

Rehearsal Notes from Lee Afdahl

General considerations:

As always, please observe tempo indication range as suggested by the composer/arranger, the dynamic contrasts, footnotes from the composer/arranger or publisher, especially for doublings, attention to “musical line” or phrasing, the ringing and “stopped bell” techniques indicated, and always be “melody conscious” (emphasizing the melody).

For “shakes”, circle and elevate handbells as they are shaken. Keep the hand grip loose. Prepare accidentals by writing cues to your self and/or for the ringers so the ringers have time to change bells. LV: most ringers use long circular motions, but please do not stress back, arms, or shoulders. The larger the bell, the smaller the circle to prevent injury. All bells can be rung with style, which enhances the musicality of the LV measures and longer duration notes.

Prepare stopped techniques by having the bell preceding a stopped technique close to the pad or shoulder so the handbell is in the closest vicinity to where the stopped technique is needed. In rehearsal, drill separately the key changes, page turns, rallentando or ritardando, and the return to “a tempo”. Ringers and directors, MEMORIZE notes at page turns, the first and last couple of measures of the piece. All of this facilitates starting and stopping together. “Be positive and flexible” as you know massed ringing of any magnitude requires a compromise of tempo and interpretation, and a working together in order to present a musical presentation and have some fun along the way.

Rehearsal Notes for the LAMB Spring Ring, March 13, 2010

MASSED

Blessed Assurance, arr. Dobrinski

Feel the eighth notes of the familiar “Jesu, Joy...” as 2-3-1; 2-3-1 rather than the usual triplet pattern of 1-2-3, 1-2-3. “1” is still the strongest of the three in emphasis, but 2 and 3 leading to 1 is more musical. Similarly with the bass clef pattern of dotted half notes and dotted quarter notes, treat them as the second and third major pulses of the measure leading to “one” of the next measure. A little stretch or lengthening of the phrase would be preferred at these measures: the third major beat of 19, 20, 43, and 55.

Christmas Meditation, arr. Helman

Please be certain to balance dynamics so the HC melody is not covered by the accompanying HB notes. Think ahead to provide a smooth transition to accidentals and key changes. Any chance there is a ‘cellist who could double the HC melody in “Carol”?

God of Grace and God of Glory, arr. McChesney

Of the choices for treatment of the staccato, let’s choose malleting the bass clef notes and thumbdamping the treble clef notes. Note the marts in m. 17-18 are “p”, not “f” as often happens with martellato. If ringers circle the bell (as if ringing a whole note) while it is shaken in m. 34, the hand will be back to the body, then the table for a clean mart in m. 35.

Rejoice the Lord is King, arr. Sherman

We will observe the fermata in m. 9, but there is no complete damp of sound, just treat it as “R”, ring and damp as we ring beat four. Note the key changes, the tempo changes, the technique changes, the dynamic changes... all clearly marked.

GROUP I

Spirit in the Wind, Afdahl

108 = quarter, or faster! Three octave choirs should add a B4 to the first beat of measures 17 and 19 to initiate the eighth note pattern. Four and five octave choirs, please add an A3 dotted half note to bar 14. Please observe LV and all crescendo and diminuendo markings to create the effect of the “wind”, especially in bars 17-20, with a strong accent for A5. Note the rallentando in bar 49. Bars 53-60, 93-100, 101-109, all ask for the inclusion of windchimes or chimetree, rung gently and continuously during those measures. Some choirs use an orchestral “bell tree” which works equally well. Melody emphasis bar 61 and following is very important to the musical effect of the piece. Bar 100, turn back GENTLY to the first page for the “da capo”. Ringers of treble bells should memorize bars 1-4 in order to facilitate the D. C. ALL RINGERS, PLEASE MEMORIZE the CODA. (one less turn!) Some choirs use Pentecost scripture readings during the ringing of this piece. Feel free to experiment!

Ride On, King Jesus, arr. Stephenson

Please understand about the circular arrow symbol, gyro. One loop or rotation of the hand and handbell for each symbol. Please do not stress your hand. The notes to be mated should not all be treated with the same intensity. Remember strong and weak beats in 4/4 time. Similarly, treat the TD notes of page six with strong and weak beats. RT = quick strike and return to the shoulder. However, the C3 ringer may mallet that note at the end of the piece.

GROUP II

Margie's Silent Night, arr. Wiltse

The intention of the arranger is to play this on chimes only; if you do not have five octaves of chimes, please learn it anyway. We will combine HB and chimes. If you have HB only, then please mallet C3 while the bell is held in hand, m. 1-15. Please observe all markings that will enhance the musicality of the arrangement, especially where the tempo “bends”.

Soon and Very Soon, arr. Honore

M. 1-15 will be as written. Beginning in m. 16, bass clef eighth notes on beats 3 & 4 & will change the rhythm to a more blues, gospel rock rhythm of dotted eighth followed by a sixteenth, dotted eighth followed by a sixteenth... for the third and fourth beats of any measure with this rhythm through m. 94. The same applies to all eighths on beats 3 and 4 in m. 47, 87, and 94.