

Performance Notes from Fred Gramann



Greetings, Area 1 handbell musicians!

Welcome! I'm excited that you have signed up for the Area 1 Festival Conference in 2025. It's going to be outstanding! I will have the privilege of working with those of you in the Coppers and Bronze divisions.

To give you a bit of a head start, I was asked to put together some performance notes which fall into several categories:

Take Note: these are the most important indications, signaling where something needs to be added or corrected in the music.

Be Aware: I've simply called attention to the various tempo changes which are so important to incorporate as you learn the music. If they aren't observed in your preparation, it's quite a challenge to retrain the ensemble once at the festival.

Then there are a variety of suggestions sharing how I might approach certain challenges. Please know that I have full confidence in your capabilities as directors and ringers, so take what is helpful and leave the rest.

As you delve into the repertoire you may have questions or need extra help with challenging sections. Please do not hesitate to send me a note and I'll do my best to assist you. Also let me know when you come up with solutions so they can be shared with others. Let's function as a team so together we can create fantastic ensembles! gramannfred@gmail.com

How to decode measure number indications:

m 1.3 = measure one, beat three

m 40.4& = measure 40, the "and" of beat four

Abbreviations used

m measure

mm measures

COPPERS REPERTOIRE

Psalm 139

Fred Gramann

This piece was written to celebrate the life of a dear handbell colleague. The choice of this Psalm was due to the message that, no matter what our circumstances may be, no matter where we may go, God is there to guide and comfort.

Take Note

- m 25.1 Add an **R**
- m 63.2 The C5 is part of the melody so doesn't observe the **LV**
- mm 95.3, 96.3, 99.3 Tie the C3 to the following measure (as in mm 79 & 80)

Be Aware

- mm 105-106 *rit.*

LVs

- mm 1-8, 74-78 These sections provide good opportunities to work on keeping the bells constantly moving rather than ringing and parking the bell near the shoulder.

An Idea

- P4 has a quick change from Bb to B-nat (mm 20-21, 90-91). The ringer can damp the 2nd Bb on the foam and ring the following B-nat close to the foam as needed. It might be useful to slowly practice each hand alone.

Come Christians Join to Sing

Shackley/Sherman

Parts are available for flute (or another C instrument), tambourine, hand drum and finger cymbals which add a lot to the piece. You will need to purchase the director's score which includes the separate instrumental scores ([10978125](#)).

This setting provides an opportunity to explore two contrasting styles of ringing:

- mm 5-54 & 70-114 use an energetic, percussive stroke, creating accent.
- mm 55-69 require a smoother stroke with a more gentle, legato strikepoint.

Be Aware

- mm 70-71 *poco rit.* and *a tempo*

Marts

- The use of marts among repeated 8th notes calls for:
 1. ringing close to the foam
 2. keeping the mart in the foam as long as possible (no, it won't be very long) so as to avoid too much of a mart lift.
- m 70: The mart lifts are to be sustained (except for D5), damping on the downbeat of m 71
- I'm going to make an editorial call and have everyone **mart** the final chord in m 114. (You can of course handle this as written for your own use of the piece as desired.)

Mallet clicks

- mm 1-4: Make sure to include the accents. Those who ring in m 5 can either omit the clicks, or drop out in m 4.
- mm 107-110: P2, P4, P9 & P11 can begin the clicks. P1, P5 & P8 can join in as soon as possible.
- m 110: P1, P5 & P8 will need to drop out

Take Note

- m 62.1 Add an **R**
- m 9.1 Treat the grace notes like 16th note triplets as shown here:



- If doubling the top notes in the sections with brackets, make sure to double the F#5, G5, A5, B5 & C6.

Added May 31, 2025

- m. 70: allow mart-lifts to LV for the full measure except for D5 with the selective damp symbol
- m. 71, beat 1: add an R
- m. 83, beat 1: add mf
- m. 83, beat 2: change D5 to E5
- m. 85, beat 1: add f
- m. 89, beat 2: change D3 and D5 to E3 and E5

Bass challenge

There are times when the D3, F3 and G3 mallet on the table then ring immediately. If that presents a problem, an option is to:

- Mallet the bell on the foam, then lift the bell slightly and mallet it again (instead of ringing it), then ring (or even mallet) the next note.



Love Will Keep Us Together **arr. Charles Peery**

arr. Charles Peery

This will most likely be the challenge piece for the Coppers. It asks a lot in regard to techniques, bell changes and rhythms.

All staccato notes in the treble clef are TDs. The use of different techniques for the up-stems and down-stems on the same clef can be challenging to decipher. It may be helpful for ringers to cross out the stopped technique indications which don't apply to them.

For example, the P6 ringer might do this:

The Rose Tree

4

5

6

* TD staccato notes throughout

The P7 ringer might do this:

The image shows a musical score for the song "The Rose Tree". It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system covers measures 7, 8, and 9. The second system covers measures 10, 11, and 12. The melody is written in the treble staff, and the accompaniment is in the bass staff. There are two red 'X' marks in the first system, one in measure 8 and one in measure 9, indicating errors in the original score. The second system also has two red 'X' marks, one in measure 10 and one in measure 11, indicating errors. The score is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 2/4 time signature. The melody is a simple, folk-like tune, and the accompaniment is a simple, rhythmic pattern.

Cautionary accidentals might be useful here:

- m 74 Note that the G5 & 6 do not mart (the cautionary natural on A4 is a typo)

C. Onstead

- mm 4-5 ***rit.*** / new tempo
- m 8 ***accel.***
- m 27 slower tempo (q=68)
- m 34 faster tempo (q=72)
- m 48.3 ***rit.***
- m 55 ***rit.***
- m 60.3 ***rit.***

It can be helpful to separate the 5/4 measures into a group of 3 beats and a group of 2 beats by a dotted bar line, making it easier to keep your place in these “long” measures for the eye:

Con moto ♩ = 72

9 *f* LV *mp* LV *cresc.* LV *R*

10

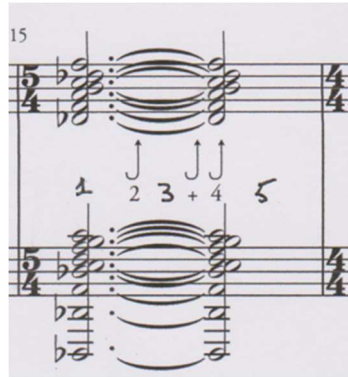
11 *f* LV *mp* LV

12

EGM113

Counting

The echoes in m 15 are on 2, 3& and 4. It may be helpful to write in the missing beats:



Here is the counting explained for the end of m 26:



São Paulo

E. Peters

There are multiple opportunities for sharing bells, especially where the chimes are added to the texture.

- mm 17-19, 23, 74 Consider having P7 cover the G5 bell (possibly LH : A RH: G/Bb)
- mm 49, 50, 51 & 55 One can't ring and mallet the G5 at the same time. I would suggest sacrificing the rung note and just mallet it. I would also suggest malleting the final G5 in m 54 to ease the transition to m 55.

An Idea

mm 17-20, 23 & 75-78

If P5 and P6 are weaving their chimes, consider putting them in non-chromatic order:

- P5: keep the Eb in LH, have the E & D next to each other and alternate with the RH
- P6: keep the F# in LH, have the G & F next to each other and alternate with the RH

As the subtitle suggests, this piece can be programmed during the Christmas season as **Prelude and Fugue on ‘Sing We Now of Christmas’**, or at Easter as **Prelude and Fugue on ‘Now the Green Blade Riseth’**. Both the Prelude and the Fugue can be used separately.

Be Aware

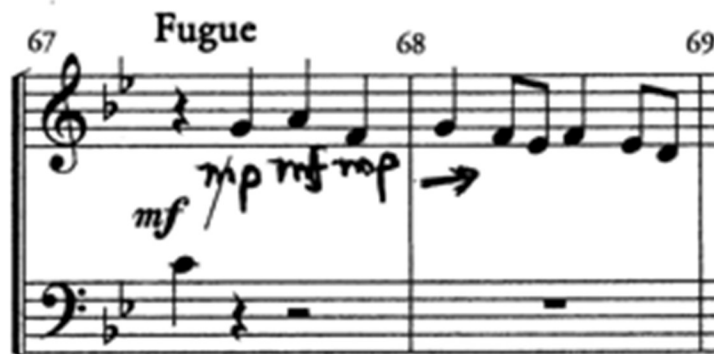
- mm 1 - 6 **poco rit. / a tempo / rit. poco a poco**
- m 7 new tempo
- mm 130-131 **rit.**

Take Note

- mm 23 - 27 / mm 43 - 46 The repeated bass clef chords should be **f** on beats 1 & 3 with a small circular extension, and **mf** on beats 2 & 4 with no circle.



- m 49: Damp completely on beat 4
- Fugue: Think it in 2/2 with the quarter notes alternating between strong and weak (**mf** and **mp**).



- m 77.1-80.1: Mark the bass line **forte**
- m 69.4&: Note the D5 in the bass clef (the footnote should read “D5 in **bass** clef”)
- m 77: See the footnote about **TDs**

Mastering the 16th note runs in mm 126-129

Start simple by teaching each ringer that their right hand is always on the same 8th note subdivision in the 2-beat pattern. Practice the top staff until all are comfortable about placing their right hand exactly on their 8th note subdivision. Then play the second staff which adds the left hand notes. (This is all **LV**) This repeating pattern can be easily memorized so they can watch the director.



LVs

There are three sections with continuous LV scale passages: mm 7-14, mm 31-41, 53-64. All treble clef bells involved need to be kept in continuous motion. Make a second circle without restriking when needed but never park a bell at your shoulder. The patterns are repetitive. Learn them and look up.

Position Specific Notes

- P10/P11: Note that P11 starts with the Bb6,7. P10 rings A#6 [Bb6] in mm 120-121.
- mm 1-7: Assignment suggestions:
 - P4 Ring C5 chime and C5 bell (note the two C5 bells in the treble clef)
 - P3 mm 2-3: ring G4B4 chimes / mm 4-6 ring G4A4 chimes, putting down the G4 on m 6.4& (fermata) / ready for G4 bell in m 7
 - P2 Ring E4F4 chimes
 - P1 Ring C4E4 chimes / putting down the C4 on m 6.4& (fermata) / ready for C4 bell in m 7 (If you have 5-octaves, a bass ringer could cover the F3 & C4 chimes)

Walkin' on Sunshine

S. Eithun

There will be an 8-measure drum solo lead in.

The chromatics like in m 3 can be handled by 4-in-handing or by sharing:

- P5 could ring the Fb5 (E5)
- P10 could ring the Ab5
- P11 could ring the Fb6,7 (E6,7)