

LAMB Spring Ring 2008

Hello Directors:

As you approach the final rehearsals for the Spring Ring, may the following information be helpful. Although I've offered a few extra words of guidance, you should mostly refer to the notes written by each composer – each have offered certain tempo and dynamic markings – my goal is to honor these requests by performing to the best of our ability.

I believe in teaching from the podium and will offer many additional suggestions that should help create overall success and confidence in ringing. It's difficult to put all of my tricks of the trade down on paper, so come enjoy an informative day of ringing.

I believe that each director offers a bit of individual liberty when directing the music. Therefore, I will not give detailed, measure for measure suggestions, thus allowing the music to take shape by your own direction. However, we will all work toward the common metric and dynamic markings to enable individual ensembles to blend into one large cohesive massed ring. Please double check each piece, preparing as possible for readiness in performance. If you and your ringers do all the advanced preparation, the overall musicality will come alive on the 15th!

Please also know that the process of learning this music is what develops a fine performance. Oftentimes the goal is all about the performance without realizing the importance of the learning "process" along the way. I'm passionate about this side of a festival experience and want all ringers to feel self-confident and like an integral part of the experience as they ring in concert.

As standard practice, please read all footnotes and apply all composers' suggestions when appropriate.

All notes are to be rung as written – do not allow ringers to extend a note's value when the notation clearly marks a return to normal ringing.

Eye contact is **essential** with each *ritard* and *a tempo*.

...And don't forget those pencils for marking their music and clips for all the page turns!

I look forward to being with you. See you on March 15th. Happy Ringing! Susan

*** * Rehearsal notes for your ringers * ***

Animato

It's essential that there is dynamic control throughout. Keep the strength in each beat to avoid the possible rushing of eighth and sixteenth notes. Observe normal ring – each note within rhythmic patterns must be properly damped.

M. 14: careful placement will avoid slam-dunking the marts.

M. 23: a slightly slower tempo. Tempo needs to move forward without dragging the beats.

M. 56-60: definitely a coordination challenge for Pos #4 (B4/C5); practice makes perfect!

M. 58: don't mart A3 eighth note, substitute a mallet instead.

Breathe

Please use handchimes as noted.

Allow the melody line to flow smoothly without over-accenting syncopation – especially when doubling the melody in upper bells throughout.

Avoid rushing sixteenth notes; if necessary clap to secure rhythm.

M. 58: important meter change – keep tempo steady without slowing down until the ritard at m. 68.

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen

Keep descending eighth notes even without slowing down.

Mallet use throughout – must be clean, even, and together. Alternating between two mallets will help.

Correctly observe echo; avoid stopping the sound on each beat.

Do check bass bell assignments. Alternating notes in thirds between bass positions may help ringers master quarter note runs.

My Song Is Love Unknown

Based on a Welsh folk tune, *Rhosymedre*, this lovely arrangement creates a suitable selection for Lent or any time of contemplation. The introduction sets the mood. The melody begins with the pickup to m. 17 – carefully observe the *a tempo*.

Be sensitive to all LVs throughout. Keep your bell in motion until the R sign or a new LV. Work toward synchronized ensemble ringing.

Five octave choirs: m. 9 – double top notes and continue through m. 24. Also, double at m. 28-32.

Avoid accenting the upper notes – get under each entrance with a preparatory breath.

Observe fermatas in m. 27 and m. 78.

If possible, please ring handchimes from m. 40 to 46 plus the first chord in the treble in m. 47. Begin using the bells directly on the downbeat of m. 47, starting from the bass arpeggio.

The arranger has appropriately added the words to a Lenten text, so your performance leading into m. 48 should reflect this climatic section. Watch for the musical nuances from m. 50-58. Each chord in m. 54 will be stressed ending with a solid fermata. Observe the complete cutoff at m. 55.

We're back to the original theme at m. 59. The final verse enters with the pickup to m. 68 (C6). Again watch the tempo change at m. 78. The entrance into m. 79 will be tricky – a prep breath and eye contact will be important.

Starting at m. 83, complete the remaining measures the same way you began – softly, musically, and with feeling.

Tuya es la Gloria

Please use handchimes as noted.

Doubling in upper bells: don't overpower entrances; think light and gentle. Don't attack inner voices – phrase bass lines throughout.

M. 11-18: avoid splatter chords with aid of a preparatory breath.

Note stems clearly separate LVs (eighth-note arpeggios) verses normal ring (melody) throughout.

We'll be observing performance option #4 – guitar and flute will be added.

We Three Kings

To perform this classic arrangement effectively, mallet using alternating hands for repeated notes.

All eighth note patterns must be damped throughout (including triplets).

Offering a bit more energy on beat 1 of each measure will help secure tempo and placement of notes.

M. 58-72: keep moving eighth notes constant and even.

M. 70 into m. 73: practice coordination between normal ring and mallet use.

Carol of the Bells

Tempo will be quarter note = ca.140; 160 if everyone is prepared and able during the festival.

There are tricky sections throughout! Remember: the ringing stroke must be adjusted (smaller circles) as the tempo is increased.

M. 1-4: A gradual crescendo can be achieved by shaking the bell low to the table (using only one side of casting), followed with increased intensity as the bell is moved upward toward the body in a circular motion (clapper now strikes both sides of the casting). A unified prep breath is necessary on m. 5 to help solidify the entrance of the C Major chord.

M. 29: Back to normal ringing and damping. For added accuracy please have ringers add the symbol "R" on beat 1 of m. 29.

M. 44-46: Careful placement of the mart-lift. Create a "springboard" effect, however with the movement of the bell returning to the table for a repeat of each note within the next two measures and also m. 48-50.

M. 78: Enter the doubling of upper bells without the volume overpowering the rest of the ensemble.

M. 87: RT – think "ah-choo" with everyone taking a quick, short prep breath before the RT. Do not RT the F3 – instead, use a mallet and immediately damp the casting with the opposite hand.

M. 88: Mark exactly who will turn and when the page will be turned. Notice that m. 73 and m. 89 are identical.

M. 97 to the end: Carefully observe all accents. Energize the marts m. 102-103 – a preparatory breath immediately before the mart in m. 103 will secure a solid final chord.

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

This arrangement masterfully interweaves a haunting melody with the Passion Chorale, *O Sacred Head Now Wounded*, carrying the weight of the somber mood of this music. It's important to ring sensitively with lots of control – proper phrasing is essential, especially within the crescendo and decrescendo passages.

Avoid accenting the doubled melody's entrance at m. 5. Prepare the placement of the first ring. Carefully ring the triplets in m. 31 – don't attack the notes.

Build the crescendo starting at m. 34 into m. 36. The top 5th octave bells need strength and power from m. 36 through m. 44.

Carefully rehearse page 6, m. 55 through the end. We'll take a big ritard at m. 58 and hold the fermata at m. 59. No cutoff at m. 60. Eye contact will be essential for m. 60-62 – emphasize each beat until the end with a subdivision conducted at m. 61, beats 3 & 4.