

BEGINNING DIRECTORS SEMINAR/CONDUCTING WORKSHOP

September 14, 2012

To beginning handbell directors and potential handbell directors:

On Saturday, April 13, 2013, the Western PA Handbell Festival will be held at Robert Morris University in Moon Township. This one-day festival is designed for handbell choirs that play level 1 and 2 music; selections that are on the easier side of the difficulty scale. You are invited and encouraged to participate in two learning experiences for beginning handbell/handchime directors and those who are considering assuming this position.

In the morning we will spend the first 30 minutes of the seminar, from 9- 9:30 AM, observing the festival conductor, then spend the next 2.5 hours having a roundtable discussion while the festival rehearsal is taking place.

In the afternoon, during the third scheduled mass rehearsal we will adjourn to the campus chapel for a workshop on Conducting techniques. We hope all of you can stay for the entire day to observe rehearsals and participate in the afternoon classes. The festival concert is at 5:30 pm.

Topics to be covered in the morning seminar include:

- Equipment: What do I need and how do I take care of it?
- Ringers: How many ringers do I need?
What skills do new ringers need?
- Music: How do I know what music I should buy?
How do I "prepare" the music I have selected?
- Rehearsal: How do I prepare myself for the first rehearsal?
How do I teach my ringers the music?
How do I run an effective rehearsal?
- Techniques: What exactly are handbell/handchime techniques?
How can I learn them? How do I teach them?
- Conducting: How do I communicate with my ringers?
- Education: Where can I learn more?
Are there books that can help me?

Topics to be covered in the afternoon workshop may include conducting do's and don'ts, basic conducting patterns, tips for teaching rhythms, emphasizing musicality in your rehearsals and all your questions answered.

The morning seminar clinician will be Nancy Lutz. She is the Artistic Director of the Three Rivers Ringers, Pittsburgh's premier handbell ensemble. Nancy is also director of handbells at Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church in Pittsburgh where she has two adult ensembles. Nancy is active in both the Area 2 and National Handbell Musicians of America.

The afternoon Conducting Workshop will be led by Elisabeth Heath Charles. She is a member of the Three Rivers Ringers and also rings with The Chapel Bells at Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church. From 2001–2005 she rang with the Ladies Handbell Team and also served as the Conductor of Ringers II Handbell Team for the Southminster Presbyterian Church of Mt. Lebanon. Mrs. Charles is the Director of Bands at Robert Morris University and was previously the Conductor and Music Director of the Butler County Symphony Orchestra.

If you are in need of help and suggestions or even if you just want some new ideas, please consider registering for the Beginning Director's Seminar/Conducting Workshop. The cost for both sessions is \$25. You may register by email or by writing to Cynthia Donahoe, event registrar. Checks should be made to Western PA Directors' Group.

Western PA Handbell Festival
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