



Madison Area Concert Handbells

Messenger

Fall
2012

Join us for *A Festive Christmas!*

Dear Friends,

Ring out the bells, Christmas music is in the air! The Madison Area Concert Handbells ringers are rehearsing festive holiday music, both sacred and secular, that they will present in three delightful Christmas concerts: **Sunday, December 9th at 3 p.m.** at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, 5700 Pheasant Hill Road, Monona, and **Friday and Saturday, December 14th and 15th beginning at 7:00 p.m.** at the Middleton Performing Arts Center in Middleton High School.

The first half of the program will highlight the events of the first Christmas, starting with a multi-metered arrangement of a tune by Louis Bourgeois that morphs into a flowing rendition of Handel's *Comfort Ye My People*, enhanced by retired Madison Symphony member Betty Bielefeld playing the flute. A 9th-century plainsong and Nicolai's *O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright* are then woven together in a fascinating piece by the internationally renowned handbell composer, Fred Gramann, called *Everlasting Light*. The choir's six-plus octaves of handbells and seven octaves of chimes, including our enormous bass chimes, will add depth and excitement to this piece. Next, two soloists, Carrie Ingebritsen, whose lovely voice has graced many MACH concerts, and Afi Dobbins, a newcomer to our concerts, whose energy and vocal talents will impress you, share the sentiments of Natalie Sleeth's beautiful *Were You There on that Christmas Night?*

A joyful *Noel, Noel* follows with the tune *Angels We Have Heard on High* announcing the good news to the shepherds. A reverent mood is then presented by the beloved pieces *O Holy Night* and *Gesu Bambino* as they occur both separately and together, enhanced by the artful keyboard work of guest artist Mark Brampton Smith. The bright and cheerful *Catalonian Carol* perks along with a tambourine accompaniment and then *On Christmas Day in the Morn*, again by Fred Gramann, weaves *Away in a Manger*, *The First Nowell*, and *The Holly and the Ivy* in a fascinating confluence of these carols. To close the first half of our program, you, the audience, will join the bells in a medley of five carols designed to keep you humming through intermission!

Afi Dobbins and several percussion instruments open the second half of the program with *African Noel* as our ringers mallet their bells, adding to the rhythmic persistence. A lively *Pat-a-Pan* follows with scale-like passages tumbling over one another and then *The Parade of the Tin Soldiers* will keep your feet tapping. Our salute to the ever popular *Nutcracker Ballet* by Tchaikovsky will include four of its tunes, concluding with the energetic *Trepak*, and then a popular Christmas toy from days past will be recognized in Leroy Anderson's *Bugler's Holiday*. Our vocal soloists return with *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*, and once again the audience is invited to participate. Joel Raney's setting of *We Three Kings* follows, with keyboard and percussion parts adding Middle Eastern atmosphere and pizzazz. Our concert concludes with the famous old French tune borrowed by Bizet in his *L'Arlesienne Suite*. It is *The March of the Kings* and it takes us on their journey over desert dunes until they reach their goal in a whirlwind finish.

MACH, founded in 1997, is celebrating its sixteenth Christmas concert this year. As in the past, brief introductions to the pieces will provide historical context and/or information about special effects executed by the bells and chimes. Audience members have said that our concerts really put them in the Christmas spirit; they're full of joy, playfulness, and fun! We hope you will have the same feelings after attending this year's concert, appropriately titled *A Festive Christmas!*

Susan Udell
Interim Music Director

MACH in the Community

Starting on the Right Foot

How do you re-start and re-energize a handbell choir? How about holding a workshop? St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Janesville contacted MACH to do just that. The church had a set of handbells, but the bell choir had disbanded about 10 years ago. Now they had a new director and wanted to revive the group, so they decided to call on MACH's experience to help both returning and new ringers to start off on the right foot.

Answering the call, five of the MACH ringers put together a four-hour workshop on a Saturday morning in September. We all got our hands dirty helping them polish and maintain their bells (which had been in their cases for the 10+ years), then covered topics including proper form, bell techniques, warm-ups and music marking. We also helped them rehearse their first performance piece. The group was very receptive to learning and even provided us with some treats! Most importantly, we all had some fun making music together.

We received great feedback from the group, and their director said, "I think even our most experienced ringers learned some new things!"

MACH always welcomes the opportunity to help out anyone in our bell community. Feel free to contact us at info@madisonhandbells.org or 608-620-1997 if you have a need, a question or would be interested in holding a workshop of your own.

Welcome Back, Susan!

After several years with MACH, Mark Bloedow has decided to step down as Music Director. We appreciate the time and effort that Mark has dedicated to MACH over the years.

We are thrilled that Susan Udell, MACH's founding director and Director Emerita, has graciously agreed to return as Interim Music Director for our fall season. It has been great fun working with Susan again!



MACH Welcomes New Ringer

Maggie Simon needed a Fine Arts high school class and chose "Introduction to Handbells" because it sounded fun and unique. She's now starting her ninth year of ringing and has fallen in love with playing bells. Maggie has played for her high school's Advanced Ensemble, the Wisconsin Lutheran College Tower Ringers, and is now starting her first year with MACH. Besides being an avid choir ringer, Maggie enjoys playing small group and solo pieces. She was greatly honored to receive the Exemplary Soloist Award at the WSMA State Solo and Ensemble Festival in 2007. Recently, she moved to Madison and began graduate studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in Computer Science. She also enjoys singing, playing the piano, reading, and taking Taekwondo classes. Maggie is excited to be starting new adventures with school, Madison, and MACH!

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.

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

HELP WANTED

MACH is seeking an individual with experience directing highly-skilled handbell choir(s) to serve as its director. This is a part-time position (10 months/year). For more information on the position and its responsibilities, see the full ad on our website:

www.madisonhandbells.org/director.html

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www.madisonhandbells.org/support.html

Your Support is Appreciated

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, rehearsal and 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 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



*Thank you for your support –
it is greatly appreciated!*

Gift Card Fundraising Program: Community Change

Help support MACH through one of our favorite fundraising programs, Community Change. Community Change sells "Charity Cards". You can buy a package of cards to receive the greatest savings or select individual cards. The proceeds from your purchase will benefit MACH.

Here's how it works: You can purchase Community Change cards to spend just like cash for yourself or use them as gifts. When these cards are purchased, a percentage of the amount spent is donated to MACH while saving you money!

There are many merchants included in the Community Change program. Visit the website at www.thecommunitychange.com for a full listing of the participating merchants. At checkout, select Madison Area Concert Handbells as your organization to benefit.

Thank you for supporting MACH and helping us continue to serve the community through high-quality performances of handbell music.



How to Contact Us:

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

Mark your calendar for
A Festive Christmas!

Sunday, December 9 at 3:00 pm
St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
5700 Pheasant Hill Rd, Monona



Friday, December 14 at 7:00 pm
Saturday, December 15 at 7:00 pm
Middleton Performing Arts Center
2100 Bristol St, Middleton

Advance Tickets: \$12 / \$9*
At the Door: \$15 / \$12*
* Student/Senior price

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

Address Service Requested

A Festive Christmas!

How to Get Concert Tickets

Tickets are available in advance in Madison at Orange Tree Imports, Ward-Brodt Music, Metcalf's Sentry-Hilldale and Cool Beans Coffee Café, and online at www.madisonhandbells.org.

Tickets are also available at the door.

See and hear us on the web!
www.madisonhandbells.org
www.youtube.com/machandbells
or Like us on Facebook

Middleton Performing Arts Center

