

Foreword

Perspectives from a B4 – C5 Ringer...

For years I directed handbell choirs in local church settings. As a director, I became reasonably adept at covering for someone who was absent for a rehearsal or even an occasional performance. Those years of experience prepared me well for my role in more recent years as the standing sub for a group in our church directed by my wife (in reality, I probably talk too much and offer too many opinions for the ideal sub . . . but that's another discussion!). In recent months, though, my role as a sub changed when one ringer had to take a medical leave and I became the regular ringer at the B4 – C5 position. All of a sudden the ante is raised in terms of expectations from the director and the rest of group. Those little miscues which were excused because I was merely filling in temporarily were no longer acceptable! I was now part of the "starting team" and it was fully expected that I would pull my share of the load. I now have a greater appreciation for the familiar mantra "A chain is no stronger than its weakest link."

The Apostle Paul used the imagery of the Body of Christ and how each varied part of the body was essential for the community of faith to function effectively. Had there been handbells in the first century church, he could easily have used a handbell choir to communicate his message. Those of us involved in bells know how critical each member is. There is a strong partnership which develops among participants. We literally breathe and move together in carefully synchronized and choreographed musical presentations. When someone in our group is absent or hurting, we all feel it. When someone stumbles, we all are impacted. When it all comes together at one time, it is because we all contributed our fair share.

I believe in the distinctive ministry opportunity afforded us through handbells in the church setting. That is one of the reasons I continue to provide handbell material that I think is practical and beneficial to local churches like yours and mine. The hymn arrangements in this collection are particularly appropriate for the seasons of Lent, Holy Week, Easter and Eastertide. You will also find material suitable for other times of the year. I think you will find the arrangements accessible and rewarding for your ringers . . . especially those playing at the B4 – C5 stand!

— *Lloyd Larson*

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