

Ringling Resources

Why should we begin a bell choir or chime?

You may be wondering how a handbell or handchime choir could add to your worship and outreach programs. There are endless possibilities for using this musical outlet and many benefits for the listeners as well as the ringers. Below I offer some ideas -

Handbells in Worship

- 🔔 To lead or support hymn-singing with congregation
- 🔔 To accompany the choirs
- 🔔 To add a festive nature to worship both visually and aurally
- 🔔 To play introductions to hymns, descants on hymns, processions, introits or call to worship
- 🔔 To introduce a new hymn or enhance learning an unfamiliar hymn
- 🔔 To create atmosphere for worship – celebratory, joyful or somber, introspective
- 🔔 To accent scripture readings; tolling as a responsive
- 🔔 Tolling the hour or beginning of worship
- 🔔 Add joyfulness to weddings
- 🔔 Bring a more visual aspect to music ministry
- 🔔 Ring on Christmas Eve – the “devil’s knell” was believed to signal the death of the devil when Christ was born
- 🔔 To mark the New Year; Independence Day, Easter!
- 🔔 To enhance worship with music combined with organ, piano, brass, percussion, marimba, etc. ...
- 🔔 Handbell music is available for any style of music – classical, gospel, contemporary, spirituals and MORE.
- 🔔 Handbell and handchimes may be rung by any number of people, from one person solo ringing, a small ensemble of 2 to 6 or a full-fledged handbell choir of 7 to 16 ringers. Activities can be tailored for any group size!

How can handbells or handchimes enhance your worship? As you can see, the possibilities are limited only to your creativity and inspiration!

For information contact: Karen Eastburn, Phone: (469)585-0212

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Performance Venues used by my choirs

- 🔔 Regular worship performances by all groups including children
- 🔔 Accompany the choirs in worship or special concerts/services
- 🔔 Playing in the hallway or other designated areas of the church. At my church we call it "Welcome Notes!"
- 🔔 Performing for area churches to share a different musical idiom or to inspire a future bell choir
- 🔔 Perform for other programs of the church – medical respite concert, preschool music classes, children's ministry events, 25th anniversary Sunday in 6 different parts of the church (borrowed bells); Deli Wednesdays – music and a meal before mid-week classes and choir, ring familiar children's songs for the day school children
- 🔔 Christmas Eve between services in halls (people love this!)
- 🔔 Town tree-lighting, Heritage Farmstead Victorian-era farm home – Christmas Lantern Tour; played on the porch of the farmhouse and in the barn
- 🔔 Area school performance as part of their fine arts day
- 🔔 Present concerts at our church; such as "Handbells 'N Hot Sauce" with fun selections played while congregation had a taco lunch – inexpensive and fun, or a more serious concert of worshipful music presented in the church chapel in a more formal setting
- 🔔 Perform for contemporary service – many arrangements of familiar praise and worship songs are available and are quite effective
- 🔔 Bell caroling for Restland Festival of Lights – a special day for families to remember recently deceased loved ones during the holidays at an area cemetery
- 🔔 Plano Senior Citizen Recreation Center – mini concert to kick-off Senior Week
- 🔔 Hymn Festival Concert at an area symphony hall
- 🔔 Attend handbell festivals to improve ringing skills and to enjoy fellowship

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Handbells outside the Church

Handbells can become a voice and a face for your church in the community by performing at highly visible events and locations. You can become "the church with the bells."

Bell choirs become missionaries in your community ringing outside the church in retirement centers, nursing homes, hospitals, other churches, schools, community meetings and events. People in town will begin to associate your church with the friendly people who ring bells and who willingly share their time and talent with the community.

Benefits enjoyed by members of a handbell choir

- 🔔 Build community within a small group of people who would otherwise have no reason to build friendships with one another
- 🔔 Experience true Christian Fellowship
- 🔔 Work together for a common purpose: praising God
- 🔔 Care for each other and build relationships; pray for one another and share our lives each week; help each other in difficult times and celebrate joyous occasions
- 🔔 Feel needed and wanted as an individual; each person is needed
- 🔔 Commitment to the group and to each other builds personal discipline and growth
- 🔔 Provide an outlet for expression of our faith
- 🔔 Demonstrate commitment and devotion to God and to our church
- 🔔 Train and encourage future church musicians (children and youth) as a way to create a legacy of participation of laypersons in church music
- 🔔 Active participation in worship services creates ownership of worship and the church among your ringers and their families
- 🔔 Learning a new skill that can be shared with others
- 🔔 Fun and enjoyment of the music created together each week
- 🔔 Satisfaction of a task well done for our creator's praise
- 🔔 Physical & mental challenges provide a stimulating workout of mind, body & spirit in celebration of God's grace to each person – it truly is a blessing to be given a reason & a way to *make a joyful noise!*

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