

Handbell Music Reviews
Winter 2010
Handbells etc.
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Laudare

Wissinger
23 octaves
Level 1

Laudare means Praise in Latin. This original handbell composition in ABA format is full of excitement and energy. Although it is rated at a Level 1+, it really sounds much harder. It has lots of full chords, some marts on unexpected beats which add to the rhythmic nature of the music. There is ample opportunity to do dynamics and phrasing. There are some exercise included to help beginning ringers with marting and syncopation.

Two French Folk Songs

Wissinger
23 octaves
Level 2

What better music for Canadian school bell choirs but two French Folk Songs! These traditional folk tunes include Au Claire de la Lune and Sur le Pont d'Avignon. This music has a great practice sheet with unison exercises so that all ringers can practice the techniques at the same time. Techniques used include shake, echoes, mallets or plucks, martellatos, mart lifts, and thumb damps! All of these can be included in the music or, if you need something a little simple for your students, leave the techniques out initially and add them in later. Parents will love this arrangement.

The Lord Is My Shepherd

Moklebust
3456 octaves with optional violin
Level 2+

This is an original composition written to the words of Psalm 23. Its descriptive style and interludes, really make you think of the words, even though none are spoken or sung. They are included in hopes that the ringers will reflect on them as they can express the words through the music. Although the violin part is optional, it really is a wonderful addition and adds depth to the music.

Triumphant Celebration

McKlveen
345 octaves with opt. Choirchimes®
Level 3

Triumphant Celebration is the perfect name for this original piece of handbell music. It starts out with an optional processional (even gives suggestions as to bell assignments for this). The chords are full, the rhythm crisp and the melody easy to follow. This arrangement includes loads of techniques and dynamics and would be appropriate for church or community choirs. Great addition to any repertoire.

Shepherd Me, O God

Arr. Roberts
3456 octaves with opt. Choirchimes®
Level 3

Based on Psalm 23, this arrangement can stand alone with bells or can be enhanced with choir. Separate compatible choir scores are available. There are five verses, each with a varied accompaniment. The music flows well and is almost could be rated as Level 2 instead of Level 3.

A Call to Celebration

Angerman
345 octaves
Level 3

I actually fell in love this piece when I first heard it. It is full on energy and excitement, and yes – celebration! It is written in 4/4 but has various parts that are really 8/8 which adds to the energy and excitement. It gives the audience the sense that you are speeding up but you aren't. Rather clever. There some very tricky bell changes so best that the director plan a little ahead before showing this to the ringers!

Jerusalem, My Happy Home

Arr. Moglebust
345 octaves
Level 3

This arrangement of this old hymn tune (Land of Rest) brings new life. The time signature alternates between 6/8 and 3/4 in the dancelike sections. The singing bell technique is used to accompany the beautiful melody played by the Choirchimes®. If you are looking for an arrangement of a hymn tune that is a little different, this is what you need.

The Syncopated Clock

Arr. Thompson
345 octaves and percussion and optional Choirchimes® and C Instrument
Level 3

Yes, this is an arrangement of Leroy Anderson's Syncopated Clock which will give audiences and ringers lot of fun. The optional Choirchime® part is written separately on the score so it is something that is a little different than your ringers are used to. There is a separate part for the percussion and C instrument parts have a separate score. This part is not really needed to make the piece work.

Will You Come and Follow Me (The Summons)

Arr. Nelson

345 octaves and optional and C Instrument

Level 3

This traditional Scottish tune has wonderful lyrics about how we need to follow a calling from God. The music has a wonderful lilt that congregations and ringers will love. The music flows well and has no time signature changes and only one key change. The addition of C instrument to this Scottish tune is definitely something to consider.

The Passion Prophecy

Moklebust

35 octaves and optional Choirchimes®

Level 3+

What a wonderful piece of music – filled with passion and drama. This music is based on Isaiah 53:4-5 “Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” This descriptive original handbell composition should bring tears to the congregation as they meditate on the words and listen to the music. The music has 16th notes but the tempo is adagio and the haunting melody makes the 16th notes seem easier. I think I might have my choir learn this for the Lent.