



Area 7

Clapper Chatter

Minnesota • North Dakota • South Dakota • Wisconsin • Manitoba

Volume 39 • Issue 1 • February 2025

Handbell Musicians
OF AMERICA

**Handbell Ringer,
Director, Innovator,
Musician, Enthusiast**

**IN LOVING
MEMORY**

**BILL ALEXANDER
1954-2025**



Handbell Ringer, Director, Innovator, Musician, Enthusiast ...

Bill Alexander



The handbell world lost one of the great ones last month. Bill Alexander passed away January 13, surrounded by his family.

Bill Alexander was the director of handbells at First United Methodist Church (also known as the Coppertop) in Duluth, MN, for more than 45 years. The church's bell program grew to include ringers of all ages and abilities in five choirs, including Strikepoint.

In 1984, Bill formed Strikepoint and began redrawing the possibilities for handbell ensembles. The unique, directorless ensemble took the world by storm and toured nearly every state, as well as England, Scotland, Wales, Canada, Sweden, Hong Kong, and Japan during his 40 years leading the ensemble. Strikepoint has produced nine albums; many ringers still have the original vinyl and cassette tape recordings from the early years.

In August 2024, Bill traveled to Japan with Strikepoint for the International Handbell Symposium. Each of the eight member countries of the international handbell organization selected one ensemble to participate in the International Handbell Concert. Strikepoint was honored to be chosen to represent the United States.

Bill was always in high demand as a conductor at area, national and international handbell events. His background in instrumental conducting, his ease of working with both youth and adult musicians, and his comfort conducting massed ensembles made him a popular choice as a clinician and massed ringing conductor. In addition to handbells, Bill was a school instrumental music educator for more than 45 years. Thousands of students learned to love band in his class.

Area 7 is incredibly grateful for the decades of leadership that Bill shared with us. He served on the Area 7 board multiple times and always said "yes" when we asked if he was interested in a new role. Bill served as Area Chair for the first time back in 1992, most recently completed a term as Publications in 2024, and filled many roles in between. For more than 30 years Bill could be found sharing his gifts with Area 7 as a clinician for the Director's Seminar in 2001, Mid-winter workshop in 2002, Anthornis in 2012, and Festival Conference conductor in 1994, 2004, and 2022, as well as teaching classes at festivals.

During this time of mourning, we send our love to Bill's family and friends. And we ask you to continue sharing your stories of Bill and his boundless energy and outstanding musicianship with your handbell family. 🎵

Message from the Chair



by Paul McKenzie

Happy New Year! I hope that you all made beautiful music over the holidays, and I suspect that you are back to rehearsing for 2025's music.

Looking back, we had a successful ANTHORNIS held at Westwood Lutheran Church in St. Louis Park, MN, with conductor, Cathy Moglebust. It was held a week earlier than usual, but found that it worked well. It involved a Sunday morning performance with some of the ANTHORNIS attendees.

Following ANTHORNIS I was able to contact a Lutheran church in Worthington, MN where a Coppers event will be held in April of 2025. The director there is enthusiastic and soooo helpful.

I'm looking forward to hearing a new community bell choir in their first concert on Friday, January 17. Ring Out! is a new LGBTQ+ ensemble in the Twin Cities and will be performing at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis. The ensemble is featured in this issue.

Also, I'm looking ahead to BellFest with Bells of the Lakes on March 8 and Milwaukee Handbell Ensemble's ringing event on March 16.

But, we've suffered a great loss! Bill Alexander, former director of StrikePoint and a church musician at Coppertop Methodist Church in Duluth, MN died at 2:00 am today [January 13]. Bill has been a friend to handbell ringers all around the globe. He was a pillar of Area 7 and a friend to many. Personally, Bill was the one who supported me along the way — always encouraging and always with a smile. Rest in peace, faithful servant. 🎵

If you are interested in advertising in *Clapper Chatter*, we have a variety of plans that could fit your needs.

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If you would like to know more,
contact Jen Welch at
editor.area7@handbellmusicians.org

**Deadline for the next
issue of *Clapper Chatter*
is April 10, 2025**

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and Music**

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From the Membership Coordinator



by Christina Herold

Happy New Year!

I hope you're finding time to slow down and recharge after the always-busy Advent and Christmas season.

One of my favorite December traditions is opening the Handbell Musicians of America (HMA) Advent Calendar each day. It's always a delight to see what fun activities the Guild has for members. While all the prizes were awarded on New Year's Eve, you can still enjoy the calendar's fun bell-themed activities, such as crafts, games, and free bell music.

Check it out by visiting handbellmembers.org/advent-calendar-2024. It's a wonderful way to bring a little extra joy during a hectic time of the year!

Handbell Musicians of America Membership Levels

Individual Membership: \$95/year

Group Membership for your church, school,
organization: \$95/year

Retired Director Membership (65-plus, no longer
leading an ensemble): \$70/year

Student Membership (full-time college or high
school student): \$25/year

Sub Membership (individuals ringing with an
organization that has a group membership):
\$10/year

For more information, contact Christina Herold
membership.area7@handbellmusicians.org

Our records show that 51% of Area 7 members have a membership renewal date in January, February, or March. As you approach your renewal month, you will receive an email reminder with payment options. However, you don't have to wait until your renewal date to renew — you can log into your HMA account anytime to take care of it. While you're logged in, be sure to update your contact information and explore the many resources available to you as an HMA member. You can even set up auto-renew on your membership so you never have to think about renewing again!

Here's something you might not know: HMA Group Memberships offer a Sub-Membership option for individual ringers. For just \$10 a year (less than \$1 per month), ringers in a Group Membership can get their own login to the HMA website, access to online resources, and receive direct communications about HMA National and Area 7 information. The Group Membership point of contact (usually the director) will still receive all communications, but this is a great way to ensure your ringers are kept informed too!

If you have questions about your membership, reach out to me at Membership.Area7@handbellmusicians.org. You also can contact our HMA Regional Membership Coordinator, Kim Braswell, at kbraswell@handbellmusicians.org for additional assistance.

Wishing you a happy, healthy, and music-filled 2025! 🎵



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From the C.H.I.M.E. Representative



by Michelle Finlon

Area 7 C.H.I.M.E. Grant and Belltree Kit Grant

Did you know that Area 7 has two 3-octave sets of handbells and two 3-octave sets of handchimes available to be awarded to area schools, churches, senior living facilities, and other community organizations through the C.H.I.M.E. Grant program?

The full C.H.I.M.E. Grant includes: a set of handbells or handchimes for a school year (September through May) as well as foam pads, music, technique manuals, curriculum suggestions, and support needed to start and grow a handbell/handchime program. Applications are accepted anytime and are awarded in July for the program year beginning in September.

If sets are still available once the school year is in progress, then the equipment is available for shorter term grants.

Maybe you ...

- Need an extra set of bells or chimes because you suddenly have more ringers than equipment?
- Want to do an “intro to bells” unit for a few weeks at your church, school, retirement community, or activity center?
- Want to put together a small group to play for Easter services or a special concert?
- Want to add a belltree to a performance and need some extra bells to supplement your current set?

Speaking of belltrees, Area 7 also has a Belltree Kit Grant. The Kit includes: 1 belltree stand, 2 belltree arms, 2 belltree dowel processional poles, mallets, Area 7 belltree resources, and a bag to keep all the equipment together. This is a great option for groups wanting to add belltree to their repertoire, or maybe

you aspire to be a belltree soloist and want to use the Grant to get started on your way.

There are currently sets of bells, chimes, and a belltree kit available to be granted through May 2025. Or you can always submit your grant application for the 2025-2026 program year.

If you are interested in learning more or applying for a grant for your organization, you can find information at area7.handbellmusicians.org/c-h-i-m-e-grant-program or area7.handbellmusicians.org/belltree-grant-program.

You can also email chime.area7@handbellmusicians.org.

Hope to hear from you soon! 🎵



From the Southern Minnesota Sub-Chair



by Paul Kingsbury

Handbell ensembles in Southern Minnesota have been seeking — and finding — new ways to use handbells outside of the familiar service music.

Celebration Bells of Christ United Methodist Church in Rochester repurposed Sandra Eithun's wonderful "Common Thread" from the Area 7 Festival in La Crosse as a musical "message" in the sermon slot in a service in mid-November. Bells rarely get such a prominent position in a worship service!

Rochester Area Handbells played at the Family Promise Rochester benefit concert, raising funds to aid families experiencing homelessness, and at the Rochester Interfaith Thanksgiving service. Both performances featured Eithun's "Common Thread" (we got a lot of mileage out of that one!) and both performances were great opportunities to get bells in front of audiences that don't ordinarily get to experience this art form.

Evangel United Methodist Church in Rochester has been working hard to reestablish their bell program, which fell apart from the one-two punch of the

retirement of their long-time director right at the beginning of COVID. Many of their ringers have been playing with Celebration Bells of Christ UMC, and the united choir plays services at both churches. More exciting, they put together a pick-up choir for Christmas consisting of eleven youth ringers, many of whom had never rung before.

The St. Olaf Handbell Choir at St. Olaf College gave a kid's concert this past November. There were three kids bell/chime choirs from Bethel Lutheran Church in Northfield, MN, involved in the concert. They each performed a piece with the St. Olaf Choir. Kids from the audience were invited to join in on Kath Wissinger's "Chopsticks and How." Each kid was given a chime, quickly taught how to play, and the group divided into two chords. An Olaf student points to them and they play on cue. It's priceless to see the look on their faces and how serious they take it.

Looking ahead, well, winter is not a great time for events, but Rochester Area Handbells and the St. Olaf Handbell Choir are planning a joint workshop in early March. This is an opportunity for both groups to get feedback from a friendly peer. For many St. Olaf ringers this is also their first encounter with a performance-caliber bell ensemble. For Rochester Area Handbells it is a blatant recruiting pitch to try to convince Oles to come to Rochester after graduation. 🎵

St. Olaf College Handbell Choir Winter 2025 Tour Stops

Friday, February 28, 7:00 pm
Hosanna Lutheran Church
9300 Scandia Trail N.
Forest Lake, MN

Saturday, March 1, 7:00 pm
Grace United Methodist Church
300 Gartner Rd.
Naperville, IL

Sunday, March 2, 3:00 pm
Madison Mennonite Church
1501 Gilbert Road
Madison, WI

Monday, March 3, 8:15 pm
St. Olaf College, Urness Recital Hall
1520 St. Olaf Ave.
Northfield, MN

Young Ringer's Camp 101

by Jessica Haeder

Do you have a youth handbell choir at your church? Or do you have youth ringing with your adult ensemble? Area 7 invites all interested youth handbell ringers to join us this summer for Young Ringer's Camp! We are so excited to be returning to Camp Omega in Waterville, MN for Young Ringer's Camp on June 20-22, 2025.

Why bell camp? The three days of camp are the equivalent of seven one-hour rehearsals of ringing. It's a wonderful opportunity for young people to increase their skill level and have the opportunity to perform in a massed handbell concert. A number of directors say that their ringers are always looking for that something special to look forward to all season long. Knowing that they are going to be attending Young Ringer's Camp in June helps the ringers to stay focused learning music and serves as a great celebration for a year of hard work.

Who can come to camp? Young Ringer's Camp is open to all children and youth handbell ringers 4th grade and up. Directors can bring anywhere from their entire ensemble to a few ringers, whatever works for your choir! Less than full choirs are encouraged to attend, we can find a spot for them too!

Are there adults at camp? In addition to the guest conductor and staff from Area 7, each group is responsible for sending chaperones to be with their ringers throughout the weekend.

What if I don't know the other ringers at camp? All the events at Young Ringer's Camp are aimed at bringing youth together. We do games, team building activities, meals, service projects and ringing together. All campers will get to know one another in a very short period of time.

Where do we sleep and eat while we're at camp? The accommodations at Camp Omega are fantastic. We have our own lodge just for Young Ringer's Camp participants. There are separate areas for girls' and boys' bunk beds and bathrooms. The facility has heating and air conditioning. For meals, we all walk



up the hill from our private lodge to the main lodge for breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals.

How can we learn the music? There are three pieces of music that need to be learned in advance of attending Young Ringer's Camp. The easiest way to learn the music is to incorporate the pieces into your repertoire this season. However, if you have youth ringing with your adult ensemble, this may not always be possible. Special rehearsal sessions can be set up in the spring for interested ringers to attend in major cities (Minneapolis, Rochester, Duluth, Sioux Falls, etc.) Contact Youth Events Planner Jessica Haeder for more information.

Any ideas to pay for camp? Bringing your whole ensemble to Young Ringer's Camp can be expensive. Start thinking now of fundraising opportunities to offset the full price of camp. Can your ringers do a small concert with free-will offering to raise money? How about a special offering during a performance of the handbell choir? Is there a church foundation where you can apply for a grant or scholarship from your church? Area 7 also has one Clista Wood Memorial Scholarship available for camp. More information can be found on the Area 7 website. Or email pastchair.area7@handbellmusicians.org.

Sounds like fun, what's the next step? You've marked the date on your calendar, music is being learned by the ringers, fundraising is underway, but don't forget to REGISTER. All ringing participants and chaperones must register no later than April 1. Registration materials are available on the Area 7 website at area7.handbellmusicians.org/events/young-ringers-camp-2025. If you have questions, please contact Youth Events Planner Jessica Haeder for more information. 🎵

Find a Nearby Area 7 Community Group

MINNESOTA

Bells of the Bluffs

Redwing, MN

bellsofthebluffs.org

Bells of the Lakes

Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN

www.bellsofthelakes.org

Ding Dong Dollies

Twin Cities, MN

Great River Resonance

St. Cloud, MN

www.greatriverresonance.org

Joy BRingers

Fergus Falls, MN

maryjane41@aol.com

Northfield Handbell Ensemble

Northfield, MN

www.facebook.com/NorthfieldHandbells

Ring Out!

Minneapolis, MN

www.ringoutmn.org

Rochester Area Handbells

Rochester, MN

rochesterareahandbells.org

Strikepoint

Duluth, MN

www.strikepoint.com

Twin Cities Bronze

Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN

twincitiesbronze.org

wRight Ringers Community Handbell Ensemble

Buffalo, MN

www.facebook.com/wRightRingersHandbells

SOUTH DAKOTA

Bells of the Hills

Rapid City, SD

www.bellsofthehills.com

Sioux Empire Handbells/Heartland Handbells

Sioux Falls, SD

www.facebook.com/HeartlandHandbells

WISCONSIN

Bell Crazy Handbell Ensemble

Lake Mills, WI

www.facebook.com/groups/378241232198/979

Encore! Handbell Ensemble

Oshkosh, WI

encorehandbellensemble.org

Great River Ringers

La Crosse, WI

www.facebook.com/GreatRiverRingers

Madison Area Concert Handbells

Madison, WI

madisonhandbells.org

Maestro Productions Inc./Ringing Badgers

Madison, WI

www.maestroproductions.org/ringing-badgers.html

Milwaukee Handbell Ensemble

Milwaukee, WI

www.milwaukeehandbells.org

Milwaukee LGBTQ+ Handbell Ringers

Milwaukee, WI

sites.google.com/view/milwaukeeelgbtqringers

Don't see your group listed?

Contact editor.area7@handbellmusicians.org

From the Northern Minnesota Sub-Chair



by Jordan Goodwater

On the home front, the last of the Christmas decorations are neatly packed away. At church, the Christmas repertoire is as close to filed as this busy director can do. That's a wrap for the 2024 holiday season.

I'm exhausted and I'm ready for spring!

I love spring. Everything is fresh, new, and mostly clean.

I had the chance to perform with Ring Out! — the new LGBTQIA+ bell choir in the Minneapolis area — this season. Every Thursday I make the 2.5 hour trek down to our rehearsal spot to connect with other humans in my community. We have had many laughs and serious moments as we learned the repertoire for our inaugural concert, "Ring Out!" Our wonderful director, Logan Olson, programmed a thoughtful concert surrounding new beginnings and our journey of life. I was reminded again how much I love spring and new beginnings. I was also reminded of how important handbells are in bringing us together in times of joy, sorrow, celebrations, and even in times of protest.

I don't think I'm alone in driving untold miles to participate in a handbell group or sub when needed. It kind of provides a high for me. I've appreciated my time on the Area 7 board and the pressure this introvert has had in getting out to visit other groups and expand my circle of friends. I really enjoy connecting with other passionate ringers, directors, and composers. I love going to concerts and witnessing a concert attendee who is hearing handbells in concert for the first time or watching the seasoned ringer in the audience waiting for "that part" of their favorite song.

I'm excited by the work of HMA and look forward to what's next. See y'all in St. Cloud in 2026, if not before! 🎵

Great River Resonance Spring 2025 Concerts

Saturday, April 5

2:00 pm

*Great River Regional Library
St. Cloud, MN*

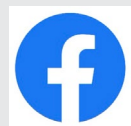
Sunday, April 6

2:00 pm

*Sartell Community Center
Sartell, MN*



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Area 7 on Facebook**



The Raleigh Ringers

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Ensemble Spotlight: Ring Out!

by Logan Olson, Artistic Director, Ring Out Handbell Ensemble

Introducing Ring Out!

The Twin Cities area has a new community ensemble in town! Ring Out, a handbell ensemble created by and for LGBTQIA+ ringers and allies, kicked off its first season in the fall of 2024. To the best of my knowledge, Ring Out is one of three active handbell ensembles dedicated to LGBTQIA+ inclusion in the nation.

The idea for the ensemble started after I led a handbell workshop for fellow singers in the One Voice Mixed LGBTQ+ Chorus. One Voice and the over 200 LGBTQ+ choruses across the nation have played a pivotal role in building community and advocating for queer rights. As I saw the excitement of so many singers ringing bells for the first time, I knew I wanted to create a space that harnessed the unifying power of handbells to create a more inclusive community for all people.

When I put out the call for auditions in the summer of 2024, I had no idea if we'd find enough ringers to complete an ensemble. I was blown away when 21 ringers auditioned and joined the group! While all members had prior musical experience, several had never touched a handbell before. For others, it had been over a decade since they last rang with a group.

With the help of social media, we received an outpouring of support from across the country. We rented additional equipment and received a donation of a 4-octave set of bells, allowing us to function as a double bell choir. Before long, the group was tackling level 4 pieces with persistence and precision!

Ring Out presented its debut concert on January 17th, 2025, at Westminster Hall in Minneapolis. The concert centered around the joy, dreams, and abundant potential of new beginnings. It was an absolute joy to share our music with an audience of friends, family, and community members. Many of them had never attended a handbell performance before, and those who had got to experience a breadth of techniques and musical styles beyond what they had seen before.

Opening up the world of handbells to a broader community is at the heart of Ring Out's mission. By creating an inclusive space for ringers of all identities, we hope to create momentum toward a more welcoming handbell community for ringers and audiences alike. We also strive to support the composition of new handbell music by a diverse array of composers, making sure all audiences see stories they can relate to told in the music we perform. Several projects to produce new handbell music from new local composers are already in the works!

If this mission speaks to you, we hope you'll join us for an upcoming concert, drop by a rehearsal, or share a word of support with our ringers. To connect with Ring Out, visit us at www.RingOutMN.org or find us on Facebook or Instagram.

It is an absolute delight to lead this talented community of ringers. I can't wait to see what the future holds for this ensemble.

Happy Ringing! 🎵





Bells & Bucks Basketball

by Tracey Bowers

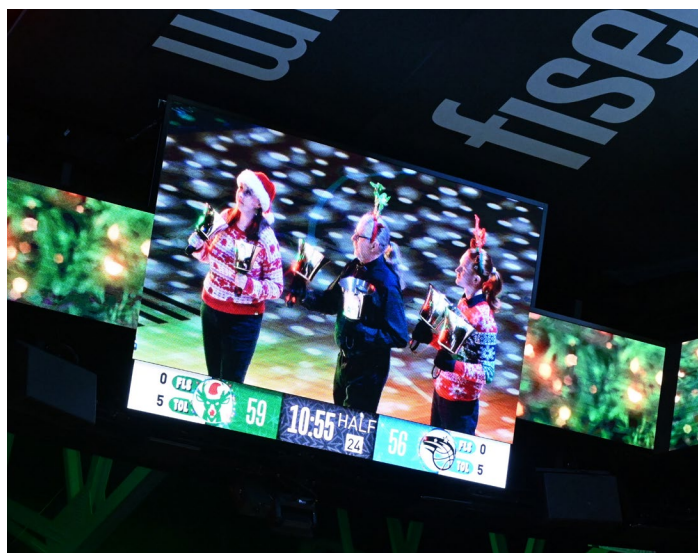
The Milwaukee Handbell Ensemble (MHE) is a community handbell choir, and, like many other community groups, we sometimes wonder where our next gig will be. We search and inquire at locations we would like to play, always trying to think of new places to perform and how to reach new audiences. We have played at a library, a senior center, the local high school performing arts center, in a hotel ballroom for a McDonald's franchise manager's holiday party, and, of course, many churches.

We have been fortunate to be invited by the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra (MSO) to join them for their Holiday POPS concert for several years. That is always a highlight for us because we get to perform for so many people that we would not otherwise get to entertain. Many of those in attendance may not have seen handbells before. We had a hiatus with the MSO after the pandemic and we heard that past attendees have asked, "Where are the handbells?" or said, "We missed the handbells at this concert." It feels good to know that we are missed and appreciated!

In a recent *Overtones* article I read that our website should be kept up to date. This has become very evident for us lately. It is through our website that we have received some of our more recent inquiries. It's always nice when someone reaches out to us to help us fill in the gaps in our schedule when we may have been struggling to find a venue. It's even nicer when those requests are more unique and interesting.

We had a very interesting request in the Fall of 2023. A contact from the Milwaukee Bucks organization reached out to us to ask if we would like to join them for their big Christmas show "hoping to put together a really amazing Holiday halftime performance." For those not up on current sports teams, the Milwaukee Bucks are an NBA team that won the national championship in 2021.

"Wow, what an exciting opportunity!" was my first thought.



The Milwaukee Handbell Ensemble gave a holiday halftime performance to remember in front of 17,000 NBA fans — go Bucks! (top).. The group lit up the big screen with a memorized piece with bells in-hand (center) before quickly moving in tables for a short Christmas medley (bottom).

My second thought was, “Is this legitimate?” You can’t be too sure these days with all the scams that are out there. I forwarded this to our Artistic Director, Jana Larson, to get her thoughts. She said “OMG yea!!! Oh goodness what would that look like. Let’s definitely have the conversation!! Cool!”

After confirming with our ringers that the proposed date would work, I reached out to the contact at the Bucks. In a matter of days, we were in full planning mode to get all the pieces in order for this unique experience. The Bucks entertainment coordinator works with the performing groups for the National Anthem and the halftime shows. She had never worked with a bell choir before, so it was something different for all of us. As handbell ringers, we all know there is a lot of equipment. So, we had to figure out how to get ringers, bells, tables with foam, and table covers on and off the court very quickly. This, plus our performance had to be done within seven minutes.

The Milwaukee Handbell Ensemble is known for having at least one memorized piece each year, typically for our Christmas season. This started when our founding director, Dr. John Behnke, heard comments from those that sat in the orchestra seats when we played with the MSO that they could hear the bells but not see them. That next year, we had a piece memorized and played it from the lip of the stage so everyone could see us. This season, we also had a piece memorized for Christmas so we knew that would be one of the pieces to play for the Bucks halftime show.

The Bucks team wanted this to be BIG CHRISTMAS. We knew that our memorized piece, “Good King Wenceslas” was not big enough on its own. We looked at our current repertoire and decided none of those pieces really worked either. A few were BIG, but used too much equipment like lots of bass bells, chimes, or mallets. Seven minutes for two songs would be fine, but that did not include getting on and off the court.

Jana did some searching and found the perfect piece, “Christmas...in About 3 Minutes” by Douglas Wagner was chosen. There are 23 Christmas songs referenced in this one handbell piece. You can’t get much more BIG CHRISTMAS than that!

With our pieces selected, it was on to logistics. The tables had to be moved on and off the court quickly, and we knew we would not be moving the tables ourselves. The Bucks had a team to do that for us. The anxieties of bells falling off the table and clanging on the court were high! We planned to play our memorized piece first. That helped because each of us carried our own bells onto the court. That left only a few extra bells for our second piece on the tables to be moved. Then, when we were done, we each grabbed as many bells as we could, to lighten the load as the tables were swiftly moved off the court.

We met at the arena about a week before the game to go over the details and for the sound crew to get a feel for how to mic up handbells. They kept telling us they know how to get the sound to carry in the arena, it’ll be fine. They also had never worked with handbells before. The day of rehearsal there was no crowd noise, it sounded amazing! We knew that it would not be that quiet for our performance with a sold-out arena of over 17,000 fans. They had mics in place and told us it would be fine, but then on game day, we needed to adjust during our memorized piece and physically move closer to the microphones they had in place. While the halftime show was not shown fully on national television, we had some family and friends recording throughout the arena. It was quieter than we would have preferred but still a wonderful show!

MHE ringer Jennifer Scheler said, “Performing for the Milwaukee Bucks halftime show was an amazing opportunity to introduce handbells to a huge audience. We got the attention of many who had likely never heard a handbell ensemble before, including turning some players’ heads as they returned to the court.” (As we were about halfway through our second song, we could hear basketballs bouncing behind us. Jana, our director, could see it all and she made some concerned faces a couple of times. That was an experience in itself!) Jim Dahlgran, another ringer, said, “What a unique way to expose so many people to the music of handbells.”

We are so thrilled to have been a part of an NBA halftime show where handbells are not often seen. From this experience we learned an important lesson, dream big — who knows what could be next? 🎵

From the Southern Wisconsin Sub-Chair



by Lisa Bourget

Such a wealth of concerts involving handbells were offered over the holidays in Southern Wisconsin!

Four handbell ensembles – Bell Crazy, Madison Area Concert Handbells, Milwaukee Handbell

Ensemble, and the Ringing Badgers – performed in eight concerts, at least one of which sold out. The Milwaukee LGBTQ+ Handbell Ringers joined the Concord Chamber Orchestra for its holiday concert, and the Milwaukee Handbell Ensemble joined the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and Chorus for a series of seven concerts. Congratulations to all for bringing the joy of handbells to many audiences; sounds of the season, indeed!

Looking forward, the Milwaukee Handbell Ensemble will be hosting its Festival 2025 on Sunday, March 16. Directed by Dr. John A. Behnke at the Brookfield Conference Center, the Festival will include Copper, Bronze, and Massed pieces. The 7:00pm concert is open to the public.

Mark your calendars for the upcoming May 17th concert of the Milwaukee LGBTQ+ Handbell Ringers, “Ringing Queens: A Pop Concert”! The 7:00pm concert will be held at Memorial Lutheran Church in Glendale, WI. 🎵



Dr. John Behnke



Back by popular demand!

SUMMER HANDBELL CAMP 2025 with Clinician Sandra Eithun

Monday, July 28 to Thursday, July 31, 2025
St. John's Lutheran Church
20275 Davidson Road, Brookfield, WI

This a four-day intensive workshop will focus on handbell technique and musicianship. Daily rehearsals and individual practice emphasize hands-on learning and group performance. Selections will range in difficulty from Level 2+ to Level 4+ of both sacred and secular music for use throughout the year. Clinician Sandra Eithun will direct the mass choirs in a fast-paced group setting to make this workshop enjoyable for musicians interested in improving their handbell performance.

See flyer and registration on pages 18 and 19.

Learn more by visiting www.gardensonarts.com/handbell-camp

From the Area 7 Events Coordinator



by Alanna Teragawa

Here's a look at upcoming Area 7 events to watch for. Planning also is well-underway for the Area 7 2026 Festival!

COPPER RING

A ringing workshop for Level 2 ringers.

April 26, 2025

8:45AM to 3:00PM

American Lutheran Church

915 Winifred Street

Worthington, MN

Clinician: Jennifer Cadwell

\$20 per person. Price includes free lunch provided by the church and one free music score.

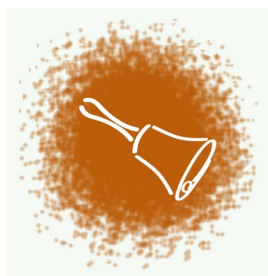
If you come as a group, please bring your own bells and foam. Tables will be provided.

A registration form for this event is found on page 17. Complete and send in the registration form and fee by March 31, 2025.

Indicate on the registration form if you have any open positions that you would welcome individual ringers to join your group for the day.

If you wish to come as an individual, return your registration form as early as possible so you can be placed in an open ringing position of another group attending.

Visit the Area 7 Events page for updates: area7.hanbellmusicians.org/events



Copper Ring Repertoire

Purchase these three pieces for all those attending and work on them prior to the workshop:

- Leaning on the Everlasting Arms – Ron Mallory. L2+ 3-5 octaves HP3018
- Let All Things Now Living – Jason Krug. L2 (3-5 octaves CGB1347) or (2-3 oct CGB1346)
- Quiescence (Be Still) – Michael Mazzatenta. L2 3-5 octaves LC202026L

You will receive one more score FREE upon arrival, and it will be worked on at the event. This piece will feature different ringing techniques.

YOUNG RINGERS CAMP 2025

This camp is for those in grades 4 to high school.

June 20-22, 2025

(Friday through Sunday morning)

Camp Omega – Waterville, Minnesota

Clinician: Bonnie Tranby

Less-than-full choirs are most welcome.

Cost:

\$225 per youth and director.

\$200 per chaperone.

Scholarships are available.

Registration fee includes five delicious meals, t-shirt, ringing and lots of fun games: canoeing, tomahawk throwing, mud pit, swimming, gaga ball, 9-square, and much more.

Deadlines:

\$50 per person deposit is due April 1st.

Balance of registration fee is due May 31st.



Young Ringers Camp Repertoire

Come with these three pieces well-rehearsed:

- Brother James' Aire – Kath Wissinger.
3-5 octave RE3018
- First Praise – Bill Ingram. 2, 3, 5 octave
CGB940
- Make Me a Channel of Your Peace – Jeffrey
Honore. Two versions are available:
3 octave HP2787 or 3-5 octave HP2828

The FOURTH piece will be announced in Spring 2025. Directors, please purchase this score and mark it for your ringers, but do NOT rehearse it. This piece will be learned during Camp.

Camp schedule:

Friday: Arrive by 1:00PM

Sunday: 11:00AM free closing concert open to the public.

More information — including information packet, registration form, and a full schedule of activities — can be found at area7.handbellmusicians.org/events/young-ringers-camp-2025

For more information:

Contact Jessica Haeder, Youth Events Planner, for fundraising ideas or with questions:

YouthEvents.area7@handbellmusicians.org

CALL FOR 2026 FESTIVAL CLASS TOPICS AND FACULTY

CALL FOR FACULTY for the
Area 7 2026 Festival Conference

Rivers Edge Convention Center

St. Cloud, Minnesota

June 26-28, 2026

THEME: **DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE**

Classes are taught on June 26-27 (Fri & Sat)

Area 7 is seeking faculty for 60-minute class periods during its 2026 Festival.

- Do you have a class topic that you'd like to teach?
- Do you have a suggestion for a class topic but would rather not teach it?
- Typical class topics include ringing techniques, mallet techniques, conducting techniques, equipment maintenance, healthy ringing, sight reading/ringing sessions, craft-y class, etc.
- New/unique topics are always encouraged.

Faculty are paid per class period taught.

Reply to Alanna Teragawa by June 1st at
events.area7@handbellmusicians.org 🎵

WIN A FREE FESTIVAL REGISTRATION!

**Design a logo for the 2026 Festival in St. Cloud, Minnesota
June 26-28, 2026**

THEME: DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE

Entries must be received by July 15, 2025

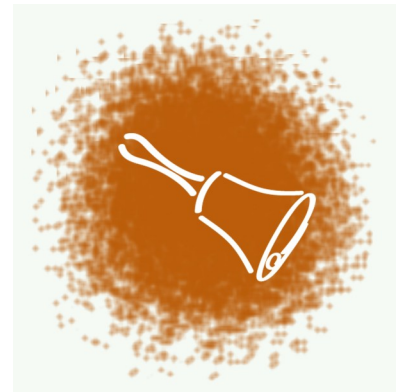
Send to Jennifer Cadwell, PastChair.area7@handbellmusicians.org



COPPER RING

Jennifer Cadwell, Conductor

April 26, 2025—Saturday
8:45AM to 3:00PM
American Lutheran Church
915 Winifred Street
Worthington, Minnesota



I am registering (☐ my choir) or (☐ as an individual ringer). Check one.

Your Name: _____

Name of Organization: _____ City _____ State _____

Name of Choir Director _____ Phone _____

Street _____ City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Email address: _____

♪ We will be bringing the following:

☐ 3-oct Bells or ☐ 4-oct Bells or ☐ 5-oct Bells and
☐ 3-oct Chimes or ☐ 4-oct Chimes or ☐ 5-oct Chimes

☐ We will be bringing ☐ linear feet of table, with corresponding foam and covers, mallets, gloves, & music.

☐ We have table space and equipment for additional ringers and would welcome them ☐ Yes ☐ No

First names of Ringers in their positions.

Write "open" in the positions where others may join you.

INDIVIDUALS: If you would like to ring in an available choir, write 1, 2 or 3 in the positions of your choice. The Registrar will contact you.

B6/7 C7/8 _____ G6/7 A6/7 _____ E6/7 F6/7 _____ C6 D6/7 _____

A5 B5 _____ F5 G5 _____ D5 E5 _____ B4 C5 _____

G4 A4 _____ E4 F4 _____ C4 D4 _____ Bass 1 _____

Bass 2 _____ Comments: _____

Mail this Registration form and check by March 31st to:

Alanna Teragawa, Registrar
5100 W 82nd St, #135, Bloomington, MN 55437
Events.Area7@HandbellMusicians.org
Keep a copy of this form for your records.
Checks payable to Area 7 HMA.

Registering _____ @ \$20.00 each = \$ _____
which includes one piece of music

Submit check and this form by March 31, 2025.

Summer Handbell Camp

Workshop for Musicians Who Love to Ring!

Monday, July 28 to Thursday, July 31, 2025

St. John's Lutheran Church

20275 Davidson Road, Brookfield, WI 53045

Summer Handbell Camp is a 4-day workshop focused on handbell technique and musicianship. Daily rehearsals and individual practice emphasize hands-on learning and group performance. Selections will range in difficulty from Level 2+ to Level 4+ of both sacred and secular music for use throughout the year. **Clinician Sandra Eithun** will direct the mass choirs in a fast-paced group setting to make this workshop enjoyable for musicians interested in improving their handbell performance.

There will be a concert on Thursday, July 31 at 7:00 pm featuring the handbell selections from the workshop. All are welcome!

Space is Limited *** **Workshop Fee: \$300.00** per person includes:

- 10-12 pieces of handbell music
- Morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack each day
- Dinner Thursday prior to the concert

Deadline to register is June 23, 2025. No refunds given after this date.

For additional information, please contact Carolyn or Heidi. We look forward to welcoming you to Summer Handbell Camp 2025!

Carolyn Masterson

262.366.4357

cmasterson2012@gmail.com

Heidi Bischmann

414.305.7812

hbischmann@gmail.com



Additional information will be available with the confirmation of your registration and email updates closer to the workshop date.

TAKE
ADVANTAGE
OF THE EARLY BIRD
DISCOUNT

\$275.00 per person
with non-refundable
deposit of \$75.00
by May 15, 2025.



Workshop Clinician Sandra Eithun

SANDRA EITHUN, M.M.Ed – is a graduate of Silver Lake College in Manitowoc, WI, with an emphasis in the Kodály teaching method, keyboard, and flute. She is currently on the faculty at Holy Family Conservatory of Music in Manitowoc, WI, leading the handbell program there. She served as Director of Music Ministry, handbell director, children's choir director, organist and choral accompanist at First Congregational United Church of Christ in New London, WI, from 1992-2021. She directed the Silver Lake College Handbell Ensemble from 2009-2020, is an active member of the Handbell Musicians of America and has served on their Area VII Board of Directors. She has been commissioned to write music for many events and for numerous individual handbell ensembles. Most recently, she received the honor of being given the esteemed Donald E. Allured Original Composition Award for the 2020 Week of Handbells in Bay View, MI.

She has over 650 pieces for handbells in publication as well as several sacred keyboard books and teaching collections for the incorporation of handbells in the music classroom. In 2013, Sandra had the honor of working alongside Doc Severinsen and the Fox Valley Symphony to include handbells in his holiday show, Jingle Bell Doc, at the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center in Appleton, WI. Sandra's compositions have been recently featured on the PBS Christmas special, Holiday Handbells, as well as concerts by noted groups across the country including The Raliegth Ringers and The Bells on Temple Square in Salt Lake City. She continues to work as a handbell clinician and conductor at numerous festivals and workshops throughout the United States. She is married to Scott, has four grown children and currently resides in Appleton, WI.

Summer Handbell Camp 2025 Registration Form

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Email _____
Church/School _____ City _____ State _____

Workshop Fee: Monday, July 28 – Thursday, July 31, 2025

\$300.00 per person (Includes music, snacks, lunches and dinner Thursday prior to the concert)

EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT: \$275.00 per person with non-refundable deposit of \$75.00 by May 15, 2025.

Full payment in advance of the workshop is required. Send complete registration form with a check payable to **Gardensong Arts** to: **Summer Handbell Camp**
c/o Heidi Bischmann
205 Woodlands Court, Hartland, WI 53029

Handbell Assignment Request

Ringing positions will be assigned in advance of the workshop. Please indicate your 1st, 2nd AND 3rd choice positions (select ONLY 3 by indicating 1, 2 AND 3 below).

Low Bass	C4-D4	E4-F4	G4-A4	B4-C5	D5-E5	F5-G5	A5-B5	C6-D6 D7	E6-F6 E7-F7	G6-A6 G7-A7	B6-C7 B7-C8

Every attempt will be made to honor your request above. In the event that is not possible, please check below all positions you are willing and able to ring for the entire week (select ALL that apply).

Low Bass	C4-D4	E4-F4	G4-A4	B4-C5	D5-E5	F5-G5	A5-B5	C6-D6 D7	E6-F6 E7-F7	G6-A6 G7-A7	B6-C7 B7-C8

Equipment

Please indicate equipment you are willing to bring if it is needed:

- ☐ Handbells (_____ Octaves)
☐ Handchimes (_____ Octaves)
☐ Mallets (_____ Octaves)
☐ Foam Padding and Table Covers (_____ Feet)

All equipment needs will be confirmed in advance. Thank you for your help.

Registration Confirmation

Upon receipt of registration and full payment by mail, you will receive an email confirmation and receipt.

Deadline to register is June 23, 2025. No refunds given after this date.

Date Rec'd _____ Check # _____ Email Confirmation _____ Deposit Date _____
--

EAU CLAIRE RING

HANDBELL FESTIVAL

Greetings to all Handbell Musicians of the Eau Claire Area and beyond!

Saturday, April 26 is the date of the 2025 Eau Claire Ring! This year it will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church, 1314 E. Lexington Blvd., Eau Claire, WI. This is always a great time to renew past friendships and create new ones. All are welcome — full choirs or just a few ringers. This event is endorsed by HANDBELL MUSICIANS OF AMERICA which provides copyright coverage. As usual, to reimburse some of the costs incurred by the host choir, we will accept donations of \$1.00 per person — collected at the event — in lieu of a registration fee.

The three massed pieces that all ringers will prepare ahead of time are:

- Built on the Rock, by Kevin McChesney. Handbell World order #MAG35388
- Steal Away, by Sandra Eithun. Handbell World order #MCGB775
- Let All Things Now Living, by Cathy Moglebust. Handbell World order #MCGB170

(Note: the McChesney piece was performed at the 2024 Area 7 Festival.
The other two you may already have in your library from past years).

Schedule for the day:

8:30a.m.: Check in & set up bells (tables will be provided, but not pads or covers)

9:00-11:45: Massed rehearsal, with a break

Lunch on your own & warm-up time for solo numbers – schedule TBD that day

1:15: Massed warm-up

2:00: Concert

You are also invited to share a solo with us for the concert; full choir and/or smaller ensembles are all very welcome. Please advise of group name, and name/copyright info for your piece on the registration form.

Please let me know if you will attend and I will send the choir registration form. Please reach out if you have any questions. Hope to see you soon!

God's Peace,
Karen Lionberger and Norma Lionberger, Coordinators
bellhog76@gmail.com

Area Events Calendar

April 26, 2025

COPPER RING

An Area 7 Event

American Lutheran Church, Worthington, MN

area7.handbellmusicians.org/events

June 20-22, 2025

YOUNG RINGERS CAMP

An Area 7 Event

Camp Omega – Waterville, Minnesota

area7.handbellmusicians.org/events/young-ringers-camp-2025

July 6-12, 2025 (for grades 5-Adult) or

July 26-29, 2025 (for 21+)

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC CAMP

International Peace Garden, Dunseith, ND

Internationalmusiccamp.com/programs-and-sessions/music/handbells

July 9-12, 2025

PINNACLE

A National Event

Wichita, KS

handbellmusicians.org/event/pinnacle-2025

October 31-November 1, 2025

ANTHORNIS

An Area 7 Event

June (25) 26-28, 2026

AREA 7 FESTIVAL

Rivers Edge Convention Center

St. Cloud, Minnesota

For additional information, go to
area7.handbellmusicians.org/events

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chair.area7@handbellmusicians.org

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