

Clapper Chatter

Minnesota • North Dakota • South Dakota • Wisconsin • Manitoba

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Area 7

Handbell Musicians
OF AMERICA

From the Chair

by Anita Fraundorf

One of my devotional readings during the month of April was Psalm 57. David wrote it when he was hiding from Saul and his army. The beginning verses remind me of how I felt last year: “Be good to me, God—and now! I’ve run to You for dear life. I’m hiding out under Your wings until the hurricane blows over. I call out to High God, the God who holds me together.” And these are the verses that speak to me this year: “I’m ready, God, so ready, ready from head to toe, ready to sing, ready to raise a tune: ‘Wake up, soul! Wake up, harp! Wake up, lute! Wake up, you sleepyhead sun!’ I’m thanking You, God, out loud in the streets, singing Your praises in town and country. The deeper Your love, the higher it goes; every cloud is a flag to Your faithfulness.” [Devotion from Our Daily Bread Ministries. Bible reading from The Message (Eugene H. Peterson, NavPress)]

Spring brings the promise of longer and warmer days, buds appear on the trees, flowers bloom, grass greens. I’ve been in hiding this past year, and I’m ready for my soul’s spring awakening. There are metrics to meet, but we have plans to open the church again. We expect to have an upside-down ringing schedule (nothing all year and rehearse during the summer). We can start to plan family birthday parties again—perhaps, with careful hugs! Yes, as David says, “I’m ready, God, so ready from head to toe.” Are you ready too?

Board Notes

By the time this issue of *Clapper Chatter* is published, we will have had three virtual meetings with Area 7 members. If you didn't have the opportunity to join any of those discussions but would like to be included in a summary, email your responses to the following questions to: chair.area7@handbellmusicians.org

1. What did you learn or discover during the past year? It can be something from your personal and/or handbell life.
2. What, if anything, were you able to do with handbells during this last year?
3. Are you ready to get back to ringing? Are there things that you/your group will do differently?
4. What are you looking forward to doing again in your handbell world?
5. What are you looking forward to doing again in your personal world?
6. How can Area 7 help you in the future? Virtual workshops or programs? Help with local in-person events or workshops? Other thoughts?

Your Area 7 Board is looking ahead with several scheduled events. Find more information elsewhere in this newsletter or on the [Area 7 website](#):

Kid's Ring: Saturday, November 6, 202; Sandra Mullaney, Clinician

Anthornis: Friday-Saturday, November 12-13, 2021; Kathleen Ebling Shaw, Clinician

2022 Festival Conference: June 9-12, 2022, in Duluth, MN; Bill Alexander, Cathy Moglebust, and Karen Van Wert, Clinicians

Clista Wood Scholarships are available. [More information is on the website.](#)

If you are thinking about hosting a local event or workshop, let us help you plan! You can also apply for an Area 7 Endorsed Event Grant up to \$250.00.

National offered its first virtual Winter Workshop in February. There were 24 sessions offered—12 during the two days of the event, with the remaining sessions available to view for a week following the workshop. This year's National Seminar will be held in-person and virtually, July 13-17, 2021. Check out the [Handbell Musicians of America](#) website for more information and registration.

Your Area 7 Board are all volunteers. We are passionate about handbells, music, fellowship, and fun. What could be better than that? Opportunities to serve are open now, and more opportunities will be open in the near future. If someone contacts you about a Board position, please seriously consider saying "yes." I've said yes (a few times) and have never regretted it. We look forward to working with you! If you'd like to know more, contact me at chair.area7@handbellmusicians.org



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If you are interested in advertising in *Clapper Chatter*, we have a variety of plans that could fit your needs. There is a 15% discount to those advertisers paying in advance for an entire year (4 editions).

\$30 for business-card size per edition

\$55 for 1/4 page per edition

\$65 for 1/2 page per edition

\$80 for full page per edition

If you would like to know more or have questions, please contact Bill Alexander at editor.area7@handbellmusicians.org

Membership

From Membership Chair Deb Madel

Membership.Area7@handbellmusicians.org

Happy spring! So much has happened since last spring! A year ago everything suddenly shut down, leaving us isolated, frustrated, and looking for answers. The new HMA renewal dates went into effect, causing membership numbers to swing wildly for a while. Everything was rather a mess! And now, a year later, many of us are still not back to ringing or are only partially back. Likewise, many members have let memberships expire because they are not back to ringing as normal. Yes, we all long for things to be normal, but now, when it is NOT normal, is the BEST time to have an HMA membership!

Bell people are the most resilient, determined, and creative people I know. We forged ahead into unknown territory and figured it out! Distanced ringing, 12 bells, small groups, virtual choirs, Zoom meetings (too many Zoom meetings!), Zoom practices, online concerts, online workshops, virtual National Seminar, and more, all keep us ringing and learning. I participated in workshops and chats from many of the different areas. I have met and made bell friends from all over the country. I have heard nationally-known bell experts speak and share, without having to travel and pay for a conference. Oh, and the concerts! In the "normal" times, I was busy preparing for my own ensembles' concerts and had no time to attend concerts of other groups. But this year, with everything virtual, I was able to attend so many concerts! That would never have happened in a normal year due to time and distances. So awesome!

Now more than ever, it is important to maintain your HMA memberships. We need to keep learning, keep informed, and support each other in moving forward. Remind our lapsed friends to renew memberships, and encourage other ringers to become new members. Check out the National website for opportunities. Check out the Area 7 website for events, networking opportunities, and resources available to you. Check out websites of other areas, websites of music publishers, and Facebook handbell groups. There are many, many opportunities to keep engaged and learning. Then, as we get back to in-person ringing, the NEW normal we create will be so much sweeter!

Tintinnabula Handbell Choir

The Concordia College handbell ensemble, under the direction of Jessica Westgard Larson, is offering you a recorded selection from their ensemble's "virtual tour" for use in your church's online service or to project on the screen for any in-person worship. The selection available is Cathy Moglebust's "Morningdance."

To acquire the file, email Jessica at westgard@cord.edu. Your church will need to have a OneLicense or CCLI Streaming license to use the video or pay Chorister's Guild \$35 for its use. There may be additional selections available from Concordia in the future, or perhaps this has given you ideas on sharing your own recordings with others.

Thank you to all the members who renewed their membership! Please invite others to join and consider adding your ringers for only \$10/year per person. Let's keep our handbell organization strong and vital both now and into the future!

There are many ways to keep up with what Area 7 is doing. The more you explore, the more you will know.

Click for more.



Area 7 Events

by Events Coordinator Alanna Teragawa

Thank you to **Karen Van Wert**, who presented a free virtual solo handbell concert on April 18 via Zoom. The presentation was from a previously-recorded concert under the title "Praise to the Lord." Karen was accompanied by Mary Ann Neighbor.

The concert program consisted of:

- **Praise to the Lord** - Christine Anderson, Douglas E Wagner
- **This Is My Father's World/Everything Is One** - Franklin Sheppard, Lois Brokering
- **Peace Medley** - Barbara Brocker, Rob Pearson
- **Be Still, My Soul** - Christine Anderson, Anna Laura Page
- **Jesus Walked the Lonesome Valley** - Michael Kastner and Kevin McChesney
- **Amazing Grace** - Barbara Brocker, Rob Pearson
- **Like a Shepherd** - Christine Anderson, Anna Laura Page
- **Immortal, Invincible** - Heather Keith



Karen shared this personal note:

I want to express my deepest thanks to God for the gift of music. I pray the indwelling Holy Spirit is touched by the joyful noise of bells ringing praise to the Lord.

Future Events

Upcoming In-Person Area/National Events

July 10-17, 2021

HMA National Seminar; Glendale, Arizona

Onsite and virtual options available. Educational and engaging classes and performances by some of the best handbell choirs and ensembles. Meet and network with fellow handbell musicians and develop life-long friendships with those that share your enthusiasm and passion for our art.

Find more information at www.seminar.HandbellMusicians.org

November 6, 2021

KidsRing; Location: TBD in Minneapolis/St. Paul area

Clinician: Sandy Mullaney

November 12-13, 2021

ANTHORNIS; St. Louis Park, Minnesota

Westwood Lutheran Church

Clinician: Kathy Ebling-Shaw

Watch for the repertoire list to be posted online soon.

A two-day event for adult/college ringers who will rehearse challenging yet attainable music to present at a free concert that Saturday afternoon.

June 9-12, 2022

Area 7 Festival Handbell Conference

Duluth, Minnesota

Duluth Entertainment and

Convention Center (DECC),

Thursday evening (optional pre-Festival events),

Friday to Sunday—Main Festival

Clinicians: Cathy Moklebust, Bill Alexander, and Karen Van Wert, with experienced faculty teaching a variety of classes Friday and Saturday.

Sunday, 1:30pm—Closing

Concert, open to the public at the DECC.

Additional Upcoming Events Around the Area

April 28, 2021

Rochester Area Handbells

Their Spring concert *Through the Dark Days* will be posted on YouTube. This is a full-length, full-choir concert exploring the emotions we have all been dealing with through the pandemic—fear, isolation, loss, anger, but ultimately joy and hope.

The Facebook event can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/events/969461066922808/>

Contact Paul Kingsbury with any questions.

www.rochesterareahandbells.org/

Notes From a North Dakota Director

by Jessica Westgard Larson

I did absolutely nothing with handbells until January, when my church bell choir was allowed to resume rehearsals twice a month. Knowing this opportunity might not last, I set each of my ringers up with a binder of music, and at every rehearsal we practiced and then recorded a song. Before the ringers left, the next song was assigned in hopes that they would look at (and practice) the music before the next rehearsal. One benefit of rehearsing and recording the same day was that we didn't have to be concerned about finding a sub at the last minute. The COVID protocols, written by Linnette Rodriguez Figueroa and distributed by Malmark, were carefully followed, and all but one of my ringers felt good about returning to rehearsals.

I had to scale back the difficulty level quite a bit, but it's worked well! After the first couple weeks, I dug in and learned some video-editing software so I can edit the videos myself. In 2020 we shut down the week we started preparing for Easter, so this year it was crazy-fun to dedicate one of our early March rehearsals to recording a piece with our virtual choir for Palm Sunday and the opening hymn for Easter. That gave the choir and trumpet plenty of time to add their parts to our track. The last week of March we recorded an organ/piano/handbell prelude for Easter as well as a stand-alone bell piece. On Easter Sunday the service was streamed on the church's Facebook page, and I could watch it all on my father-in-law's TV, three hours away from home. It was still fun and exhilarating to have all that big music back, carrying on our traditions!

I never did find the personal motivation to do some solo ringing or put together some smaller groups early in the pandemic, but parenting through distance learning, working from home frequently, and otherwise "doing the best we can" kept me from doing anything extra. (Sigh)

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Artistic Director Bill Alexander • 230 E. Skyline Parkway, Duluth, Minnesota 55811

Handbell Program Dealing With COVID-19

by Maryls Herring

We at Olivet, like everyone else, brought everything to a close following worship last March 15. As you know we are a busy church, offering our facilities to many community groups. But I think I would have to say that Fargo, in general, has been conservative in how we have been dealing with this pandemic, and have tried to adhere to all common sense and the safety protocols that have guided us all. We all knew we had to simply go home and stay there. And we did.

We did not miss a beat with a Sunday, however, immediately moving to streaming even though we had not been doing that prior to the pandemic. We had talked about "getting around to it," but had not taken any steps before we were thrust into it again, like so many other churches.

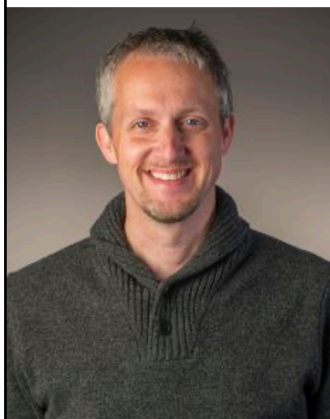
So no Sunday School, no choirs, no meetings. We created a couple sub-staff groupings so that the office was always staffed for business and phone calls or the needs or emergencies of our congregation. Personally, I got to continue, somewhat, with my regular responsibilities, playing a worship service, but to an empty sanctuary. We did not record in segments and then put it out on YouTube; we sent out a live service. So an organist, a couple clergy, and a tech guy. That's who was in the sanctuary on Sunday morning for weeks... months.

I did not have the heart to dismantle the bell folders or the choir folders for several weeks, not until it was pretty clear we would not be making music anymore for the rest of the Spring. I did some organizing and bell polishing, and our head custodian did some cleaning that he could never get to with people always all over the place. But eventually, we all got caught up on some stuff and had settled into a routine.

—continues on page 8



SAVE THESE DATES!



Ready. Set. Ring!
Prepare to return to ringing
at a one-day workshop
with Brian Childers.
Saturday, August 14, 2021
9am-3pm
Incarnation Lutheran
Church, Shoreview MN

Space is limited. Online registration available June 1, 2021
at TwinCitiesBronze.org



Annual Christmas Concert

Sunday, December
5, 2021
4:00pm
Incarnation
Lutheran Church
Shoreview MN

TwinCitiesBronze.org

South Dakota Sub-Area Chair

Who could have imagined that our “normal life” would still be in recovery more than a year since COVID19 hit the United States? Luckily in the state of South Dakota, the resilience and tenacity of its citizens and governor have spared us from some of the results broadcast on the nightly news. Arts organizations and churches have worked to adhere to CDC guidelines. Rehearsals, events, concerts, and in-person worship services were cancelled. Thanks to the Handbell Industry Council and Dr. Linnette Rodriguez-Figueroa, handbell directors could have access to ways in which to safely prepare to gather once restrictions were lifted. Many became schooled in Zoom and other media to keep connected. Smaller ensembles emerged from full choirs, and social distancing became the new logistical norm in rehearsal spaces. Vaccination rates are extremely high in South Dakota, and as the population gains “herd immunity,” directors and ringers are looking to gather once again to make music. For some ringers there is the concern that their strength and skill sets may have become a bit rusty. Plans are underway to create onsite workshops with choirs to work out those kinks, refresh rhythm recall, and strengthen those sight-reading skills that have been dormant. Stay tuned to hear from your South Dakota Sub-Area Coordinator as she travels across the state of South Dakota. A “Re-Entry Workshop” just might be coming to a location near you.

~Monica McGowan

From the Area 7 Historian

It's been an interesting year for handbells, to say the least, due to the pandemic. I'm sure many of you haven't been able to ring due to COVID. At my church we have five of us that are ringing socially distanced. We are ringing music for 12 bells (we have a 4-in-hand ringer), and our director, Brice Peterson, has been arranging some easy hymn settings. I pray that if you haven't been able to ring, you will get to start soon.

I don't know about you, but I really missed our festival last year. I am looking forward to our 2022 festival. I know that Alanna Teragowa, our festival coordinator, has it all set to go, and she put it in a box and stored it in her closet! (had to have a little fun!). It will be great to see everyone and to ring in a massed choir under the direction of Cathy Moklebust and Bill Alexander. Here's a fun fact about festival that is pretty amazing:



Q: Do you have a clue how many pieces of music we have rung over the many years of festival?

A: We have rung over 300 pieces of music! Wow! Amazing! I will share more fun facts in future newsletters.

I pray that God will bless us with a healthy rest of 2021 and a wonderful festival in 2022.

~Dan Ahlman

The Raleigh Ringers

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As Christmas drew closer, we realized we would still not be worshipping in person, so we quickly—and I think it was nothing short of miraculous—brought in a professional videographer who, along with several of us, put two completely different Christmas worship services together to be accessed online. We created a children's service and our very large service of Lessons and Carols—but not very large—COVID style. These services we DID tape in segments and then spliced them together to make two services. We recorded for two full days, with all the participants coming in at a very specific appointed times to tape their part.

I think it was in January that we opened to in-person worship again, but adhering to very strict protocols, and only straight into the sanctuary, through the Atrium, and then straight out again. We took up the furniture, and folks knew there would be no loitering. We didn't even make coffee! Those who chose to come were so happy to be back. But we knew there were folks who were not ready to mix it up yet. We did the "every other pew" thing, and only two family units per pew. And we were never pushed to that max, even with that scant number. So we felt safe and had made ourselves available for those who wanted, but we still continued with the live-streaming.

Up to this point, none of us programmatic staff were trying to get around the COVID guidelines in any way to allow us to have choirs, singers, on-site confirmation classes, or Sunday School. We just accepted this for what it was and did the best we could with online confirmation and online Sunday School activities, etc. Confirmation eventually began to have Zoom meetings. So throughout this, I have not done any fancy ringing or clever arrangements for ringers to "get around" this pandemic. We just sat it out like everyone else. My ringers are made up mostly of teachers and retired folks. As much as they missed ringing, no one was pushing to "try this" or "try that" to get back to ringing. It is what it is.

So in January, ahead of opening to in-person worship, I sent out an email asking for six ringers who would be willing to come together on a Saturday morning, to brush up three small ensemble pieces and then record them. I got six folks right away, but no more; the others were still electing to stay home. We had done some small ensemble stuff prior, so my ringers knew what was involved. I selected three

pieces and had the necessary bells and music stands—we rang from music stands, two bells each, no tables—all set up in the sanctuary when they arrived. We stood in a gentle semi-circle, comfortably spaced. We were all dressed for taping. With masks and our sound guy on deck, we video recorded three pieces to be inserted into some upcoming worship services. When these pieces showed up in a worship service, those who were in person watched the recorded bell pieces on the overhead screen, while those at home saw it on their computers. By January we were thrilled to even be able to do this! Congregants had not seen children or choirs of any kind for ten months!

By this time there now were some categories of folks who were getting their shots, and there was hope on the horizon.

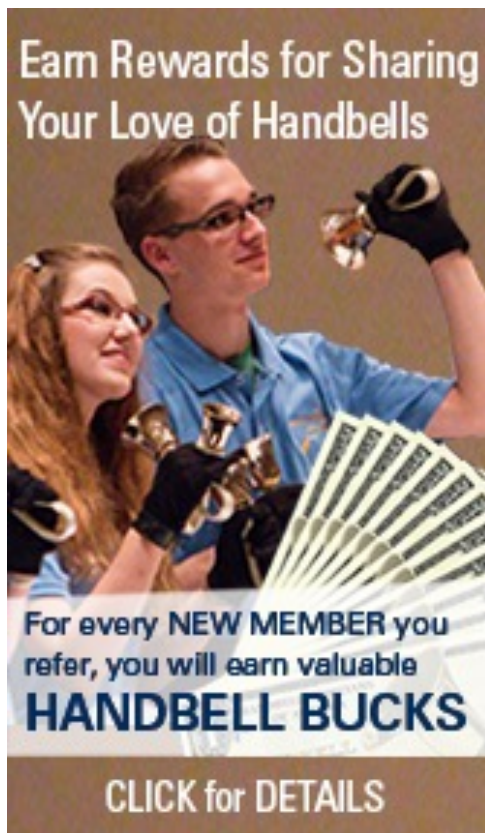
By the last Sunday in February, we split into two services. We had been doing only one, and I was playing it, but our Contemporary group had been without a service for some time, so we thought we would go back to two services per Sunday, and give them their worship time. At the same time, I asked for, and got, four volunteer singers from the choir to come and help lead the hymn-singing each Sunday. The folks who chose to volunteer in this way had already had their shots, and we were well-spaced out with plexiglas shields between us. This has proven to be a big help, and has given the folks who choose to sing in a church choir a small way to contribute. I work a schedule with those 19 people who have volunteered so they are all rotated in.

Throughout Lent we continued live-streaming our mid-week Lenten services, too, but also had in-person worshippers. I began to wonder if maybe things would ease up enough to be able to bring in some brass for Palm Sunday or Easter, or maybe put a volunteer group of singers together from my choir—I mean, it's Easter, for Pete's sake! But by about two weeks out, I realized this was not to be. We sang all the expected hymns, but no brass, no choirs. It felt weird for me at the organ to play "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today" with no brass; I kept looking at my registration, thinking I had forgotten to put on some big and noisy stop. But nope. It was just without trumpets and trombones and tubas.

Once it became apparent that we would have no choir or brass for Palm Sunday or Easter, I again

asked for ringer volunteers to come together and ring—in person—for Palm Sunday worship. Again, I got six who were very ready and willing. I selected a piece, we came on Saturday morning to run over it, and then showed up for two of the three Palm Sunday services and played live! It was the first live music group to play at Olivet since the pandemic shut us down. So it was thrilling for them, and very much appreciated by the congregation. We again rang small ensemble music, two bells per ringer, from music stands. And they did this director-less. I am so proud of them!

Earn Handbell Bucks



Our most important asset in getting the word out about the benefits of belonging to Handbell Musicians of America is you, our current membership. In appreciation for your help in encouraging new handbell musicians to join the Guild, we are pleased to offer a membership referral program to reward you for your effort. For

every new member you refer, you will earn valuable Handbell Bucks, which can be redeemed toward your own membership dues and event registration fees.

The Basics

Members receive Five Handbell Bucks for each new membership they refer. Handbell Bucks can be exchanged for coupons that provide equal value discounts for membership renewal and event registration. There is no limit to the amount of Handbell Bucks that can be earned.

For complete details, go to

<https://handbellmusicians.org/bucks/>



At National Seminar

An exciting part of this year's event is the new Handbell Commons. This area will be the hub of all social activities during the event including vendor booths, our annual Silent Auction, nightly Happy Hours, the Welcome Reception, the Gala Banquet, daily grab-n-go breakfast and lunch, and a new Community Plaza, giving individual members and handbell ensembles the opportunity to exhibit at the event.

NEW Handbell Commons

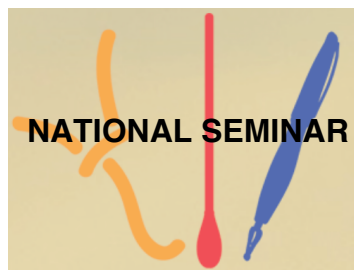
When not in class sessions, Handbell Commons will be THE place to be! In addition to being home to our fabulous vendor area, Handbell Commons will be the hub of all social activities during the event.

- Vendor booth shopping
- Annual Silent Auction
- Daily Happy Hours
- Welcome Reception
- Gala Banquet
- Daily grab-n-go breakfast and lunch options
- Hangout Areas
- Community Plaza
- Pop-Up Prize Drawings during the posted shopping times
- Finale and Sibelius Help Desk staffed by Cathy and David Moglebust

Community Plaza

New to National Seminar this year, we are offering exhibit opportunities to our non-business members. The Community Plaza will be an open courtyard within the normal exhibit area of Handbell Commons. This space will allow individual members to promote a product, event, or service. It also provides handbell ensembles with a space to share information about their programs, sell merchandise such as CDs and DVDs, and recruit members.

Click the Event for More Information



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