

Practical suggestions for introducing handbells into a modern worship setting

Be excellent

Be relevant

Children's program

Begin with "High Holy" seasons; Lent/Easter – Advent/Christmas

Play FAMILIAR songs; contemporary or traditional, even "secular"

Demographic of the handbell ensemble should mirror the demographic of the congregation

The attire of the ensemble should mirror the attire of the congregation/staff

Adding bells to a Contemporary Worship Ensemble (Praise Band)

Learning to read a chord chart/lead sheet

Ringers need to "know" the song, be able to sing it

Listen

When to play and when not to play

Descants

Using bells & chimes to set the "mood" of the piece or the service

Often songs have a repetitive harmonic structure. Just like in a traditional setting, it will lend itself to adding high descant, utilizing the pentatonic scale

On quiet song, double the bass part with chimes

Bells are most effective in songs that have a reduced texture

Ringin' from a Chord Chart & Simple Arrangements

Amazing Grace My Chains are Gone

This Is Amazing Grace

Lord, I Need You

How Great Is Our God

Take the bells on the road

Particularly in context of Modern Worship; handbell choirs should be a ministry opportunity and outreach of the church, not just a "performing" ensemble

Perform outside the church: retirement homes, prisons, Sunday evening concerts at other churches

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EMI Christian Music Group

REFERENCE: Ron Mallory's Article & Videos: <http://handbellmusicians.org/handbell-musician-resources/>