



Area 8 2024 Festival Classes

Friday Morning	Saturday Morning
Session B 9:15am - 10:15am (Gold)	Session J 9:15am - 10:15am (Gold)
History of Handbells	Handbells from the Inside Out
Stopped Sounds: Advanced	You've Just Heard the "M" word. Now What? - Memorization
Handbells With Other Instruments	Repeatable Changes
Ringing 101	Score Marking
Grant-Writing Basics for Non-Profit Handbell Choirs	Resources for Handbells in Worship
Reading Session: 8- and 12-bell music	Overview of Music Theory
Reading Session: Advent/Christmas, L 3-6	Reading Session: Original Compositions, L 3-6
Session C 10:30am - 11:30am (Blue)	Session K 10:30am - 11:30am (Blue)
History of Handbells	Handbells from the Inside Out
Bell Tree: Beginning	You've Just Heard the "M" word. Now What? - Memorization
Handbells With Other Instruments	Catch Up With That Metronome!
Ringing 101	Score Marking
Grant-Writing Basics for Non-Profit Handbell Choirs	Resources for Handbells in Worship
Reading Session: Advent/Christmas, L 1-2	Overview of Music Theory
	Reading Session: Original Compositions, L 1-2

Friday Afternoon	Saturday Afternoon
Session E 1:15pm - 2:15pm (Gold)	Session M 1:30pm - 2:30pm (Gold)
Weaving	Stem Direction Does Count!
Small Ensemble Techniques: Advanced	Processionals and Ostinatos
Handbells in Pop Culture	Techniques for Ringers and Directors
Tackling Tricky Terrain: Rhythms	Bass Bells: Advanced
Practicing Handbells at Home	Take a Break! Gentle Yoga & Sound Healing
Reading Session: Lent/Easter, L 3-6	Panel: National Events - How to Get Involved
Reading Session: 2-3 Octaves	Reading Session: Area 8 Composers: L 3-6
Session F 2:30pm - 3:30pm (Blue)	Session N 2:45pm - 3:45pm (Blue)
Weaving	Stem Direction Does Count!
Bass Bells: Beginning	Processionals and Ostinatos
Handbells in Pop Culture	Techniques for Ringers and Directors
Tackling Tricky Terrain (Rhythms)	Take a Break! Gentle Yoga & Sound Healing
Practicing Handbells at Home	Navigating New Music
Stopped Sounds: Beginning	Reading Session: Area 8 Composers: L 1-3
Reading Session: Lent/Easter, L1-2	

Classes listed in alphabetical order with class title, teacher, and description.

Bass Bells: Beginning

Russell Joy

Get to know the B3 and its buddies. There is a lot to consider before picking up these beasts at the bottom. Body basics, setup, techniques, teamwork, and taking care of equipment will be covered. Bass bell ringers need to be able to prepare and play in ways that serve the music but are safe.

Bass Bells: Advanced

Noah Hartsfield

This class will focus on ringing the low bass table of a traditional 5-octave ensemble (C3-C4). The class will explore how to ring quickly and effectively, techniques to aid in ringing, and ways to handle common challenges and difficulties of the low bass table. The class will focus on being hands-on and participants will have an opportunity to tackle difficult passages found in current music.

Bell Trees: Beginning

Pat Latshaw

If you are interested in adding bell trees to your handbell arsenal, this class will discuss how bell trees can be integrated into your performances, the basic equipment needed, and the introductory skills to start making music with handbell trees.

Bells With Other Instruments

Nancy Youngman

The students will be given a list of available music with other instruments, and these will be discussed. A variety of percussion pieces will also be included, and the student will be shown how to use these with their handbell choirs.

Catch up with that Metronome!

Sharon Schmidt

Do fast passages with lots of black on the page challenge you? Learn some tips and tricks for improving your skills to play rapid or rhythmic passages. As a bonus, you'll be improving your sight-reading skills.

Grant Writing Basics for Non-Profit Handbell Choirs

Steve Jackson

This session will address the availability of potential grant funds for bell choirs, both on the local and national level. Additionally, local and national foundations have funds available to arts organizations. Accessing these opportunities can enhance budgets and fund projects for your bell choir. If no grant writer is available, we will discuss avenues to identify free or low-cost grant writers.

Handbells from the Inside Out

Nancy Blackwell

This class will use handouts and hands on work with bells to discover how the musician's body is an integral part of playing the instrument of handbells. We will explore breathing and movement techniques to unleash your ensemble's musicianship and visual performance.

Handbells in Pop Culture

Marshall Allen

In recent years handbells have been popping up in a variety of new places. Take a break from ringing and relax in this class while enjoying a compilation of video clips from YouTube and other sources.

History of Handbells

Laura Austin

The class will explore the origins of handbell ringing in the United States. The discussion will start with the bell bands and troupes that traveled throughout the country in the 19th century, playing for audiences, but not necessarily encouraging participation. It will continue with Margaret Shurcliff, the founder of the New England Guild of English Handbell Ringers, and how her enthusiasm for ringing started a movement across the country. We will also look at other aspects of handbell history, like music notation and publication, and handbell manufacturing.

Navigating New Music

Amy Knudsen

Various processes for sight-reading music will be discussed as well as the pros and cons of each option.

Overview of Music Theory

Ron Mallory

Ever wonder why some pieces have lots of sharps and flats, while others have none? Curious about why a composer chooses to write certain notes, and not others? This class will give a broad overview of scales, chords, key signatures, melody, harmony, rhythm, and more, as we take a look “under the hood” of some well-known handbell pieces to see how and why they work. We will also talk about why understanding these concepts is vital in your ensemble’s journey to better musicianship.

Panel: National Events - How to Get Involved

Tracy Peterson, Lori Fenton and more

This session will include a panel of handbell musicians who have been involved in many national ringing events. The full realm of national events will be explained and discussed as well as how you can get involved. The panel will also share their personal experience ringing in national events. The session will also include a Q & A segment.

Practicing Handbells at Home

Ron Mallory

You just finished rehearsing with your handbell group . . . and it will be another full week before you can touch the instrument again, so there is no way to practice on your own. It does not have to be this way! There are many ways handbell musicians can practice at home, even if you do not have your own personal set of bells. This class will be taught from the perspective of both the ringer (tools you can use to practice at home) and the director (resources you can give your ringers to practice from home).

Processionals and Ostinatos

Nancy Youngman

Using examples from published sources, the class will practice a variety of processionals and ostinatos, as well as work on their own creation using a variety of ideas. This will be especially helpful with choirs who are working with fewer members or inexperienced ringers.

Repeatable Changes

Sharon Schmidt

How do you play that tricky passage the same way every time? Once you have the basic skills (weaving, table damping, changes to chimes or mallets), the next step is to figure out when to do what, and how to mark your score so that you can repeat the change. In this hand-on class, we will solve multiple problems and explore marking techniques. Bring your mallets.

Resources for Handbells in Worship

Beth Ann Edwards

HMA is working on resources for handbells in worship that can be available on the HMA website. This round-table discussion will review resources that are now available and resources that would be helpful and useful if they were available to handbell directors. Participants can ring and work through resources such as descants, singing bells, processions, etc.

Ringling 101

Sharon Schmidt

New to handbells? This session will get you started with the basic skills of ringing and damping with proper, healthy technique. It is also a great refresher, or a time for directors to learn how to teach new ringers.

Score Marking

Lori Fenton

The use of effective and consistent score markings enables handbell ringers to be better prepared from “bells up” to the final cut off. This class will discuss the importance of standard notation for marking bell music as well as offering a review of the standard (and maybe not so standard) notations used.

Small Ensemble Techniques - Advanced

Pat Latshaw

The standard techniques used with ringing as part of the handbell choir will be expanded upon in this class. Topics covered would include table layout, score notation, sharing bells, bell displacement and recovery, traveling 4-in-hand, and learning to dance together. The class will focus on teams of two practicing these techniques, but the skills learned can be applied to small ensembles of any size.

Stem Direction Does Count!

Sharon Schmidt

How do you figure out who does what in handbell music? How would you study a piece of music away from the table? We will walk through several pieces of music to explore the mysteries of stem direction. On the way, we will review all the information presented in the music, including the bells used chart, brackets and parentheses, plus tricks for finding the melody.

Stopped Sounds: Beginning

Nancy Youngman

Each student will be given a packet of excerpts from music showing a variety of stopped sounds. From instructor explanations and demonstrations, the student will be able to work on perfecting each technique. A fun final exercise will let the students use their skills.

Stopped Sounds: Advanced

Pat Latshaw

Prerequisite: Knowledge of basic stopped sound techniques. Briefly review the stopped sound techniques and then put them into practice using examples from published music. Stopped sounds are often used in combination with each other. Learn the art of playing multiple techniques in a piece with emphasis on the preparation needed to play musically.

Tackling Tricky Terrain: Rhythm

Jill Endaya

With greater understanding of familiar rhythm components, you will encounter fewer rhythms that trick you. This class will include tips for breaking down difficult passages and allow time for hands-on practice.

Take a Break! Gentle Yoga & Sound Healing

Tricia Fuelling/Janelle Flory Schrock

As the Schuyler sisters told Hamilton, “take a break!” In this class we will spend some time stretching all those well used bell ringing muscles through gentle yoga for every level. Take some time to slow down, stretch, and refocus. Exercises will be enhanced by a healing “sound bath” using handbells and other instruments. Everyone is welcome! No need for a yoga mat – just bring yourself!

Techniques for Ringers and Directors

Ron Mallory

Good technique provides a foundation for good musicianship. This class will explore a “grab-bag” of techniques that are important for both ringers and conductors, including: challenges unique to bass, treble, and battery bells as well as conducting patterns and hand independence, reading ahead, communicating as an ensemble, movement and eye contact, and more. Along the way ringers and conductors will better understand the other’s role in making great music. Aimed at beginning to intermediate ringers and conductors, but with helpful material for more advanced musicians as well.

Weaving

Lisa Mills

Does playing three notes in a row kind of stress you out? How about four? And what about those accidentals? This class will give you confidence about playing those types of passages in your music. Weaving is a skill needed by all ringers so let's learn the proper technique to make your ringing look graceful.

You've Just Heard the "M" Word. Now What? - Memorization

Tracy Peterson

Wait, what? You want me to memorize? This session will explore the use of memorization for the handbell musician. We will discuss strategies and tools for memorization and experience the process of memorizing to be able to ring a few short excerpts by the end of the session.