



Madison Area Concert Handbells

Messenger

Fall
2017

Ringling in the Season with “A Yuletide Chime”

Madison Area Concert Handbells is proud to present our Winter 2017 concerts, “A Yuletide Chime.” We’re so excited to have you with us as we ring in the season with a festive holiday celebration!

Our first selection, Dan R. Edwards’ “**Carillon Christmas**,” opened the very first MACH concert in December of 1997. Twenty years to the date, we once more present this jubilant medley of Christmas favorites.

From looking back on our beginnings, we now reflect on our more recent history with Jason W. Krug’s arrangement of the classic “**Sussex Carol**.” Driving rhythms, modern harmonies, and interesting textures characterize Krug’s handbell compositions and this piece is no exception. Those of you who were with us for our May concerts may recall our specially commissioned piece from Jason, “Shock Wave.”

William Griffin’s arrangement of the Waltz movement from Tchaikovsky’s “**Serenade for Strings**” challenges ringers to maintain a graceful waltz character while maneuvering through devilishly tricky chromatic passages, while the beautiful melody is doubled by a handchime trio.

With lyrics by Mark Lowry and music by Buddy Greene, “**Mary Did You Know?**” was originally released in Michael English’s 1991 self-titled debut album, which eventually climbed to number six on the Contemporary Christian Music charts. Anna Page’s arrangement sets the melody in the handchimes while the handbells add a beautiful accompaniment.

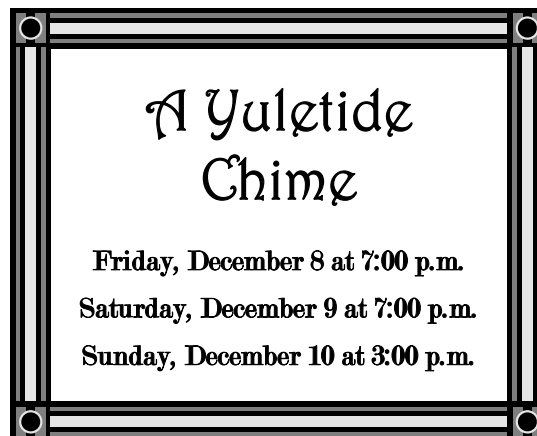
Next on our program, we will present two arrangements by one of our favorite handbell composers, Michael Helman. In “**Silent Night, Holy Night**,” the familiar Christmas tune is combined with original melodic material composed by Helman, set to beautiful textures in handbells and chimes. “**A Christmas Lullaby**” combines ideas from the hymn tunes *Cradle Song* and *Orientis Partibus* to create a lovely new work of music.

Cathy Moglebust brings the traditional English folk song “**Greensleeves**” into the 21st century with this eccentric setting. Moglebust sets the ancient tune over new harmonies in a running eighth-note accompaniment for a fresh take on a holiday favorite.

We close our first half with a medley of traditional Hebrew songs celebrating Hanukkah. Eileen’s Laurence’s “**O Hanukkah**” opens with musical material drawing from Klezmer scales and harmonies before launching into a spirited rendition of the tune for which the piece is named, *O Hanukkah*. The next section is a setting of *S’vivon*, which translates to “dreidel,” and evokes the festivities of the holiday, followed by *Ma’oz Tsur*, or “Rock of Ages,” which praises the saving power of God in a chorale-like setting.

One of the most ambitious pieces on our program is Fred Gramann’s “**Veni Veni, Emmanuel**.” The contrapuntal material in this composition originates in Gregorian chant, particularly the titular melody, *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*, which he deftly weaves together with the ancient French carol *Picardy* and the plainchant tune *Puer Natus Est Nobis*, or “A Child is Born to Us.”

We pare down our ensemble for the next pair of pieces, two familiar works of J.S. Bach adapted for bell trio by Jason Krug. Both the *Prelude in C Major* (BWV 846) and the *Minuet in G* (BWV 114) are instantly recognizable classics that may take you back to the days of childhood piano lessons.



(continued on page 2)

A Yuletide Chime (cont.)

Turning to another work from the early days of MACH, the next piece on our program, Moira Boynton's "**Alpenglow**" for handbells and harp was last performed in December of 1999. From founding Music Director Dr. Susan Udell's program notes of that concert, "An alpenglow is 'a reddish glow often seen on the summits of mountains just before sunrise or just after sunset.' Let yourself be transported by sound to the crisp air of the mountains and listen as the harp dances and glitters on the snow of its handbell accompaniment." I couldn't have said it better myself!

The remainder of our Yuletide program has its roots in the secular and popular music traditions associated with the Christmas holiday. Douglas E. Wagner's arrangement of "**Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas**" stays true to the original, sung by Judy Garland in *Meet Me In St. Louis*. Following this, we continue the theme of 20th Century popular Christmas songs with Sondra Tucker's adaptation of "**It's The Most Wonderful Time of the Year**," which features a jubilant jazz waltz feel throughout.

Carrying on a beloved MACH tradition, we invite you to lift your voices in song with us for the sing-along portion of our show. Douglas Wagner's "**Christmas Carol Fest II**" features the Christmas classics: Jingle Bells, Up on the House-Top, O Christmas Tree, Jolly Old Saint Nicholas, Deck the Halls, and We Wish You a Merry Christmas.

The final selection on our program is a wonderful new arrangement by Joel Raney of Johnny Marks' classic "**A Holly Jolly Christmas**." Featuring percussion and synthesizer accompaniment, we think you'll find yourselves humming this lighthearted rendition of the 1964 Christmas standard on the way home!

Nick Bonaccio, Music Director



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 or by phone at 608-620-1997.

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

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

MACH Rings with Area Groups



On October 26, six MACH ringers had the privilege of performing Eric Whitacre's "Cloudburst" with the Verona Area Concert Band. The piece paints a musical picture of a thunderstorm as it approaches, erupts into a cloudburst, and finally recedes into the distance. The handbells were rung from balconies on either side of the main stage, providing an antiphonal effect. It was a real treat to be able to perform with such an accomplished community group!

Seven members of MACH will be performing with the University of Dubuque's Concert Choir, Chamber Singers and Wind Ensemble as part of the university's "Christmas at Heritage Center" concert on December 1, 2017 in Dubuque, Iowa. You can learn more about the concert and purchase tickets at <http://www.dbq.edu/HeritageCenter>.



Workshop Opportunities

MACH is offering several workshop opportunities for your handbell program this spring. We can send 1-2 people to your congregation or school to provide customized instruction. Alternatively, your choir can attend our upcoming Spring Workshop Saturday morning, February 24th at the First Congregation UCC, 1609 University Avenue, Madison. If you're interested, please contact us at info@madisonhandbells.org.

Workshop Opportunities

Option 1 - Elementary Techniques. This workshop teaches you the basics of good handbell ringing, from basic damping to the various effects of handbell physics (e.g. gyro). If your choir is inexperienced or your director is new to handbells, this is an excellent workshop to learn the basics. Time: approximately two hours.

Option 2 - Bass Bells. The large bass bells (C₃ through C₄) require a ringing technique different from the other bells in order to avoid ringer injury while still achieving the robust deep sound of the bell. Learn how to protect yourself while ringing the larger bells, how to position them for faster ringing and even how to share bells with your neighbor. Time: 60 – 90 minutes.

Option 3 - Maintenance. Learn how to do basic maintenance on the working parts of a bell. Some things should be dealt with by a professional, of course, but you might be surprised how much you can do yourself. Learn how to tell when the former is needed, how to do the latter, and how to tell the difference. Time: approximately 45 minutes.

Option 4 - Advanced Ringer. Do you have a ringer that isn't challenged enough? In this workshop ringers will learn advanced techniques such as four-in-hand, Shelley, hooking, playing on bell trees, and solo ringing. Time: about 90 minutes; although, for really interested ringers, another hour could be useful.

Option 5 - Director Training. This workshop is designed for someone new to directing a handbell or handchime choir. You will learn basic directing techniques, how to select music for the church service, how to assign ringers and even working with challenging personalities. Special training sessions for experienced directors can be requested, too. Time: about 90 minutes.

Option 6 - Children's Choir. Sometimes the best way to start a choir is through children, with either handbells or handchimes. This session will teach you the basics needed to establish a children's choir and how to work with the young ones in your congregation or school. Time: approximately 45 minutes to get started.

Option 7 - Problem-solving. This is a rather open workshop. The idea is to find ways to solve real problems you have encountered. There are all sorts of potential solutions, but first we need to have the problem described. This is a workshop where you come with problems that need solving. Time: approximately one hour.

How to Contact Us:

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

A Yuletide Chime

Friday, December 8 at 7:00 p.m.
Christ Presbyterian Church
994 E Gorham St, Madison

Saturday, December 9 at 7:00 p.m.
Covenant Presbyterian Church
326 S Segoe Rd, Madison

Sunday, December 10 at 3:00 p.m.
St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
5700 Pheasant Hill Rd, Monona

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

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

Group tickets available; info at
www.madisonhandbells.org/perform.html

Address Service Requested



How to get concert tickets

Tickets will be available in advance in late November at Orange Tree Imports, Ward-Brodt Music, Metcalfe's Sentry-Hilldale and Cool Beans Coffee Café, or by ordering online at www.madisonhandbells.org/perform.html. Tickets are also available at the door.

Online Newsletter and Volunteer Opportunities

Printing and mailing newsletters is one of our largest expenses each concert season. We would LOVE to be able to send your newsletter by email instead! If you would like to receive an electronic copy of future newsletters, fill out our form at www.madisonhandbells.org/connect.html.

Also, we're always looking for volunteers to help with things like concert support (handing out programs and taking tickets), fundraising, grant writing, etc. If you can help us out, use the same form to let us know!