



Madison Area Concert Handbells

# Messenger

Fall  
2016

## Join us for our 20th year!

It's MACH's 20th anniversary and we're celebrating! Our **Bells of Christmas** concerts will feature some best-loved pieces from the past along with exciting new ones that will showcase our ringers' and soloists' talents. MACH's founder and Director Emerita, Dr. Susan Udell, will be conducting the December concerts to bring an air of fun-filled nostalgia and continuing excellence to our programs.

The **Bells of Christmas** opens with the timely reminder that *Christmas is Coming* before an array of pieces that unfold the events of Christ's birth. *Wake, Awake*, a stirring arrangement of Philipp Nicolai's *Wachet Auf*, is replete with giant chords, flowing passages, and the resonance of bass chimes as the city of Jerusalem is made aware of the Savior's importance. Next, an arrangement of the 17th century French tune *Picardy*, *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*, features mysterious random ringing of bells and hand chimes while the melody is intoned. A lively Caribbean tune, *The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy*, gives a change of pace with its syncopation and moments of percussive instruments. The noted English composer John Rutter's *Angels' Carol* follows, sung by our favorite guest vocalist from the past, Carrie Ingebritsen, and our own Rachel Bain; their voices blend beautifully with a liquid handbell accompaniment to give the angels' message from that long-ago night. Another favorite soloist, Barbara Roberts, takes the leading part in an excerpt from Benedetto Marcello's sonata for flute that has been combined in a *Gigue* with "*Forest Green*", an alternate tune for "*O Little Town of Bethlehem*." A bell tree duet of *Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella* follows, played by MACH members Caitlin Ristow and Debi Robey. Then it's time for an audience sing-a-long in *Christmas Carol Fest III*. *How Great Our Joy* closes the first half of the concert with variations on the carol "*While By My Sheep*" and then another opportunity for the audience to sing as "*Joy to the World*" affirms the events that occurred in Bethlehem so long ago.

After a brief intermission, renowned handbell composer Cynthia Dobrinski's arrangement of *I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day* brings sobering and dramatic music that climaxes in a joyful affirmation that, despite all, God will prevail. An energetic *Comfort, Comfort Ye My People* follows, based on tunes by Louis Bourgeois and G. F. Handel, also arranged by Cynthia Dobrinski. Next, her arrangement of *On Christmas Night All Children Sing (Sussex Carol)* brings us to a light-hearted celebration of the holiday as seen through the eyes of children. Peter I. Tchaikovsky's famed *Nutcracker Suite* is represented as our MACH ringers present a challenging, full-bodied arrangement of its *Marche* as transcribed by noted handbell composer William Griffin. Former MACH member Janet Rutkowski returns as handbell soloist for *Parade of the Tin Soldiers*, an amusing rendition of that well-known tune. Then the ever popular *Up on the Housetop* details the gifts children anticipate at Christmas and depicts Santa's arrival, descent of the chimney, and filling of stockings before he departs in a flash of sound. Our concert concludes with a joyful, foot-stomping *Caroler's Hoedown*, created and arranged by Valerie Stephenson.

We hope you will join our 20th year's celebration by attending one of our concerts!

### *Bells of Christmas*

**Friday, December 9 at 7:30 p.m.**  
**Saturday, December 10 at 7:30 p.m.**  
Middleton Performing Arts Center  
2100 Bristol Street  
Middleton, WI

**Sunday, December 11 at 3:00 p.m.**  
St. Stephen's Lutheran Church  
5700 Pheasant Hill Road  
Monona, WI

Advance: Adult \$12; Student (16 & under) / Senior \$9  
At the door: Adult \$15; Student (16 & under) / Senior \$12

## MACH turns 20!

It's hard to believe it's our 20th anniversary year! MACH was founded 20 years ago by Dr. Susan Udell so it is quite appropriate that she is serving as our interim director this fall. The group initially started by borrowing bells from Asbury Church, and through the help of its dedicated supporters MACH now has over 6 octaves of bells and 7 octaves of hand chimes along with miscellaneous bell trees, percussion and other assorted equipment. It takes several vehicles to move all our equipment to performances! Our numbers have varied over the years from 12-17 ringers and have ranged from high school students to the "very experienced." One of our ringers, Kristi Menninga, has been a continuous member for our entire history.

MACH has performed at a large variety of venues and settings over the years. The group has performed with the Madison Symphony Orchestra in Overture Hall, at the Stoughton Opera House, the Sharon Lynne Wilson Center for the Arts in Brookfield, the Sinsinawa Mound Center near Dubuque and MANY churches in the greater Madison area. We have played at weddings, retirement homes, hospitals and even at a Madison Mallards game. MACH has done joint performances with the Milwaukee Handbell Ensemble, the Luther (College) Ringers and the WYSO Percussion Ensemble. In addition to performances, we have served the Madison handbell community by hosting workshops and handbell festivals. We've been busy!

As part of our 20th anniversary celebration, we have pulled out some of our favorite songs for our *Bells of Christmas* concerts and plan more for our Spring concerts. We have also unveiled a new updated logo you may have noticed on all of our materials. We will recognize past ringers and Board of Directors members in our programs as a special tribute of thanks for their support over the years. Finally, we have commissioned a song from one of our favorite composers, Jason Krug, in honor of our anniversary and will be performing it at our Spring concerts.

In addition to our ticketed concerts, MACH plans to share our music at several residential facilities to bring cheer to those unable to venture out to enjoy concerts. We recently received a generous grant from the Madison Community Foundation to help support concerts at seven different venues in Madison and surrounding communities. From past audience comments and enthusiasm, we know that these interactive concerts are greatly appreciated and we are most appreciative of this opportunity to continue our tradition of bringing music to shut-ins.

Over the years we have made many memories and friends and hope we have provided fond memories and musical enjoyment for all of you as well!

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## Your Support is Appreciated



*Thank you for your support!*

MACH has grown throughout the years by offering seasonal concerts, educational workshops, and festivals in the community, region, and state. Although our ringers volunteer hundreds of hours of rehearsal and performance time, there are many costs associated with producing concerts and events. Some of these include music, performance space, concert advertising, postage and printing, compensation for guest artists, technical assistance, and artistic staff expenses.

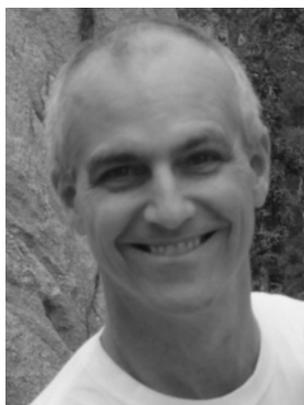
Whether you are a long-time supporter or new friend, we invite you to consider helping us continue to make a positive impact on the artistic and cultural life in our community by making a generous financial contribution. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, your contribution to MACH is fully tax-deductible as your individual tax situation allows. Please mail your gift to:

Madison Area Concert Handbells  
P. O. Box 44056  
Madison, WI, 53744-4056

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**Experience the uniquely beautiful music of one of America's finest handbell choirs!**

## MACH Welcomes New Ringers



**Alvin Menninga** has been surrounded by music his entire life. He started taking piano lessons at an early age and continued through his senior year of high school. He played the baritone in band and the valve trombone in jazz band and was a choir and show choir member. Alvin currently rings handbells and sings in a men's quartet at Asbury Church. This is his

second semester ringing with MACH. He and his wife, Kristi (also in MACH), have three college-age sons. Alvin is an IT Manager at Sentry Insurance and in his spare time likes playing basketball, watching sports, and traveling with his family. Welcome, Alvin!



**John Rottier** has been ringing in a hand bell choir since he was seven under the directorship of Ken Sosinski. He joined MACH in the Spring of 2016. John is in his sophomore year at UW-Madison where he is a mathematics major with potential

certificates in physics and German. He is also involved in choir at UW, local musical productions, and a barbershop quartet, as well as other musical enterprises throughout the year. Welcome, John!

## Welcome back, Susan!

After several years with MACH, Brad Schultz has decided to step down as Music Director. We appreciate the time and effort that Brad has dedicated to MACH over the years. MACH is a better choir because of him!

We are thrilled that Dr. Susan Udell, MACH's founding director and Director Emerita, has graciously agreed to return as Interim Music Director for our fall season and to help us celebrate our 20th Christmas concert. It has been great fun working with Susan again.

In celebration of our 20th year, Susan has put together a history of the first years of MACH. You can read about the people and events that shaped MACH on our website at <http://www.madisonhandbells.org/memories>.



## MACH Ringer Memories

Packing equipment in the "kidnapper van" (the white panel van belonging to one of our ringers) to go to and from dozens of events

Having to find a substitute ringer for a concert because one of our members hurt himself ... again

Having to be at television stations at 5:15AM for early-morning TV spots

## Memories

Driving through blizzards and torrential rain to get to various concerts

All of the good food during our Saturday rehearsal potlucks

The dress rehearsal before our first concert that lasted until midnight

Standing room only in Asbury Church's sanctuary for our first concert

## How to Contact Us:

Madison Area Concert Handbells  
PO Box 44056  
Madison, WI 53744-4056  
608-620-1997  
info@madisonhandbells.org

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under) / Senior \$12

Group tickets available; info at  
[www.madisonhandbells.org/perform.html](http://www.madisonhandbells.org/perform.html)

Address Service Requested



## How to get concert tickets

Tickets will be available in advance in mid-November at Orange Tree Imports, Ward-Brodt Music, Metcalfe's Sentry-Hilldale and Cool Beans Coffee Café, or by sending in the order form at [www.madisonhandbells.org/perform.html](http://www.madisonhandbells.org/perform.html). Tickets are also available at the door.

## Are you an experienced ringer? Come ring with us!

Does playing challenging and enjoyable music with a fun-loving group whet your appetite? To arrange an audition, contact us at [info@madisonhandbells.org](mailto:info@madisonhandbells.org) or by phone at 608-620-1997.

See and hear us on the web!

[www.madisonhandbells.org](http://www.madisonhandbells.org)  
[www.youtube.com/machandbells](http://www.youtube.com/machandbells)

or Like us on Facebook