL + SOCIALIZING**

There are times when we need to talk outside of rehearsals, and technology gives us a great advantage by making that possible online. This could include time to work out tricky measures between a few ringers, sharing a funny moment from rehearsal, notes of congratulations, or board meetings.

**Simple solution** – Set up a private social media space, such as a Facebook Group, for the ensemble. You can also use Facebook or other social media messaging for one-on-one and small-group discussions. In addition, there are standalone, free online meeting platforms, like Zoom, that can be used for board meetings.

**Moderate work** – Basecamp is a great collaboration tool that allows for easy setup and use. While it's designed for project management, it works well with both large and small teams. Be aware that only up to 20 people can use a Basecamp license for free for one group. After that, there is a \$15 per month, per user fee.

**Advanced teams** – Go all in with Microsoft Teams and SharePoint for collaboration. This does require someone to be a designated administrator who will need to set up accounts for each member.

## **SHARING FILES – DOCUMENTS, PHOTOS, AND MORE**

Handbell choirs juggle a lot of content, and technology-based sharing tools can make collaboration much easier than files saved on someone's home computer. Upload files to the cloud so they're backed up and accessible from anywhere—no worries about losing a flash drive or deleting the wrong folder. Files may include:

- Board governing documents, accounting files, and bylaws.
- Publicity files such as graphics, flyers, and poster designs.
- Concert videos and photos.

There are many options beyond Microsoft OneDrive and Google Drive for file sharing. Other options include Dropbox and Box. Almost all storage sites work similarly, using folders, file links, and sharing permissions. The key considerations are how much space is included and how much it costs.

You might even use a combination of storage platforms for different purposes. I typically use Microsoft OneDrive, which includes a large amount of storage space, to archive our media files. Google Drive links are more familiar to our ringers, so we use it for regular files like rehearsal notes and concert flyers. No matter what you select, create a file map listing all folders and the categories of files stored in them.

## **CONCLUSION**

It can be tricky to pick the right tool for your group. There is no single application that works for all situations. Remember that no matter how great a tool appears to be, it only works if the ensemble adopts it. That adoption starts at the top and is reinforced through repetition. To help with adoption, look for applications that offer both desktop and mobile versions to accommodate individual preferences.

If someone won't adopt the new tool, talk with them to find out why. Is there something specific you can change about the setup to make it easier to use? It may be something simple they didn't know how to do. At the end of the day, if a team spends months with a tool and it's not being used, consider moving from an advanced solution to a moderate or simple one.

Semper Gumby!



# Handbells in Education

Coordinated by **Kathleen Wissinger**

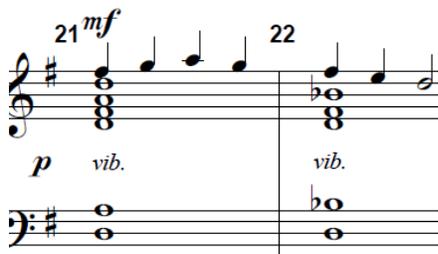
## Let's Talk Voicing

by **Kathleen Wissinger**

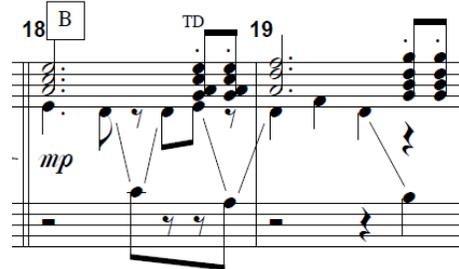
There is a never-ending array of interesting theory tidbits and engraving choices that whiz by us at every rehearsal. Here's one I latched on to: recently on Handbell People (a wonderful Facebook page), a question was posed about the G5 in this measure (M1): "How should it be played?"



The issue at hand is called voicing—identifying notes that belong together in some way, whether chordally, rhythmically, dynamically, melodically, or by technique or instrument. Chords and rhythmic phrases are often voiced with specific stem directions, dots, and beams so you can clearly see which stacks of notes belong together and are played the same way. Techniques can also be grouped with stems to distinguish them from what's happening in other voices. If handchimes are used, they are "voiced" with diamond-shaped noteheads. Sometimes, though, a melody note is also contained within a chord played at the same time—like the M1 example in question.



Let's explore some common methods of voicing. In M21 and M22, note that the upper treble line is clearly a melody line, while the entire stack of notes below serves as chordal accompaniment. "Clearly identify the melody" is a goal of most composers. Notice that D6 is part of the lower voice in M21 (played piano, vibrato) and part of the top voice in M22 (rung, mezzo-forte), but because these occur in two different measures, the voicing is very clear. It's easy to assign a specific dynamic or a broad technique like vibrato to voices in such cases, since it's obvious who will participate.

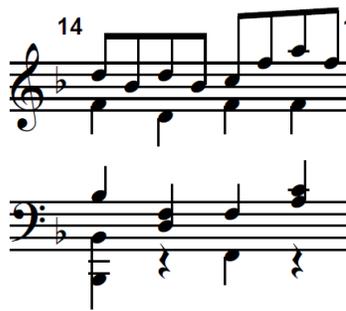


The example in M18 and M19 shows the same practice, except the melody is the lower voice and jumps back and forth between treble and bass. Each staff's rhythm is fully notated with rests as placeholders, as well as voice-leading lines that show where the melody moves next. Often, a voice-leading line like this can be used without all the rests, but in this case the individual eighth notes would be hard to place precisely in a read-through without them. Hence the engraving mantra: "make it easy to read and count." If you've ever sight-read through a poorly voiced piece, you know the difference.

Stem directions can also signify voicing across a staff. In this example (M14), there are three main voices: (1) top voice—treble stems up; (2) middle voice—treble stems

Known for her creative teaching style, clear directing, and engaging compositions, Kathleen Wissinger has directed and taught at events across the US and in Canada and Japan, and is Artistic Director of Mosaic Handbell Ensemble and Gloria Dei (an adult church group). Kath is pleased to announce the sale of "ringTrue Handbell Music" to Jeffers Handbell Supply. While Jeffers will now do most of the heavy lifting, she retains composing and editorial rights to her wide range of publishing innovations. Kath currently serves on the National Board of HMA; coordinates the CHIME Loan program for Area 3 (served on the Area 3 Board for eight years); and often mentors ringers, directors, composers, classes, and new events. She was integral on the planning team for Into the Forest, a bell tree event. Her Professional Development sessions for her local county school system have received rave reviews ("The best I've ever taken!"). A former National Park Service Ranger with a degree in geology, Kath lives in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley of Virginia with husband Skip (also a former Park Ranger), teaches piano lessons, and makes world-famous bread & butter pickles. Contact her at Longwalk3@aol.com.

down and bass stems up (note how their rhythms and functions are the same); and (3) low voice—bass stems down.



Each voice could be given a particular dynamic or technique, and each can be practiced separately. Note that in this example, none of the voices overlap any notes. With these “isolated” voices, a handbell musician plays in only one voice for an entire section. In such cases, musicians can follow a single rhythm or technique line without jumping back and forth. If your musicians are fumbling in a passage, check to see whether their bells are included in more than one voice, even if the music looks easy.

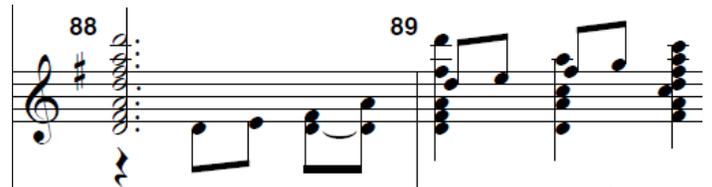


Stem direction also helps when voices overlap in the same range, as in M24. The stem-down half notes stand apart from the moving eighth notes to help clarify assignments. Again, this is a great rehearsal tool, since the director can ask musicians to play the stem-up eighth-note voice alone to practice rhythm, accidentals, or balance. Note that the AB5 musician will play in both voices, sustaining the Ab5 and damping the Bb5 eighth note on beats one and two.

Playing in more than one voice makes life a little more complex, as with the Eb6 in M28 and the C6 in M29. With the top voice as the melody, the stem-up notes would be played louder, so each musician would play the beat-one eighth note forte and the beat-two quarter note mezzo-forte.



M88 and M89 show chords with an eighth-note scale moving through them. The stem direction of that voice changes (stem down in M88 and stem up in M89). This notation choice makes it easy to identify that particular voice and helps musicians be sure they hear the rising line within the chords. In M89, the CD6, EF6, and GA6 musicians are challenged to play the eighth notes with more gusto than the quarter notes so that the scale really pops out. A6 is the assumed end of the scale on beat three.



Sometimes, the need for clear reading overrules clear voicing. In example Box A, I am trying my hardest to make sure musicians know where the melody (in octaves) is, while quarter notes pop in here and there. This is a well-known tune being repeated, so it might be best to merge both voices together (Box B). Melody-wise, it may not be as clear, but it is much easier to read and play. Both approaches are correct; you just have to choose the goal. The Eb5 in M32 is part of the lower voice, so adding a voice-leading line would keep it from getting lost in the shuffle. Side note: I also added a B4 on the last beat so the melody remains entirely in octaves. I could drag it into the bass clef, but there is already a lot going on, so I leave it in the treble clef and make a note for the B4 musician to look up there for it.



Sometimes there is so much happening—when a melody is fully immersed in a sea of chordal notes—that it is best to consolidate everything and reduce the clutter on the page. It may take some score study to bring out the melody notes, but the notes themselves are much easier to read.

Continued on page 19



# Handbells in Worship

Coordinated by **Mitchell Eithun**

## Creative Uses of Handbells in Worship

by **Mitchell Eithun**

“Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth” (Psalm 100:1, NRSV). Here are five creative ways to incorporate handbells in worship services. Suggested repertoire that incorporates these techniques is also included.

### Additional resources:

- *After the Prelude* by Bill Mathis (Choristers Guild), available for Year A, Year B, and Year C in the Revised Common Lectionary
- *The Creative Use of Handbells in Worship* Vol. 1 and Vol. 2 by Hal Hopson (Hope Publishing)

### PEALS

In the English ringing tradition, a peal is a particular type of pattern used for ringing large tower bells in rapid succession. In the handbell world, the word “peal” is often used colloquially to mean a repeated scale-like pattern played by an ensemble or one person on a bell tree. A peal can be used to introduce a handbell anthem or start worship. Some faith communities begin worship by playing “Westminster Quarters” (see example 1).

**Creative idea:** Begin a Christmas Eve service by reading the Canticle of Zechariah (Luke 1:68–79) in the dark. Next, have one person ring a low bell 12 times to mark “midnight.” On the last strike, have the handbell ensemble start playing a peal while the lights are turned on. The peal could lead into a triumphant hymn such as “Joy to the World” (See example 2).

### Handbell Repertoire with Prominent Peals:

- “Gloria” arr. Francis Callahan (L3-, AGEHR Publishing)
- “Peal Con Brio” by Karen Thompson (L2, AGEHR Publishing)
- “Carillon Festiva” by Cathy Moglebust (L4, Choristers Guild)

- “All Praise and Glory” arr. Sondra Tucker (L3, Jubilate Music Group)

### PROCESSIONALS

A procession is a form of worship that involves moving into the worship space (see Psalm 68:24-25). Some faith traditions have a procession at the beginning of worship in which the choir brings a cross or Bible to the front of the space. Others have a small procession following the offering to bring tithes to the altar. In a handbell processional, ringers walk in from the back or the side of the worship space playing a repeated series of measures. Processionals can be used prior to playing a piece of music or to begin worship.

**Creative idea:** Tie ribbons to small plastic hairbands. Have the ringers wear these ribbons around their wrists while playing a processional. If a handbell anthem directly follows the processional ringers can quickly remove the bands from their arms when they arrive at the bell table. Choose a processional that is in the same key as the anthem for musical continuity.

### Selected Handbell Processionals:

- *Four Processionals for Handbells* by John Behnke (Concordia Publishing House)
- *Six Processionals* by Sandra Eithun (Chorister’s Guild)
- “Joy Abounds” by Mitchell Eithun (Handbells Magazine, Lifeway)

### Handbell Repertoire with Optional Processionals:

- “Festive Peal” by Karen Thompson (L2+, AGEHR Publishing)
- “Alleluia” by Brian Tervo (L3, AGEHR Publishing)
- “Processional on O Come All Ye Faithful” arr. Sandra Eithun (L2, Jeffers Publishing)

Mitchell Eithun is a church musician, composer, and mathematician. He has over 80 published pieces of handbell music and has received commissions from community and church handbell ensembles. Mitchell is interested in developing innovative handbell rehearsal techniques and writing about the history of church music. Currently Mitchell is the handbell editor for Beckenhorst Press, and the staff carillonneur at Duke University Chapel. He is also the founding director of Bell Durham, a community handbell ensemble in Durham, North Carolina. Mitchell recently completed a Master of Divinity with a focus in Theology and the Arts from Duke Divinity School. He also holds a Bachelor of Arts in mathematics and computer science and a minor in music from Ripon College and a Master of Science in computational mathematics from Michigan State University. He is an associate member of the Guild of Carillonneurs in North America and a seminar instructor for Handbell Musicians of America. In his spare time, he enjoys trying new food and traveling to new places.

## ACCOMPANY PENTATONIC HYMN TUNES

In music theory, the major pentatonic scale consists of degrees 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 from the major scale. There are no half-steps (“minor seconds”) in the major pentatonic scale and so none of the notes are dissonant with each other. In other words, each note in the scale sounds pleasing with every other note. Many folk music traditions around the world use this scale (see example 3).

Melodies that only use notes from the pentatonic scale are called pentatonic. Because they do not contain any half-steps, pentatonic hymn tunes may be accompanied by a single chord: the tonic chord, (also called the “I chord”.) For example, “Amazing Grace,” when sung in F Major, can be accompanied exclusively by an F Major chord with the notes G (scale degree 2) and D (scale degree 6) added for extra color.

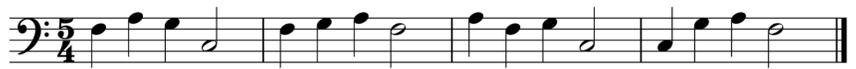
Three handbell techniques are well-situated for accompanying pentatonic hymn tunes: singing bell, random ring, and suspended mallet. Combinations of these techniques can also be used together to support singing by an instrumentalist, vocal soloist, choir, or congregation. Experiment with the location of the ringers in the worship space (see example 4).

**Creative idea:** Seat the ringers in random positions in the worship space. When the time comes, cue the ringers to stand up and begin singing bell or random ringing. The ringers walk to the front, sides, or aisle as the first verse of the hymn is sung or played by a soloist. After the verse, the organist sets up the second verse for congregational singing.

### Pentatonic Hymns:

- “Amazing Grace”
- “How Can I Keep From Singing?”
- “How Firm a Foundation”
- HOLY MANNA
  - “Brethren We Have Met to Worship”
  - “God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens”
- BEECH SPRING
  - “Lord Whose Love In Humble Service”
  - “Wash O God, Your Sons and Daughters”

### EXAMPLE 1



### EXAMPLE 2

#### Plain Hunt

Handbells Used

### EXAMPLE 3

Deriving the major pentatonic scale from the major scale.

F Major Scale

F Major Pentatonic Scale

### EXAMPLE 4

Examples of handbell accompaniments for major pentatonic hymntunes in F Major. Adding the 2nd or 6th scale degrees produces a different feeling.

**F<sub>add2</sub> : Brighter**

**F<sub>add6</sub> : Darker**

- “Come All Christians, Be Committed”
- SLANE
- “Be Thou My Vision”
- “Lord of All Hopefulness”

### Handbell Arrangements of Pentatonic Tunes Incorporating Singing Bell:

- “Amazing Grace,” arr. Sandra Eithun (L2, Red River)
- “How Can I Keep From Singing,” arr. Arnold Sherman (L3-, Red River)
- “What Wondrous Love Is This” arr. Brenda Austin (L2+, Hope Publishing)

## ACCOMPANY CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

Handbells can help enliven congregational singing by reinforcing the melody and harmony or adding a new line of music called a descant. If congregational singing is led by the organ, the handbell ensemble could join the organ for the first and last verse of a hymn.

### Published Handbell Hymn Accompaniments:

- *Hymn Embellishments* by Anna Laura Page (Chorister’s Guild)
- *Easy Hymn Accompaniments* by Margaret Tucker (Chorister’s Guild)
- *Hymns and Handbells Vol 1 & 2* by Lloyd Larson and Joel Raney (Hope Publishing)
- *Ten Christmas Hymn Introductions* by Matthew Prins (Hope Publishing)
- Write your own!

### Published Hymn Concertatos with Handbells:

- “Church’s One Foundation” arr. Cathy Moglebust (L2+, Chorister’s Guild)
- “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today” arr. Douglas Benton (L2, Hope Publishing)
- “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” arr. William Mathis (L2, From the Top Publishing)
- A hymn introduction: “I Sing the Mighty Power of God” (or “Hosanna, Loud Hosanna”) arr. Joel Raney and Arnold Sherman (L3, Hope Publishing)

**Creative idea:** Have the handbell ensemble play each of the Alleluias in “Christ the Lord is Risen Today”.

## ENHANCING LITURGY

The word liturgy, meaning the order of service, is derived from a Greek word meaning the work of the people. Adding handbells to call and response liturgy is a way to involve more people in leading worship. Aleatory effects such as shakes, random ringing and singing bell can be added to

punctate lines or strike a particular mood. Singing bell can be used to accompany a soft or meditative moment in worship.

**Creative idea:** Add random ringing to a Psalm-based Call to Worship (see example 5).

### Psalm-Inspired Handbell Repertoire:

- Psalm 150: “Timbrel and Dance” by Kevin McChesney (Chorister’s Guild)
- Psalms 103, 27, 18: “Three Psalms for Bells” by Judy Hunnicutt (Hope Publishing)
- Psalm 9: “Psalm 9” by Carl Wiltse (AGEHR Publishing)
- Psalm 138: “In the Presence of the Angels” arr. Sandra Eithun (GIA Publications)

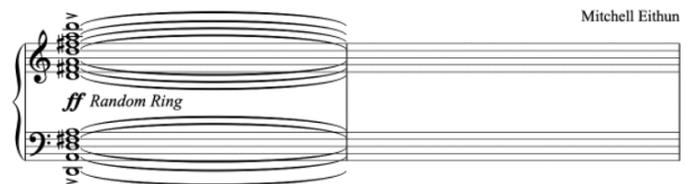
### EXAMPLE 4

You can download the full-size copy of the following Call to the Worship in the online edition at [HandbellMembers.org](http://HandbellMembers.org).

### Call to the Worship Psalm 118

Leader: Please rise for our call to worship.

Mitchell Eithun

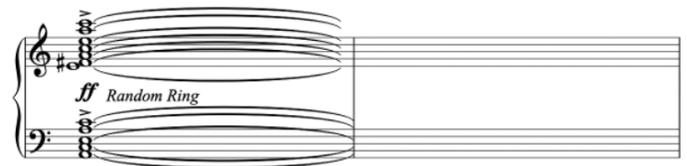


Leader: O give thanks to the Lord, for God is good

**People: God’s steadfast love endures forever!**

Leader: The Lord is my strength and my might;

**People: God is my salvation!**



Leader: The right hand of the Lord is exalted

**People: I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the Lord.**

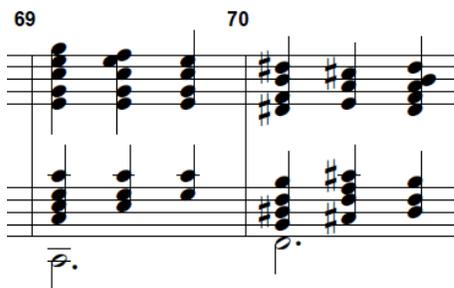
Leader: This is the day that the Lord has made

**People: Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**



## Handbells in Education...

Continued from page 15



Musical notation for measures 69 and 70. The notation consists of two staves. The top staff has a treble clef and the bottom staff has a bass clef. Both staves show chords with stems. Measure 69 shows a G5 chord in the top staff and a G5 chord in the bottom staff. Measure 70 shows a G5 chord in the top staff and a G5 chord in the bottom staff.

Now for the situation in the Facebook question (see Box X, M1).



Musical notation for Box X, measures 1, 2, and 3. The notation consists of two staves. The top staff has a treble clef and the bottom staff has a bass clef. Both staves show chords with stems. Measure 1 shows a G5 chord in the top staff and a G5 chord in the bottom staff. Measure 2 shows a G5 chord in the top staff and a G5 chord in the bottom staff. Measure 3 shows a G5 chord in the top staff and a G5 chord in the bottom staff.

The question focused on what the G5 should do on beat three and why it is notated simultaneously as a double—twice—so each voice is complete. From there, it is up to us to interpret how to play the phrase. This is actually a series of chord transitions with passing tones on beat two (A4) and beat four (F5). However, the composer also wants to ensure that the G5 on beat three sustains for a full two beats. There are many credible ways to notate this phrase with the same aural and physical result. I tried two other possibilities: M2 divides the top staff into two distinct voices (stems up and stems down) and shows the sustained G5 with a tie, but you lose track of how the F5 relates to the G5. M3 offers a cleaner solution, but again we lose track of G5's purpose, and now it looks as though the quarter notes form an arpeggio—G4, A4, D5, F5—which is not quite the composer's intent. Which measure looks the least cluttered and most clearly conveys musical flow and the "important" notes? I would vote for M1.

There are many possible ways to voice a musical passage. The composer strives to balance musical intent, readability, and page clutter. As teachers and directors, we do well to study tricky passages like this, determine the composer's intent, and guide our handbell musicians to play musically and confidently.

## Solo, Ensemble, Bell Tree...

Continued from page 11

In "Great Is the Lord," arranged under CCLI license, the bell tree musician frequently uses mallet rolls, while the table musicians move through ringing, thumb damping, martellato lift, shaking, and a final emphatic martellato. This concluding passage is shown in Example 5, and congregations often find the growing excitement contagious.

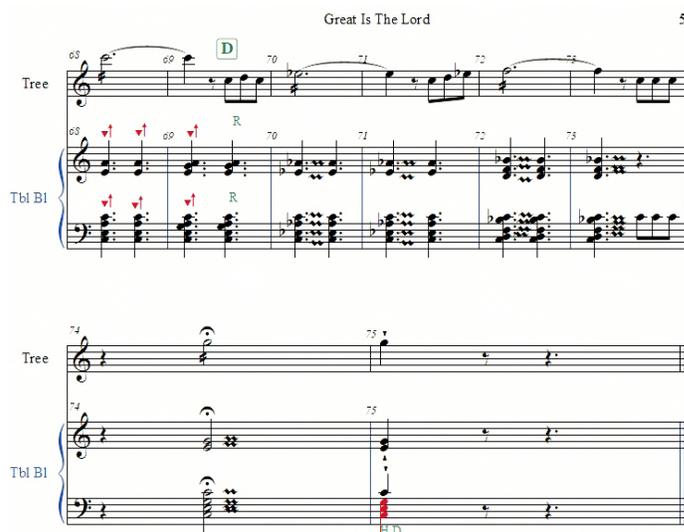
### EXTRACTED PARTS

Providing extracted parts allows musicians to enjoy fewer page turns. The bell tree part often fits on just two pages, eliminating page turns entirely. Page turns in the table bell parts can usually be placed in convenient locations, often requiring only one turn.

I also provide the full score when first introducing the piece, allowing musicians to see how the parts fit together. Most then choose to perform from the extracted parts for convenience. Whether a publisher would be willing to print both extracted parts and full score remains an open question.

### CONCLUSION

Bell tree ensembles for a flexible number of handbell musicians have been a mainstay of my bell choir for several years as we have rebuilt toward a larger ensemble capable of more traditional repertoire. These ensembles offer fresh, energetic arrangements of familiar hymns that are accessible to musicians of moderate skill and training while remaining engaging for congregations. It is encouraging to see a growing body of music written in this style.



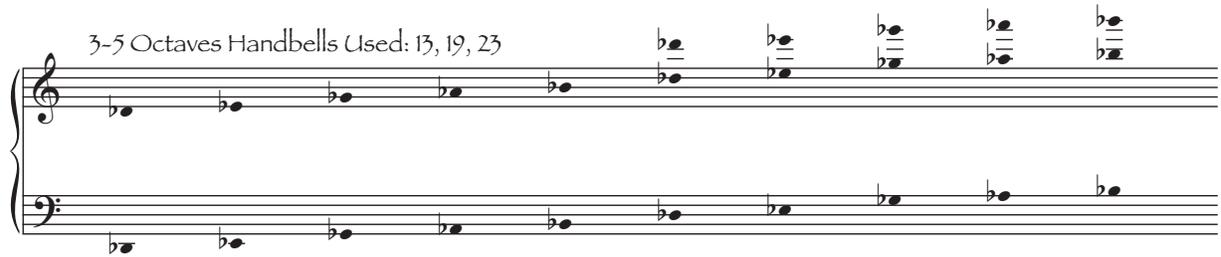
Musical notation for "Great Is The Lord", measures 69-73. The notation consists of two staves. The top staff is labeled "Tree" and the bottom staff is labeled "Tbl BI". The top staff has a treble clef and the bottom staff has a bass clef. Both staves show chords with stems. Measure 69 shows a G5 chord in the top staff and a G5 chord in the bottom staff. Measure 70 shows a G5 chord in the top staff and a G5 chord in the bottom staff. Measure 71 shows a G5 chord in the top staff and a G5 chord in the bottom staff. Measure 72 shows a G5 chord in the top staff and a G5 chord in the bottom staff. Measure 73 shows a G5 chord in the top staff and a G5 chord in the bottom staff.

# Music for Members

## Fanfare #8 in Gb

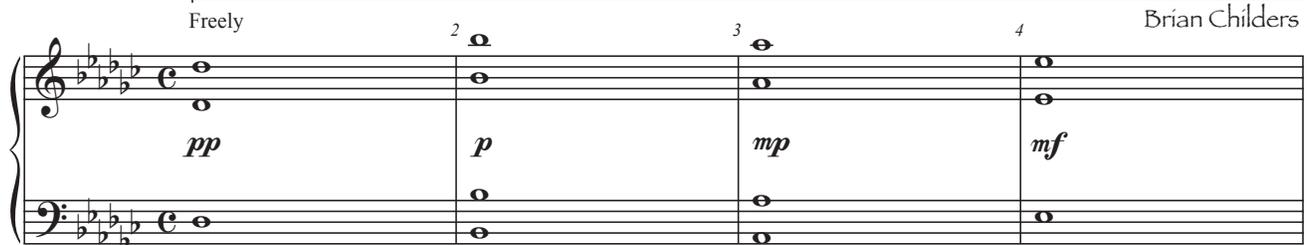
A pentatonic prelude or processional for 3-5 Octaves

3-5 Octaves Handbells Used: 13, 19, 23



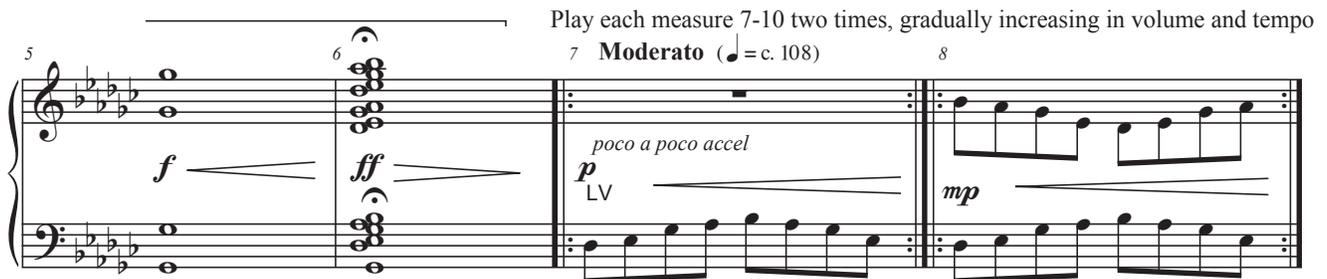
Random ring, adding bells in each successive measure (ALL BELLS ms. 1-4 continue through ms. 5)

Freely 2 3 4 Brian Childers



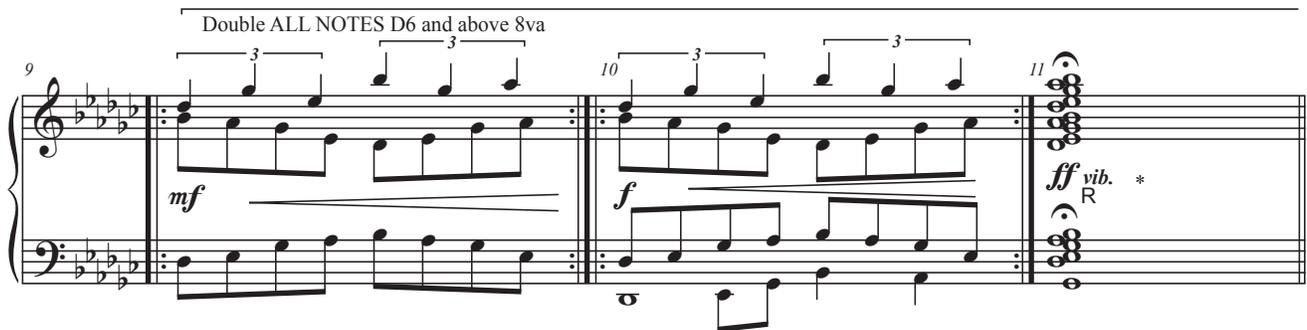
5 6 7 Moderato (♩ = c. 108) 8

Play each measure 7-10 two times, gradually increasing in volume and tempo

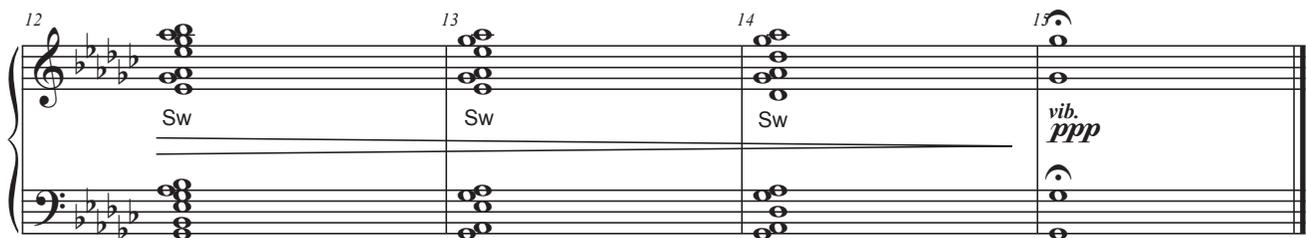


9 10 11

Double ALL NOTES D6 and above 8va



12 13 14 15



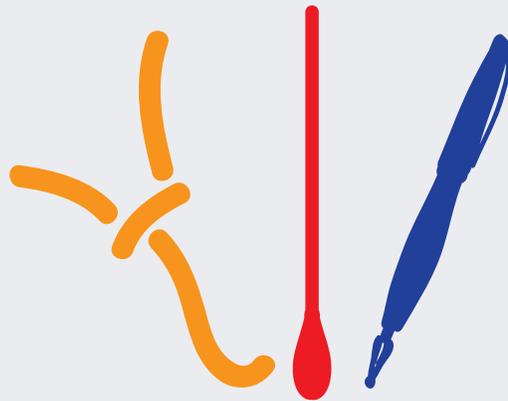
\*Bells may stop after measure 11 or continue through end

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**July 14-18**



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**CINCINNATI, OHIO • 2026**

At National Seminar, you will participate in educational and engaging classes; hear performances by select choirs and ensembles; and browse and shop exhibiting partner displays in the Handbell Commons. National Seminar provides the unique opportunity to meet and network with fellow handbell musicians and develop life-long friendships with those that share your enthusiasm and passion for our art.

**Details at [Seminar.HandbellMusicians.org](https://Seminar.HandbellMusicians.org)**

# SPECIAL RINGING & LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

## ALL-STAR CHOIR

### BRENDA AUSTIN, CONDUCTOR

The All-Star Choir is an auditioned ensemble comprised of advanced handbell musicians. The new audition process for 2026 required an application and video of the applicant performing provided audition excerpts (deadline Feb 28). The All-Star Choir will share a concert with Distinctly Teen on Saturday, July 18, 2026, which will be livestreamed.

#### Repertoire:

*Exultate* – Krug / GIA Publishing / G-8546 / L.4+

*We Three Kings* / Hope Publishing / 2482 / L.3+

*Vivace* – Austin / GIA Publishing / G-9019 / L.3+

*In the Hall of the Mountain King* – Thompson / Fred Bock Music Co / FBBG 0915

*Be Still, My Soul* – Guebert / Jeffers / JHS9570 / L.5

*Golden* – Hanson / Hope Publishing / L.4

## BEGINNING RINGING TRACK

### KIMBERLEE STREPKA, CONDUCTOR

This ringing track provides hands-on experience with basic to intermediate ringing techniques in a learning-focused, stress-free environment. This track is for ringers and directors who work with beginning ringers.

#### Repertoire:

*Joy and Celebration* – Afdahl / AGEHR Publishing / MAG35297 / L.2

*Within the Darkest Night* – Hakes / AGEHR Publishing / MAG36028 / L.2

*Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus* – Moglebust / Choristers Guild / MCGB266/569 / L.2

*O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus* – Lamb / Hope Publishing / MHP2701 / L.1+

*Morning Has Broken* – Sherman / Choristers Guild / MCGB421/422 / L.1

## INTERMEDIATE RINGING TRACK

### JOE GALYON, CONDUCTOR

Stretch your ringing skills with a challenging, diverse, and engaging repertoire. Multiple treble and bass bell techniques, weaving, malleting, chime techniques, assignment strategies, stage presence, and other skills will be employed.

#### Repertoire:

*Allegro con moto* – Krug / GIA Publishing / G-8073 / L.3+

*Calypso Celebration* – Austin / Hope Publishing / 3106 / L.3-

*Rejoice and Be Glad* – Galyon / From the Top Publishing / 20698 / L.3+

*Soul Search* – Gramann / From the Top Publishing / 20884 / L.3

*Spires* – Compton / Beckenhorst Press / HB647 / L.3



#### Note:

Track participants must purchase music in advance and attend all sessions.

## ADVANCED RINGING TRACK A CELIA CHAN VALERIO, CONDUCTOR

This year, we are offering two Advanced Ringing Tracks with separate repertoire. In Advanced Track A, read and work on four pieces that incorporate various styles and challenges. Sessions will challenge each ringer to think conceptually about how to make their ringing even more musical. This track is appropriate for the advanced ringer or a ringer desiring assistance to move to a new level.

### Repertoire:

*Rhapsody in B Flat Minor* – Erdman & Compton / Choristers Guild / MCGB1065 / L.4+

*Vivacio (Spirited Praise)* – Moglebust / Beckenhorst Press / MBEHB785 / L.4

*Majesty* – Cerna / The Golden Dance / L.5

*After Silence* – Krug / Choristers Guild / MCGB1288 / L.4



## ADVANCED RINGING TRACK B STEPHANIE RHOADES, CONDUCTOR

This year, we are offering two Advanced Ringing Tracks with separate repertoire. In Advanced Track B, read and work on five pieces that incorporate various styles and challenges. Sessions will challenge each ringer to think conceptually about how to make their ringing even more musical. This track is appropriate for the advanced ringer or a ringer desiring assistance to move to a new level.

### Repertoire:

*What a Wonderful World* – Eithun / Hope Publishing / HP2702 / L.3+

*Solace* – Glasgow / Choristers Guild / CGB1393 / L.4

*Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* – Compton / Choristers Guild / CGB1355 / L.4

*Comfort, Comfort Ye My People* – Krug / Beckenhorst Press / BEHB812 / L.4

*Psalm 42* – Buckwalter / Beckenhorst Press / BEHB251 / L.5



Details at [Seminar.HandbellMusicians.org](http://Seminar.HandbellMusicians.org)

# CLASSES AND FACULTY

Classes are organized into several categories based on handbell musicians' individual needs.

## BASICS FOR HANDBELL RINGERS

### **Bells, Ringers, Rehearsal Room: What Now?**

*Linda Lamb*

### **Developing Young Choirs – Ringing for Today and Building for the Future**

*Mark Arnold*

### **Fear Not! Good News of Great Joy for Inexperienced Directors**

*Jackie Stephenson*

### **Gamify the Basics – from Newbie to Confident in Record Time**

*Taryn Davis*

### **Organizing Your Ringing Year**

*Kathleen Wissinger*

### **Ready, Set, Ring! A Practical Guide for New Handbell Directors**

*Marie Loeffler*

### **Take It Up a Notch**

*Jennifer Stack*

## COMMUNICATIONS

### **From Good to Great: Stage Presence for Everyone**

*Hillary Marotta*

### **Tuning Your Message: Strengthening Communication within Your Group and with Your Audience**

*Marie Loeffler*

## COMPOSING/ARRANGING/PUBLISHING

### **Conquering Copyrights**

*Nick Hanson*

### **Ringing with the Congregation – Arranging Hymns for Handbells**

*Christopher Boilesen*

### **The Art of Arranging Pop Music for Handbells**

*Nick Hanson*

### **The Art of Engraving (and the Chore of Proofing)**

*Michael Glasgow*

## CONDUCTING

### **Basic Principles of Conducting**

*Stephanie Rhoades*

### **Behind the Baton**

*Debbie Rice*

### **Beyond the Gesture: Conducting Past Basic Patterns**

*Billy Brandt*

### **Conducting Creativity: Introduction to Conducting Gesture**

*Billy Brandt*

### **How Do I Conduct That?**

*Joel Plaag*

## CULTURE

### **Boomer Bells – Keeping the Passion and Challenge**

*Sandra Eithun*

### **Handbells Are for Everyone – Music Reading Is Not Required**

*Diana Montgomery*

### **Noticed, Known, and Needed: Creating a Culture of Belonging in Your Ensemble**

*Suzanne Neafus*

## MARKETING

### **Handbells and Pop Culture**

*Mitchell Eithun*

## MUSIC THEORY

### **A Music Theory Primer**

*Kathleen Wissinger*

### **A Pedagogical Approach to Understanding Rhythm in the Handbell Ensemble**

*Corbin Rasmussen*

### **BINGO – Theory is FUN!**

*Joy Toll-Chandler*

### **Counting Counts! How Do I Count Thee? Let Me Love the Ways**

*Kathleen Wissinger*

### **Exploring Symbolism through Music Theory**

*Madeline Carey*

### **Meters Matter**

*Michael Glasgow*

## MUSIC THERAPY

### **Experience a Music Therapy Session with Handbells and Handchimes**

*Bruna Marinho de Almeida*

## PROGRAMMING

### **8 Bells and a Bell Tree**

*Karen Van Wert*

### **Bell Tree and Ensemble Music**

*Karen Van Wert*

### **Demystifying the Art of Programming**

*Billy Brandt*

### **Discovering the Creative Musician Within**

*Joel Plaag*

## REHEARSAL MANAGEMENT

### **Organizational Strategies: Ideas and Roundtable**

*Anne Kelley*

### **The Handbell Rehearsal: Inside the Process and Best Practices**

*Billy Brandt*

### **Too Many Bells, Too Few Hands**

*Brian Seemann*

## SACRED

### **Enhancing Worship with Handbells**

*Karen Van Wert*

### **Handbells – Music or Ministry?**

*Mark Arnold*

### **Worship Planning 101**

*Mitchell Eithun*

## SCORE STUDY

### **New Music, Who Dis?**

*Brian Seemann*

### **Score Scanning Success**

*Anne Kelley*

### **Well, Look at That! Score Study for Ringers**

*Kerry Johnston*

## SIGHT READING

### **Improving Sight Reading and Score Study Skills**

*Christopher Titko*

## SOLO/SMALL ENSEMBLE

### **Bell Trees – Introduction to the First Branch**

*Laura Blauch*

### **Bell Trees Continued – Beyond the First Branch**

*Laura Blauch*

### **Ensembles Beyond the Numbers**

*Mark Arnold*

## TECHNIQUE

### **Advanced Weaving**

*Nikki Evans*

### **All About That Bass – Digging Deeper**

*Leslie Lewis*

### **Basic Percussion Methods**

*Jack Burdwood*

### **Bass-ics and Beyond**

*Mark Arnold*

### **From Clunky to Clear: the Art of Beautiful Chimes**

*Kathryn Jurado & William Murphy*

### **Handbell Science**

*Karen Van Wert*

### **Mallets in Motion**

*Jack Burdwood*

### **Mastering Handbell Tone and Style through Laban's 8 Efforts**

*Phoebe Yeung*

### **Ring with Confidence: from Notation to Motion**

*Marie Loeffler*

### **Six-in-Hand Methods**

*Nikki Evans*

### **Techniques: A-Z**

*Kathleen Wissinger*

### **Weave Me Alone**

*Nikki Evans*

### **When the Bell You Need Is Not in Your Hand – Creative Solutions from C(3) to Shining C(8)**

*Erin Gerecke*

## TECHNOLOGY

### **Crash Course in Audio and Video Recording for Handbells**

*Matt Gender*

### **Dorico Music Notation Program for Handbell Composers**

*Paul Kinney*

### **Marking your Digital Music: ForScore for Handbells**

*Susie Amos*

See Class Descriptions at [Seminar.HandbellMusicians.org](http://Seminar.HandbellMusicians.org)

# PERFORMANCES

Participants will have the opportunity to enjoy nine performances from groups across the United States, including the National Seminar All-Star Choir and Distinctly Teen.



Hymn Festival at Hyde Park  
Community United Methodist  
Church, Cincinnati, Ohio



Queen City Bronze  
Cincinnati, Ohio



Bronze Ringers of Floyd Central  
High School • Knobs, Indiana



Bells in Motion  
Decatur, Illinois



Trinity Ringers of Trinity English  
Lutheran Church  
Fort Wayne, Indiana



Ring Sarasota  
Sarasota, Florida



Chicago Bronze  
Chicago, Illinois



Detroit Handbell Ensemble  
Detroit, Michigan



All-Star Choir and Distinctly Teen

# VENUE AND LODGING

All event activities will take place at the Sharonville Convention Center, with lodging available at the Delta Hotels by Marriott Cincinnati Sharonville and Hyatt Place Sharonville Convention Center.



## OFFICIAL EVENT HOTELS

### DELTA HOTELS BY MARIOTT CINCINNATI SHARONVILLE

11320 Chester Rd, Cincinnati, Ohio



The Delta Hotel is the main event hotel and is just steps away from the convention center. HMA has secured a rate of \$149/night. To receive this rate, rooms must be reserved by June 23, 2026.

Amenities include:

- 24-hour business center
- 24-hour fitness facilities
- 24-hour front desk
- Free self parking
- Refrigerator
- Free Wifi for Marriott Bonvoy members

### HYATT PLACE SHARONVILLE CONVENTION CENTER (SOLD OUT)

11345 Chester Road, Cincinnati, OH

Hyatt Place is our secondary hotel. It had a smaller available room block and is now sold out.

Amenities Include:

- Digital Check-In
- Digital Key
- Free Breakfast
- Free Internet Access
- Self Parking
- Pool



For booking information, please visit [Seminar.HandbellMusicians.org](http://Seminar.HandbellMusicians.org)

# REGISTRATION OPTIONS

## FULL EVENT REGISTRATION

**\$440 Members; \$495 Non-members**

- Ohio and Kentucky residents will automatically receive a discount on the full event rate when registering with a zip code from either state.
- To pay in installments, call 937-438-0085 ext. 809.
- Payment in full is due before classes can be chosen.

## DAILY REGISTRATION

**\$100 per day Members; \$120 per day Non-members**

- Payment in full is due before classes can be chosen.

## PERFORMER REGISTRATION

**\$375**

- This is a full-event rate reserved for artists performing in the concerts.
- To reserve a performer rate, call 937-438-0085 ext. 809.

## HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS AND PAST PRESIDENTS

- HMA provides complimentary registration for Honorary Life members and past presidents.
- Honorary Life members and past presidents should call 937-438-0085 ext. 803 to make a reservation.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

- Please visit the Seminar website to find out about available scholarships.

## CANCELLATION POLICY

- Through May 31, 2026, the total fee, minus a \$100 administrative charge, will be refunded. From June 1, 2026, onward, no refund will be provided.

Registration Details are at [Seminar.HandbellMusicians.org/registration](https://Seminar.HandbellMusicians.org/registration)

# HANDBELL COMMONS EXHIBITOR OPPORTUNITIES

Handbell Commons is home to our Exhibiting Partners and the hub for all social activities during the event. You can enjoy shopping, silent auction, Happy Hours, daily grab-and-go breakfast and lunch options, pop-up prize drawings, and more!

## EXHIBITING PARTNER BOOTH PRICES

Each booth is 10' x 10' and includes one 8' skirted table, two chairs, one wastebasket, wireless internet access, and event badges for up to two on-site booth staff. Each exhibiting partner will receive two tickets to the lunch banquet on July 18. Additional tickets can be purchased.

Initial booth: \$325 for HMA Business Members, \$475 for Non-Members.

Each additional booth: \$300

Exhibiting Partner Details are at  
[seminar.handbellmusicians.org/  
commons/](https://seminar.handbellmusicians.org/commons/)

## SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

National Seminar is made possible through a combination of registration revenue and the generous support of sponsors. We invite you to partner with us—either as an organization or an individual—by taking advantage of one of our many sponsorship and advertising opportunities and helping us bring this flagship event to the handbell community each year

Sponsor Details are at  
[seminar.handbellmusicians.org/  
nssponsorship/](https://seminar.handbellmusicians.org/nssponsorship/)

# distinctly teen 2026



Distinctly Teen is a fun and exciting handbell event for ringers ages 13-18  
July 15-18

Play intermediate to advanced repertoire under the leadership of Dr. Lynn Atkins and perform in a shared concert with the All-Star Choir during National Seminar that will be livestreamed.

## DISTINCTLY TEEN REPERTOIRE

*Carillon*, Louis Vierne/Fred Gramann, L4, JHS9200

*Arirang*, Jason Krug, L2+, GMH350032

*A New Day*, Caleb Onstead, L3, From the Top 20856

*Quietude*, Michael J. Glasgow, L3-, G8494

*I'm Still Standing*, Elton John & Bernie Taupin/Kevin  
McChesney, L3+, JHS9622

Registration: \$150  
Scholarships Available

[seminar.handbellmusicians.org/  
distinctly-teen](http://seminar.handbellmusicians.org/distinctly-teen)

Cancellation Policy: Through June 20, 2026, the total fee, minus a \$25 administrative charge, will be refunded. After June 20, 2026, no refund will be provided.



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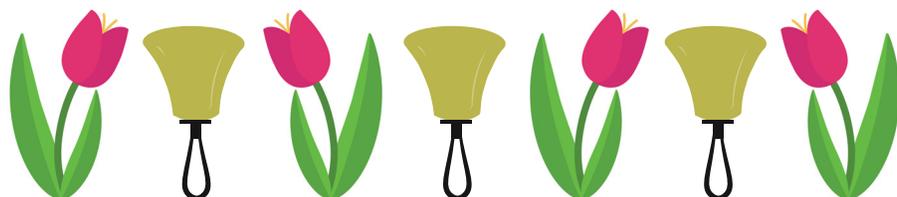
## AREA 1 (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT)

### Area 1 Spotlight on Spring and Early Summer Rings throughout New England

## Ring in Spring!

Meet new people, become more effective in your ringing or directing skills, learn from great directors, and share experiences with fellow handbell musicians in a social atmosphere.

Registration is now open for three Spring Rings throughout New England. All are welcome! Click this QR code or visit [area1.handbellmusicians.org/state-and-local-events](http://area1.handbellmusicians.org/state-and-local-events).



#### Cape Cod & Islands Spring Ring - March 21

Harwich Community Center  
Clinician: Samantha Beschta

#### Massachusetts Spring Ring - April 11

Tewksbury Memorial High School  
Clinician: Kimberlee Strepka

#### Maine Spring Ring - April 11

Greely Middle School, Cumberland  
Clinicians: Samantha Beschta &  
Kevin McChesney

#### Friends & Family Handbell Camp - June 26-28

Camp Toah Nipi, Ringe, NH  
Stay tuned for more details!



### AREA 1 LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

#### BOARD

Chair: Greg Urban, [chair.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:chair.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

Chair-Elect: Andrew Wallace, [chairelect.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:chairelect.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

Past Chair: Jennifer Stack, [pastchair.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:pastchair.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

Secretary: Jeannie Cushman, [secretary.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:secretary.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

Treasurer: Charles Arnold, [treasurer.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:treasurer.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

#### STATE/SUB-AREA CHAIRS

Cape Cod & Islands\*

CT: Vicki Moroski, [ct.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:ct.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

Greater Boston\*

New Hampshire: Laurie Kubik, [nh.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:nh.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

Eastern MA\*: Jennifer Dalrymple, [ma.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:ma.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

Western MA: Audrey Pierce, [westernma.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:westernma.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

ME: Dana Humphreys, [me.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:me.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

RI: Jill Boday, [ri.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:ri.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

VT: Kimberlee Strepka, [vt.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:vt.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

\*Eastern MA is a redistricting effort; this region includes all of Eastern MA, including Greater Boston, Cape Cod & Islands

#### APPOINTED POSITIONS/COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Membership Chair: Susan Schultz, [membership.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:membership.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

Education Liaison: Kristen Russo, [educationliaison.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:educationliaison.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

Communications/Historian/Newsletter: Amy Rollins, [communications.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:communications.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

Scholarships: [scholarship.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:scholarship.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

Chime Loan Program: Meredith Gaines, [chimeloaner.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:chimeloaner.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

Registrar: Susan Schultz, [registrar.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:registrar.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

Webmaster: Casey Spring, [webmaster.area1@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:webmaster.area1@handbellmusicians.org)

#### AREA 1 WEB DIRECTORY

Website: [area1.handbellmusicians.org](http://area1.handbellmusicians.org)

Facebook: [facebook.com/HMAarea1](https://facebook.com/HMAarea1)

Youtube: [@area1handbellmusiciansofam265](https://youtube.com/@area1handbellmusiciansofam265)

## AREA 2 (NJ, NY, PA)

A promotional poster for the 2026 Composition Contest. The background is a photograph of a handbell ensemble performing. The text is overlaid in a stylized, hand-drawn font. The year '2026' is in white, 'COMPOSITION' is in yellow, and 'Contest' is in white. A QR code is in the top left. The deadline 'DEADLINE: APRIL 26, 2026' is in yellow. The prize '\$1200 PRIZE!' is in green and yellow. The logo 'HMA Area 2' is in blue and white. Social media icons for Facebook and Instagram are next to the handle '@hmaarea2'. The website 'area2.handbellmusicians.org' is at the bottom.

**2026  
COMPOSITION  
Contest**

**DEADLINE: APRIL 26, 2026**

**\$1200  
PRIZE!**

**HMA Area 2**

@hmaarea2   area2.handbellmusicians.org

### AREA 2 LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

#### BOARD

Chair: Sarah Hazel, [chair.area2@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:chair.area2@handbellmusicians.org)  
Chair-Elect: Billy Mild, [chairelect.area2@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:chairelect.area2@handbellmusicians.org)  
Past Chair: Elizabeth Nowik, [pastchair.area2@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:pastchair.area2@handbellmusicians.org)  
Secretary/Registrar: Jean Coniber, [secretary.area2@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:secretary.area2@handbellmusicians.org)  
Treasurer: Shawn Gingrich, [treasurer.area2@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:treasurer.area2@handbellmusicians.org)

#### APPOINTED POSITIONS/COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Membership: Kathie Bittenbender, [membership.area2@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:membership.area2@handbellmusicians.org)  
Education Chair: Lynn Morgan, [education.area2@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:education.area2@handbellmusicians.org)  
Historian: Nancy Moore, [historian.area2@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:historian.area2@handbellmusicians.org)  
Workshops/Mentoring: Gail Posey, [workshops.area2@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:workshops.area2@handbellmusicians.org)  
Communications: Jordan Allen, [communications.area2@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:communications.area2@handbellmusicians.org)

#### AREA 2 WEB DIRECTORY

Website: [area2.handbellmusicians.org](http://area2.handbellmusicians.org)  
Facebook: [facebook.com/hmaarea2](https://facebook.com/hmaarea2)  
Instagram: [instagram.com/hmaarea2](https://instagram.com/hmaarea2)

## AREA 3 (DE, DC, MD, NC, VA)

# Area 3 Announces Scholarship Opportunity

Are you an Area 3 HMA director that would like to attend the National Seminar? If so, you can apply to receive a scholarship from Area 3. For more information, contact Scholarship Chair, Mitchell Eithun, at [scholarship.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:scholarship.area3@handbellmusicians.org).  
Deadline for applications: **April 15, 2026.**

**The scholarship covers the full registration fee.**

### Requirements to apply:

- resident of Area 3
- HMA member
- directing a handbell choir within Area 3 at the time of application and the event
- first time attendee of event



## AREA 3 LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

### BOARD

Chair: Debbie Henning, [chair.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:chair.area3@handbellmusicians.org)  
Chair-Elect: Allison Keisler, [chairelect.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:chairelect.area3@handbellmusicians.org)  
Past Chair: Kerry Johnston, [pastchair.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:pastchair.area3@handbellmusicians.org)  
DE/MD Eastern Shore: Teri Gregory, [boardmember1.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:boardmember1.area3@handbellmusicians.org)  
DC/MD: Patricia Lane, [boardmember2.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:boardmember2.area3@handbellmusicians.org)  
VA Northern: Alan Payne, [boardmember4.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:boardmember4.area3@handbellmusicians.org)  
VA Southern: Reginald Fox, [boardmember3.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:boardmember3.area3@handbellmusicians.org)  
NC: Mark Gourley, [boardmember5.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:boardmember5.area3@handbellmusicians.org)

Composition Contest Chair: Kevin Quick, [compositioncontest.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:compositioncontest.area3@handbellmusicians.org)  
Community Ensemble Chair: Sarah Sheffield, [communitychoir.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:communitychoir.area3@handbellmusicians.org)  
Education Chair: TBD  
Scholarship Chair: Mitchell Eithun, [scholarship.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:scholarship.area3@handbellmusicians.org)  
Registrar 1: Gail Williams, [registrar1.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:registrar1.area3@handbellmusicians.org)  
Registrar 2: Christine Fox-Roberts, [registrar2.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:registrar2.area3@handbellmusicians.org)  
Webmaster: Angie Chiatello, [webmaster.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:webmaster.area3@handbellmusicians.org)

### APPOINTED POSITIONS/COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Secretary: Karen Simons, [secretary.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:secretary.area3@handbellmusicians.org)  
Treasurer: Debbie Strine, [treasurer.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:treasurer.area3@handbellmusicians.org)  
Membership Chair: Barbara Marley, [membership.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:membership.area3@handbellmusicians.org)  
Chime Loan Chair: Kath Wissinger, [chimeLoan.area3@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:chimeLoan.area3@handbellmusicians.org)

### AREA 3 WEB DIRECTORY

Website: [area3.handbellmusicians.org](http://area3.handbellmusicians.org)  
Facebook: [facebook.com/groups/90491126540/](https://facebook.com/groups/90491126540/)

## AREA 4 (FL, GA, SC, PR, BS, VI)

### WHAT'S RINGING IN AREA 4?

#### Bells of the Caribbean

In November 2025, Area 4 returned to the warm waters of the Caribbean for the second edition of **Bells of the Caribbean**, held once again at the University of Puerto Rico–Carolina. Guest clinicians Meredith Fajardo and Brian Childers led two ensemble tracks, Tins and Coppers, welcoming 56 participants and doubling attendance from the inaugural year. The continued growth of this event reflects Area 4's commitment to meaningful musical experiences and regional connection.

Mark your calendars! Bells of the Caribbean returns to the University of Puerto Rico–Carolina on **November 6–7, 2026**, featuring guest conductors **Zilka Figueroa** and **Brenda Austin**.

#### Coming Soon...

The **Florida Handbell Festival** will take place **March 13–14, 2026**, in **Sun City Center, FL**, with clinicians **Kathryn Jurado** and **Michael Lamb**. Visit the Area 4 website for details and registration information.

With spring just around the corner, Georgia ringers can look forward to **Georgia Spring Ring 2026**, taking place March 7, 2026 on St. Simons Island, Georgia, with guest conductor Carlos Rivera Aponte. Orphan ringers are welcome, and the public is invited to the closing concert.

Area 4 is seeking dedicated members interested in leading handbell events in South Carolina. Please contact Area 4 Chair **Carlos Rivera-Aponte** at [chair.area4@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:chair.area4@handbellmusicians.org).

**Bronze Under the Sun** will be held June 26–27, 2026, in Fort Myers, Florida, under the direction of John Behnke. Registration details will be available soon.

Reading sessions and a technique workshop in North Florida and South Georgia are planned for **Fall 2026**.

Scholarships are available for Area 4 events. For more information, contact Carlos Rivera-Aponte, Area 4 Chair, or visit the Area 4 website.



### AREA 4 LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

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YouTube: [www.YouTube.com/@area4\\_HMA](https://www.YouTube.com/@area4_HMA)

## AREA 5 (IN, KY, MI, OH, WV)



### MUSIC OF MUNCIE

Our next Music festival is titled “Music of Muncie” and will take place in Muncie, Indiana, on March 20-21, 2026. Under the direction of Jason Krug, handbell musicians will have another chance to learn new music and perform together!

Jason is a composer native to Indianapolis, Ind. He holds a degree in music from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is a full-time freelance composer, arranger, clinician, and teacher. Since his first publication in 2006, he has had over 700 compositions and arrangements for handbells, piano, strings, organ,

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WV: Joyce Armentrout, [wv.area5@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:wv.area5@handbellmusicians.org)

and choir. He is the owner and editor of Grassy Meadow Music and his works have been featured at numerous festivals and workshops in the United States and beyond.

His website can be found here: <https://jasonwkrug.com/>

The massed repertoire will include “Fantasia on ‘Azmon’” by Jason W. Krug, “Appassionata” arranged by Michael W. Joy, and “Somebody’s Knockin’ at Your Door” by Brenda E. Austin

The tin repertoire will include “Journey of Hope” by Brenda E. Austin and “Holy Manna” by Nicholas Hanson.

The copper repertoire will include “Echoes From a Weary World” by Jason W. Krug and “Pirates of the Caribbean” by Klaus Badelt and arranged by Kevin McChesney

The optional challenge piece is “De Profundis” arranged by Jason W. Krug

Registration for the event can be located at this website: <https://area5.handbellmusicians.org/spring-festival-2026-muncie-indiana/>



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Twitter (X): @area5hma

## AREA 6 (AR, AL, MS, LA, TN)

# 2026 Louisiana Spring Ring

20-21  
MARCH



Cathedral-Carmel School  
Lafayette, LA

# 2026 Mississippi Spring Ring

24-25  
APRIL



Clinton Methodist Church  
Clinton, MS



Handbell Musicians  
OF AMERICA | Area 6

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Instagram: [instagram.com/handbells.area6](https://instagram.com/handbells.area6)

## AREA 7 (MN, ND, SD, WI)

### GEARING UP FOR FESTIVAL 2026

Area 7's next Festival Conference will be upon us in just a few short months. If you're joining us "Down by the Riverside" this summer, now is a great time to get on the boat. Don't miss these important details:

#### Registration ahoy!

As of February 11, registration for the event is officially open. Be sure to register early, especially if you're interested in applying for one of the Specialty Choirs (Conference Choir or Bronze Plus) or living it up at Handbell Happy Hour the evening before the Festival begins.

#### Secure the hotel and save

Hotel reservations can be made from February 1 through May 23 with a special discounted rate at the Best Western Plus Kelly Inn Hotel, which is attached to the Convention Center.

For registration forms, hotel discount link and all other Festival essentials, row on over to [area7.handbellmusicians.org/festival-2026](http://area7.handbellmusicians.org/festival-2026).

**DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE  
AREA 7 FESTIVAL CONFERENCE  
JUNE (25) 26-28, 2026  
RIVER'S EDGE CONVENTION CENTER  
ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA**

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Save the date!

## ANTHORNIS 2026



**Emily Li, clinician**

**Westwood Lutheran Church  
St. Louis Park, MN  
October 30-31, 2026**

*For those who want to ring more  
challenging music*

[area7.handbellmusicians.org/  
anthornis-2026](http://area7.handbellmusicians.org/anthornis-2026)

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## AREA 8 (IL, IA, KS, MO, NE)

# Area 8 Festival

June 17-20, 2026 | La Vista, Nebraska

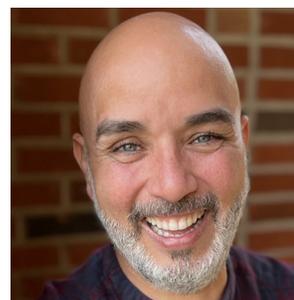


- ★ Pre-Festival Bronzefest Ringing Track
- ★ Pre-Festival Directors Seminar
- ★ Classes
- ★ Massed Ringing
- ★ Concerts
- ★ Shopping
- ★ Networking
- ★ Scholarships Available

*With clinicians*



**Kathryn Jurado**



**Carlos E. Rivera Aponte**

Registration opens after January 1, 2026  
Check the Area 8 website for more details: [area8.handbellmusicians.org](http://area8.handbellmusicians.org)

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## AREA 9 (OK, TX)



Handbell Musicians  
OF AMERICA | Area 9

[area9.handbellmusicians.org](http://area9.handbellmusicians.org)

### Spring Ring 2026

Saturday, March 7  
Tulsa and San Antonio

#### Spring Ring 2026 Repertoire

The following repertoire is to be prepared in advance of the Spring Ring event.

**Exploration on DEO GRACIAS – L2+**  
Jason Krug, 2-3 oct. (GMH230033) or  
3-6 oct. (GMH350045)

**Give Me Jesus – Level 3-**  
arr. Hart Morris, 3-5 oct HB  
with opt 3-5 oct HC – BEHB768

**Joyeuse – Level 3-**  
Karen Buckwalter, 3-5 oct HB – BEHB799

**Morning Light – Level 3**  
arr. Stephanie Berryman  
3-4 oct HB – FM203473;  
5 oct HB – FM20347

**Bell Peal on Lasst uns Erfreuen – Level 3**  
arr. Sondra Tucker, 2-5 oct HB  
with 2 oct HC – JMG1457

#### TULSA, OK

Asbury Church  
6767 S Mingo Road  
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74133  
Clinician: Hart Morris

#### SAN ANTONIO, TX

University Methodist Church  
5084 De Zavala Road  
San Antonio, Texas 78249  
Clinician: Bob Avant



Spring Ring  
EVENT PAGE

#### Register NOW!

\$25/person if received by February 21  
\$35/person after February 21  
Additional charge for lunch (optional) \$12-15  
(lunch orders must be received by February 28)  
Table rental is \$10 per 6 foot table

#### Schedule:

8:30 a.m. Load in/set up/registration  
9:00 a.m. Ready to ring  
12:00 p.m. Lunch on site  
2:30 p.m. Concert



Brenda Austin  
Clinician

Visit the Summit 2026 Events Page  
for the Massed Ringing Repertoire

ALL RING, INTERMEDIATE  
& ADVANCED DIVISIONS



Summit 2026  
EVENT PAGE



REGISTER NOW for Summit 2026

JUNE 19-20, 2026

Massed Ringing and Classes  
Event begins Friday at 1 p.m.  
and concludes Saturday by 5 p.m.

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

941 W. Bedford Eules Road  
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## AREA 10 (AK, ID, MT, OR, WA)

Registration is still open



April 16—19, 2026 Portland, OR  
An event focused on Coppers level musicians. Visit [coppersclassic.com](http://coppersclassic.com)



HANDBELL MUSICIANS  
43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Big Sky Handbell Festival

April 24—25, 2026 Livingston, MT

To register, go to:

<https://area10.handbellmusicians.org/area-10-events/>

## Fall Ringing Round-Up: A Success Story

Following four recent in-person AREA conferences, each with only about 120 attendees, the board started discussing ways to better support the ringers in AREA 10. To answer that question we came up with a questionnaire that asked our ringers what they wanted in ringing events, how far they were willing to travel to attend an event, and what they felt was a good length for an event. The link to the questionnaire went out to AREA 10 ringers on our e-mailing list (650 recipients), and we got a 25% response rate. The results were clear. Most respondents preferred an event with a lower registration fee, a duration of 1.5-2 days, a location requiring no more than 3 hours of driving time, and a focus on massed ringing. The board put its thinking cap on and came up with our newest AREA 10 "ALL" Area event. The inaugural *Fall Ringing Round-Up* was held the weekend of October 17-18, 2025, in four different locations around AREA 10. Each location was centered on a large ringing population, so that driving time would be less than 3 hours for most participants. The locations were Olympia, WA; Bend, OR; Spokane WA and Great Falls, MT. At each event we offered massed ringing, and we furnished the bells/chimes/tables and the music. No one needed to learn the music before the event. The event was open to choirs/partial choirs and "orphan" ringers. The clinicians/conductors gave instruction in skills and musicality during the Friday evening workshop and from the podium as the music was learned on Saturday. An informal performance concluded the event. Costs were kept low, and those who wanted to keep their music had the option to buy it. Results from a follow-up evaluation indicated that the weekend was a success!

Ringers liked the format and conductors, identifying some things that could be tweaked for next year's event.

AREA 10 has now altered its ALL-AREA conference schedule to include the Fall Ringing Round-up for two consecutive years. The third year will be a traditional ALL-AREA summer conference, a gathering of the whole area in one location.



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### AREA 10 WEB DIRECTORY

Website: [area10.handbellmusicians.org](http://area10.handbellmusicians.org)

Facebook: [facebook.com/HandbellMusiciansOfAmericaArea10](https://facebook.com/HandbellMusiciansOfAmericaArea10)

## AREA 11 (AZ, CO, NM, UT, WY)

### Area 11 Events













## Now Open for Registration

Ringing Up! Festival 2026 - June 11-14, 2026 - Loveland CO  
 Read and Ring - February 21, 2026 - Multiple locations  
 Arizona Spring Ring - March 28, 2026 - Chandler AZ  
 Colorado Spring Ring - March 21, 2026 - Englewood CO  
 New Mexico Spring Ring - March 28, 2026 - Albuquerque NM  
 Utah Spring Ring - March 14, 2026 - Kaysville UT

### AREA 11 LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

#### BOARD

Chair: Anne Anderson Kelley, [chair.area11@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:chair.area11@handbellmusicians.org)

Chair-Elect: Sharon Schmidt, [chairelect.area11@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:chairelect.area11@handbellmusicians.org)

Past Chair: LeAnna Willmore, [pastchair.area11@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:pastchair.area11@handbellmusicians.org)

Sec/Treasurer: Jill Persichetti, [treasurer.area11@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:treasurer.area11@handbellmusicians.org)

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#### AREA 11 WEB DIRECTORY

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Facebook: [facebook.com/area11handbells](https://facebook.com/area11handbells)

## AREA 12 (CA, HI, NV)



Area 12 is going to Vegas! We invite you to Neon City Rhythms, a boutique handbell conference to be held June 18-20, 2026.

We are thrilled to be under the fabulous direction of Michael Glasgow, who will lead us in divisional and massed ringing, as well as offering an optional one-day

Director's Workshop on Thursday, June 18th.

Thursday evening after the first massed rehearsal, join friends and family for an optional excursion to The Neon Museum. Also known as the Neon Boneyard, the museum illuminates the cultural essence of Las Vegas by sharing iconic signage, diverse collections, and stories that define its vibrant past, present, and future. This is an opportunity to see Vegas history up close. Founded in 1996, the Boneyard provides a home for classic Las Vegas neon signage to be enjoyed.

Registration for the event opened February 1, 2026. Please check our website for more information. Registration includes participation in massed and divisional ringing, classes, and final concert.

### AREA 12 LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY BOARD

Chair: Michèle Sharik, [chair.area12@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:chair.area12@handbellmusicians.org)  
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[area12.handbellmusicians.org/ncr2026/](https://area12.handbellmusicians.org/ncr2026/)

**We look forward to seeing you there!**

### APPOINTED POSITIONS/COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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