

Handbell Music Review

Spring 2007

**by Camille Ream
Handbells Etc.
Edmonton, Alberta**

Go, Tell It

arr. Waldrop

23 Octaves

Level 1

Optional Narration (Spoken Chant)

Go Tell It On the Mountain is a familiar Christmas Spiritual, You will need to divide your choir into two groups to make the narration work best. The melody in this one has been simplified so that it can be rung by a level 1 ringer. Included in this arrangement are TDs, Shakes, Echos and Swings.

Two Carols

arr. Edwards

23 Octaves

Level 1

Optional Percussion

Pat-a-Pan has an optional tambourine or hand drum part and Fum Fum Fum has an optional tambourine part. Each percussion part is written in the score. The scores are full so all ringers are busy. The addition of the percussion, makes the music sound more difficult than it is!. Nice enough arrangement that a Level 2 ensemble could learn it in one or two rehearsals.

Bethlehem Dreams

arr. Lamb

23 Octaves

Level 2

Optional Choirchimes®

This music is based on O Little Town of Bethlehem. The music is slow but each verse is in a different key which adds a little extra challenge. The first verse melody is rung on middle Choirchimes®, the second on treble bells and the third on a combination of chimes and bells. The music also has some mallets on suspended bells and the final chord end with a vibrato on both Choirchimes® and handbells.

The Little Drummer Boy

arr. Waldrop

234 Octaves

Level 2

Optional Percussion (triangle and hand drum)

We often get requests for this piece of music. The first 10 measures can be played as a processional. It can be repeated as many times as need to allow ringers time to get to their tables. It is quite a full arrangement but some of the ringers are not that busy (the first 10 measures, position 2 doesn't have any notes but that ringer could do some of the percussion part.) Just for little interest - there is one bar of 2/4 time just near the end!

A Bit of Tchaikowsky's Nutcracker

arr. Rogers

23 Octaves

Level 2

This is one of Alfred handbell series of pieces by classical composers. This collection contains music from the Nutcracker ballet - March, Chinese Dance and Russian Dance. This music will fit well with any Christmas concert. The challenge will be to ring it at the tempo that the audience is used to hearing it. The metronome markings for these pieces range from 112-144 so none of them are slow. Lots of repetition and fun for ringers and audience alike!

Once in Royal David's City

arr. Dobrinski

3456 Octaves

Level 2+

Optional Choirchimes® and Flute

This familiar tune is not written in traditional Dobrinski style with a million techniques and tempo changes BUT it does have a fantastic flute part. Dobrinski has a multitude of dynamics marked as well as a few 6/4 measures which make this a great arrangement of this piece. The dynamics will make this piece go from ordinary to extraordinary.

What Child Is This

arr. Kinyon

3 octaves

Level 3-

Optional Choirchimes®

Every handbell choirs needs an arrangement of What Child Is This. You may think - this is only three octaves...But it would work great if you are short a ringer or two. The bass has a lot of LV and sustained notes so you could ring with 3 in the bass instead of 4 quite easily.

Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow

arr. Dobrinski

3456 octaves

Level 3

Optional Choirchimes® and Clarinet

Now this arrangement is done in traditional Dobrinski style - full of techniques, mood changes but only a few key changes! You get to swing the last verse and end with a mart. I will be using this in my Christmas music this year. The clarinet part comes separately.

Wassail Song (Here We Come a-Caroling from Suite of Carols)

arr. Thompson

3456 Octaves

Level 3+

Starts out with quarter notes...a bit deceiving because the tempo is marked Allegro with the dotted half note marked between 60 - 72 beats per minute. By page three, the quarter notes have turned into eighth notes, the excitement builds from there and goes to a grand ending! Harder than it looks but great fun to play!

Coventry Carol

arr. Helman

345 Octaves

Level 3+

Optional Choirchimes®

This is one of my favourite Christmas pieces. I love the harmony and the soothing melody. Helman has woven an extra melody at various times in the piece which adds some great flavor to the music. His addition of chimes and echos really add to the piece.

Four-in-Hand Christmas Quartets

This set of music includes quartet arrangements of Silent Night, O Holy Night, The First Noel and What Child is This. Each part is written on a different staff in the full score section (but there are lots of page turns). In addition, each part is written on a different page - much like band music where the clarinet only has his part and the trumpet only has his part. All ringers must be able to ring four in hand. No tables are needed but each piece uses different bells so there needs to be time between pieces to rearrange your four in hand bells.
