

Ring Praise Music Ministry 2012 Compilation Journal

Pine Eagle School District, Halfway, Oregon, 3-14-12

Our first concert this trip in Eastern Oregon was at an assembly for K-6 grade students. Katie, the music teacher, rang bells in college and was excited to have us at the school. We never have to worry about what to say. Between pieces the kids ask questions and cover about all the topics possible with the bells. Bell size is always important. They wanted to hear the biggest and smallest ones and then we talked about which was higher sounding and which was lower. Then we compared that to the length of strings on the piano giving the higher and lower sounds. We were able to open the front of the piano so the kids could see the strings and watch the hammers strike the strings as Sean played his solos.

To introduce the change ring that begins *Lauda Anima*, Phyllis had 4 students come up and demonstrate a plain hunt change ring by switching places and ringing so the students could see as well as hear what was happening to each of the bells as the pattern changed. Six kindergarten students provided the train sand blocks for *Glory Bound*. We paired kids up with older students helping the young for ring along. They really enjoyed and many were standing around the bell table as they rang. Sean always weaves together a medley of requests from the students. It was a beautiful rendition of *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*; *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*; *Old McDonald*; *Zippity Doo Dah*; *Amazing Grace*; and *Für Elise*.

There was a P.E. class in the gym immediately after the concert so as soon as something was packed, the kids moved it to the door. They were excited to help and we were thrilled to have their help! It is always so refreshing to see the enthusiastic response of youth to our instruments.

Pine Valley Presbyterian Church, Halfway, Oregon, 3-14-12

Every time we are in Halfway, we have such generous hospitality. We stayed with Anne Shields, the pastor's wife, and were treated to wonderful meals and great conversation. Pastor Bill was out of town taking care of parents. Anne had also arranged for someone to bring in a better sound system than the church has. It worked beautifully and we were so grateful.

Katie, the music teacher at the school, was at the concert with her husband. Her parents live in Burns, Oregon, and we have stayed with them when we have given concerts in Burns. What a small world!

During the question time, someone asked about the use of Phyllis's wrists to play the bells and if she ever has problems with them. She showed how little the wrists are used in ringing and emphasized a loose grip and the bell rocking in the hand, not an abundance of wrist movement.

We would like to take Josh, the twentyish gentleman who introduced us, on tour with us. He introduced us as "these young folks" and made our day! ☺

Along with great singing for the ring along and fun adults who did sand blocks for *Glory Bound*, there were delicious treats after the concert. It was great to reconnect with people who have been at our other concerts through the years at the church.

Lostine Presbyterian Church, Lostine, Oregon, 3-15-12

It was a beautiful drive along the river on our way to Lostine even though there was a little fog and some rain. Just as we were arriving in town, Phyllis's van hit a landmark – 200,000 miles. We have a picture of the odometer reading! After setting up, we had dinner at the only eating establishment in town, the Lostine Tavern. Great food!

It was a very warm and receptive audience. By the reaction after the piece, they seemed to especially like *The Rugged Cross*. It is very dramatic and emotional.

The church has a set of handchimes so between that set and Phyllis's set, we had enough for everyone during the ring along so no one had to trade. It was a very responsive audience to the different moods of the pieces.

During questions, one person commented how much he really wanted to applaud. Others nodded in agreement. We then explained how we want to let the Spirit speak to them afterward and not get caught up in applause and bowing. They understood, but still said it was hard.

It rained during the concert with a downpour afterward. Since we had time in the morning, we decided to leave the bells and van at the church and pack everything up in the morning. That was a very wise decision since it was dry in the morning.

We stayed with Jeanette Sams in a beautiful house way up on the side of the mountain. The house is over 100 years old. We woke up to a winter wonderland. It's a good thing we left the van at the church. We rode down in Jeanette's large four wheel drive truck, an essential vehicle where she lives!

The church has many ministries and is exploding with community activity. The manse has been converted into a community center. Many other community outreach ministries have come to fruition with social work guidance from the pastor, Steve Kliewer.

First Presbyterian Church, LaGrande, Oregon, 3-16-12

After leaving Lostine, we drove to LaGrande and had lunch with very good friends of Phyllis from when she lived there. We then walked around town before going to the church to set up.

The church has a lovely pipe organ so Sean used it to accompany Phyllis on *The Lord Is My Shepherd*. That plan will be a keeper as we use that song in other churches with nice organs.

About 50 people were at the concert. This is the church where Phyllis was a member for 16 years during the two times she and her family lived in LaGrande. It is also the church where she became acquainted with handbells in 1993 when they asked her to direct the handbell choir.

Publicity was incredible. Sean's picture filled the cover of the Friday arts insert with a large picture of Phyllis and an article inside. Some people from Baker City saw the article and came. One was a teacher who brings students every year to the Cool Ringings program Phyllis conducts at Gem State Academy in Caldwell each January. She loved the chime ring along. She only has a few students in chimes, and was thrilled to hear such a wonderful audience sing and ring. Sean had a high school classmate come to the concert who had seen the article.

When we went to a restaurant for dinner before the concert, it was like a homecoming reunion. Phyllis saw several people from the church and community she knew. The biggest surprise was our waitress. She was the little sister of Tiffany's (Phyllis's daughter) friend who used to live across the street from them. What fun it was to catch up on what everyone was now doing.

The concert went extremely well and was followed by delicious refreshments. It was a perfect time to visit with many other people Phyllis has known since living in LaGrande for so many years.

We were staying with Connie Ingerson, a ringer in the handbell choir. When we arrived at her house, the power in the whole neighborhood was out so we sat and chatted and snacked by candlelight. It was actually quite fun. The power came on some time around 4:00 am. (We knew this from the clocks starting up, not from staying up that late!)

It was a delightful evening of music and fellowship.

First Presbyterian Church, Homedale, Idaho, 4-1-12

Before the concert, we videoed our arrangement of *The Church's One Foundation*. This is the second arrangement we have had published and want to have a YouTube clip of it on our website.

Twenty-four people came for the concert. One was a young girl who came early. She was thrilled when Phyllis asked her to hand out programs. Sean's aunt and uncle who live in Homedale came. This was the first time they have heard us.

Sean saw several College of Idaho alumni and also parents whose children attended the C of I. It was like a reunion!

For *Glory Bound*, there weren't enough children for all the sets of sand blocks, so some adults were encouraged to participate. They appeared to be having a great time.

Marianne Paul, pastor, was so appreciative of our mission to go to the small churches. We are thrilled to be able to go to them and are so appreciative of the mission money we receive from the Presbytery of Boise for concerts like this in the presbytery.

King Hill Community United Presbyterian Church, King Hill, Idaho, 4-7-12

Forty-one people attended our annual concert at this church. This included ten residents and two helpers from Poplar Grove Assisted Living in Hagerman and Glens Ferry.

Marty, the new pastor, also serves the Glens Ferry United Methodist Church and is enjoying both congregations. New entry doors were installed the day before the concert – they look great! A new sign by the highway was installed last August. It is used for community as well as church events. It is exciting to see the improvements this small congregation keep making in their building.

When it was time for the kids to play sand blocks for *Glory Bound*, some of the young girls couldn't be found. Grandma had taken them out for a while! They came back later, so for the encore we had the kids come up and we played *Glory Bound* again!

You never leave King Hill hungry! There was a fantastic spread of food including elephant ears, fruit and veggies, meat and cheese, and homemade apple dumplings with ice cream.

King of Glory Lutheran Church, Boise, Idaho, 4-13-12

Each year Phyllis helps with the Boise Bell Bash, a day of reading a variety of handbell music and attending a couple of classes. It is held at King of Glory Lutheran Church. The music director has been asking Phyllis when we could do a concert and we finally set this one up.

About 65 people attended, included many handbell ringers from a variety of choirs in the area. The acoustics in the sanctuary were beautiful as well as the lighted contemporary stained glass behind the altar. What a treat to have so many handbell ringers in the audience!

The Ring Along was beautiful with so many voices singing the songs accompanied only by the chimes. Once people realize how easy it is to ring the chimes, they have a smile and have a good time. It is always fun to watch a spouse who knows how to ring helping by pointing out when the person should ring.

Afterward we were treated to a delicious dinner by Ken and Jan Jones. We always have such a good time when we get together.

Owyhee Presbyterian Church, Owyhee, NV, 5-17-12

It was a beautiful drive down to Owyhee on the Duck Valley Indian Reservation. Remember the Verizon commercial, "Can you hear me now?" The answer is Owyhee is, "NO!"

As always, there was great hospitality including a potluck dinner before the concert and additional desserts afterward. No one left hungry!

Attendance at the church is growing with more men and women attending. It was exciting to hear about the growth because they struggle like so many of the other small churches.

During the questions time, one gentleman stood and gave a testimonial of our concerts and how we don't perform, but invite the congregation to participate in worship with us. Phyllis was so moved by what he was saying that she had tears in her eyes. It was a very special blessing to us because he was saying that he experienced what we have in our mission statement.

In the past, we have been in Owyhee on a Sunday afternoon. This time we were continuing on for a couple more concerts so they arranged for us to stay in the local motel which was incredibly comfy and spacious. For breakfast, we ate "A Taste of Heaven – Kountry Kitchen," the only restaurant in town. The breakfast was a delicious home-cooked meal. It was such a blessing to be in Owyhee to share our music and experience their hospitality.

Bruneau Community Church, Bruneau, Idaho, 5-18-12

After our great breakfast in Owyhee, we headed to Bruneau. Since it wasn't too far of a drive, we had a lot of time before the concert so we went out to the Bruneau Canyon overlook. What a magnificent sight! The opposite canyon wall is 1,300 feet away and the Bruneau River is 800 feet below. With the extreme wind, we were thankful

for the guard rail at the edge of the rim. As you drive, you are on the edge of the Air Force bombing range. We did observe a number of jets doing maneuvers which was fun to watch.

We stopped for a short break back in Brueau before heading to Mountain Home for a late lunch. Sean ran into a childhood friend who had also come from Duck Valley where he had been camping with another high school and college friend of Sean. They spent a little time catching up.

The sanctuary of Bruneau Community Church is an old one room school. This is where Sean's chair slipped off the edge during his big resurrection piece. The piano was pushed way back to make sure there would be no repeats of that fall. The stage is interesting for leveling the bell tables. Phyllis dropped the front legs so they would be on the first step to give more room behind the table. She then used an APP on her phone for a level. When finished, there was a 1 inch difference from one end to the other which was taken care of with the adjustable legs on one end and books for the legs in the middle. Front to back on the tables was level, but the floor sloped to Phyllis's back which took a little while to get used to.

There were three kids for sand blocks so they each got to pick an adult to join them. They seemed to enjoy being able to do that. A couple of the kids had run a 10K race earlier in the day to raise money for cancer awareness.

The reception had all kinds of cookies and sandwiches. We stayed with a couple who have and continue to give so much time and effort to keep the church going. They live off the road to the Bruneau Canyon overlook and we talked about the jets we saw. They can watch them from their house. It was our hostess's birthday and she said the concert was the most wonderful present. Since Saturday was free with only setting up the bells that evening for an early morning service, they packed us a lunch and we headed to Shoshone Falls.

Valley Presbyterian Church, Hazelton, Idaho, 5-20-12

Shoshone Falls weren't roaring as much as last year, but were still exquisite. We hiked from the falls up to the rim of the canyon for spectacular views. Once back at the falls, we enjoyed our lunch in the shade of some large trees.

We were spending the night with Barbara Mix, the organist and handbell choir director at First Presbyterian Church, Twin Falls. We have stayed with her in the past. We went to the College of Southern Idaho to set up the bells for an 8:00 am memorial remembrance at the P.E.O. State Convention. Then the three of us we ventured out for dinner and enjoyed the Persian Kebab Restaurant. It was fun to try something very different.

Sunday morning we played prelude, a special music piece, and postlude at the memorial hour. We then quickly packed everything up and headed to Valley Presbyterian Church in Hazelton to lead the 10:30 am worship service. About 40 people were at the service. The church has a theatre organ like the ones Sean has, but smaller. So he began prelude with a very jazzy *Just a Closer Walk with Thee* complete with drums, organ, guitar, brass, etc. What an opening!

Handbell pieces were interspersed within the outline of a traditional worship service with the "sermon" being that past part of our regular concerts. This included *Amazing Grace*, *The Rugged Cross*, and *How Great Thou Art*. We then followed with our response to God's wondrous gift – coming to Christ *Just As I Am*.

Several kids came forward for the children's time about Zacchaeus. Phyllis then encouraged them to remain in the front for the rest of the service so they could see better. They did, and it was so inspiring to see a full pew of youth worshipping together with us.

After refreshments, we packed up, enjoyed lunch at "Garden of Eden" truck stop/restaurant, and headed home once again thanking God for the gift of music and the opportunity to share the Gospel with all the different people who came to hear us.

First United Methodist Church, Nampa, ID, 7-8-12

As a prelude to our tour, we had a "Summer Tour Kick-off Concert" to share with our friends in Nampa what we will be playing as we travel about 5,000 miles during the remainder of the month. The generosity of the audience really helped us on the financial side of the tour.

We began by playing a couple of pieces at the 6:00 pm worship service for those with developmental disabilities, their families and friends. It was exciting to see the joy on their faces as we played a couple of songs they knew.

Over 100 people came to the 7:00 pm concert. Everyone seemed to enjoy seeing on the program where we were headed over the next 3 weeks. When a five-day gap was noticed, we told them that both of us were attending the Handbell Musicians of America National Seminar which occurs every year and moves around the country. This year it was in Cincinnati, Ohio; next year it is much closer – Portland, Oregon!

From beautiful singing for the ring along to six adorable kids on sand blocks for *Glory Bound*, the Spirit was felt as we shared the Gospel with our music, scripture and hymn history.

Trinity United Methodist Church, Idaho Falls, ID, 7-10-12

A friend was looking for a way to get from Nampa to Billings where she had lived for close to 40 years. She wanted to visit old friends and encourage them to attend our concert. A one-way airline ticket was very expensive, so Phyllis suggested she ride along with us. What a blast! Not only did we have a great time visiting, but she also helped at the concerts by passing out programs, selling CDs, and helping with set up and tear down.

The church has a beautiful pipe organ which Sean used for a prelude. Heat affects the tuning, and since it was quite warm, it wasn't in tune with the bells so Sean wasn't able to use it to accompany Phyllis on a piece.

Jim Dahlgran, our contact and the handbell director at the church, has a very strong handbell program. Every Christmas they present a large concert to benefit the bell program and raise a few thousand dollars. They have invested in some of the large handchimes which add depth and richness to many handbell pieces. For the ring along, Jim and another ringer added these beautiful chimes.

In May, we played for the memorial hour at the Idaho State P.E.O. Convention. A few people that were at that service were part of the 41 in attendance. It was nice to meet them and make that connection.

Since there were no kids at the concert, Phyllis drafted several adults to play the sand blocks. Although hesitant at first, they seemed to enjoy their part.

First Church of the Nazarene, Billings, MT, 7-11-12

After a beautiful drive through Montana, we arrived at the First Church of the Nazarene. Our traveling companion, Jean, had a chance to see her two granddaughters at our lunch stop in Bozeman, MT.

One of Jean's friends, Sharon, is the widow of Ed Harris, a nationally known choral arranger. She absolutely loved the concert. Jean and Sean had talked about many of his arrangements as we traveled to Billings. It was so nice to meet her.

The church's air conditioning wasn't working so we played in a very warm sanctuary. There was a storm that went through shortly before the concert which brought a little relief from the heat, but also more humidity. There were 25 people at the concert, including five young ladies from Russia that are on an exchange program here.

The church is doing a backpack ministry to provide children with school supplies this fall. Their goal is 25 filled backpacks. Several were already filled and in the foyer.

We stayed with a lovely lady, Miss Lucille, and enjoyed our conversation, breakfast and a wonderful dog and cat. She even packed us lunch to enjoy on the road as we traveled.

South Canyon Lutheran Church, Rapid City, SD, 7-12-12

We stopped at Mt. Rushmore before heading to the church. What a glorious sight! Sean had been there as a child, and Phyllis was there in 1993. It was impressive to see the changes that have been made with parking garages and a grand entrance with flags of each state. In the parking garage, we saw a van from First Church of the Nazarene, Nampa, ID. Phyllis left a business card wishing them safe travels!

South Canyon Lutheran Church has a beautiful pipe organ in the balcony. Sean played a prelude and also accompanied Phyllis on *The Lord Is My Shepherd*. Whenever there is an organ, Sean tries to use it on this song.

The church has an active handbell choir and the director and some others had just attended the Area 7 conference in Minneapolis. There is also a community handbell choir. Many of those attending the concert were handbell ringers from various churches and the community choir. They were very attentive to all going on in the concert and great leaders in the ring along.

The music director at the church is also the organist and enjoyed sharing about their music ministries. Worship can be jazz, classical, gospel, etc. – incredibly diverse in styles. The Sunday before we were there, they had ring along with the congregation during worship.

Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church, LaCrosse, WI, 7-14-12

We traveled all day on Friday arriving at Phyllis's brother's home in the evening. After relaxing and visiting with Ken and Sharron most of the day on Saturday, we headed into LaCrosse for the worship service and concert. At the 6:00 pm worship service, we played a couple of special music pieces – *What a Friend We Have in Jesus* and *The Lord's Prayer*. There was also a baptism and communion. The service ended at 7:10 pm so we quickly made the transition to be ready for our 7:15 pm concert. We began less than 5 minutes late!

The audience had members from at least three different handbell choirs in LaCrosse. We knew that many in the audience were handbell ringers from the first song in the ring along. They had excellent technique – some of the best we've heard during our concerts.

During questions, one of the ringers asked Phyllis how she did 6-in-hand in the opening song. She gave a short demonstration and then some came up afterward to try it.

After the concert, one lady posted on Facebook about the beautiful concert. She was a first time visitor to the church for the worship service, heard our special music, and decided to stay for the concert. We continually thank God for how He works in our lives and the lives of those who attend a concert.

The next morning we worshiped at the historic stone Lutheran Church in Houston, MN. Phyllis's brother, Ken, talked with the organist and arranged for Sean to play offertory. Afterward, we had brunch at Ken and Sharron's home then headed to Illinois.

Yorkfield Presbyterian Church, Elmhurst, IL, 7-15-12

Elmhurst is a western suburb of Chicago and the church where Phyllis grew up. The front stained glass window is the one pictured on our *Ring Praise* CD.

There was a wonderful crowd of 69 people with a mixture of church members and many from the community. Phyllis enjoyed seeing several people who are still at the church from when she attended there. She used the music stand that was in memory of her father for the many years he sang in the choir. Memorial contributions in honor of her mother were put toward the purchase of a 4th octave of handbells for the church. She was so pleased to hear this.

Phyllis had a close call with a bell during *Joshua*. At the end, as Phyllis was picking up a bell, it caught the handle of the bell above it, flipped, and almost rolled off the front of the table. Phyllis caught it just in time! *Joshua* raises the pulse, and this pushed it even higher!

The next morning we headed to Russell's Barbeque to meet Phyllis's uncle and cousin. Whenever in the area, Russell's is a must! After stuffing ourselves with delicious beef and pork sandwiches, we headed to Kalamazoo.

Second Reformed Church, Kalamazoo, MI, 7-16-12

Prior to the concert, there was a delicious potluck dinner with the church's handbell choir and their families. They also provided a wonderful reception after the concert. It was a warm and humid day, and the church office had received several phone calls asking if the church was air conditioned. Yes, it was!

There was a beautiful pipe organ so Sean played a prelude and accompanied Phyllis on one piece. Members from several church bell choirs and the community choir, Kalamazoo Ringers, were among the 50 in attendance.

One person who solos has been working on a song that Phyllis has on our *Ring Praise* CD. She was having trouble figuring out how to do a couple of passages so after the concert Phyllis helped her. The director of the community choir asked Sean for a handbell arrangement of his solo, *All Creatures of Our God and King*. He will be working on it!

A Nampa friend of Phyllis had contacted a friend in Kalamazoo who came to our concert. She enjoyed the concert and talking with us about Idaho; she used to live in the Twin Falls area. An adorable three-year-old came with her grandma. She loves music and was so cute doing the sand blocks. Another person commented how she

loved having the words to our songs printed in the program. This is a very important part to us since the various verses printed are selected for the message they tell. It was affirming to hear that they were so appreciated.

Arbor Trace, Richmond, IN, 7-22-12

This is the assisted living home where Phyllis's mother-in-law lived for a year and a half. There were about 25 people there, including Phyllis's brother- and sister-in-law and nephew. All seemed to appreciate the concert. There were many questions by several in attendance, and a few of the residents also enjoyed ringing the big bells after the concert.

Prior to the concert, we worshiped at Fountain City Wesleyan Church, then went out to brunch.

First United Presbyterian Church, Knoxville, IL, 7-23-12

This congregation was founded in 1835. Sean played prelude on their tracker organ that was installed in 1904. He played the last two movements from the Bach/Vivaldi Organ Concerto in D minor. There were delicious cookies, lemonade and iced tea afterward. Then we were taken out for dinner in Galesburg by a member of the congregation. It was so fun to get to know Suzanne.

There were no children at the concert, and since it was quite warm, we simply passed out the sand blocks to some of the adults attending and let them play from their seats instead of coming up front. They rang and sang heartily during the ring along.

We were hosted in a lovely bed and breakfast which had homemade bread and cheese waiting for us when we arrived. We also enjoyed delicious bread pudding and fresh fruit.

Peace Presbyterian Church, Elkhorn, NE, 7-24-12

Phyllis and her family were active at this church when they lived there from 1987 to 1993. She was one of the organists and studied organ for three years before moving to Oregon. Her teacher is still the organist at the same church in Omaha where she took lessons so she emailed him inviting him to the concert and he came. It was thrilling for her to share with him that even though she no longer plays the organ, she is very involved with music through handbells.

After setting up, Diana, the Christian Education Director, gave us a tour of the downstairs Christian Education classrooms. The hallways have beautiful murals of life in Bible times including large maps from the Old Testament and New Testament. The junior high "tree house" room was just completed – what an inviting place for the youth to come and hang out and learn. A community arts program uses the facility with one room devoted to computers and keyboards for music education.

Phyllis was at the church when the congregation moved from a small facility in the neighboring community of Waterloo and built the current facility. At the time, there was ample room for future growth of the congregation as Omaha moved closer to Elkhorn. Well, Elkhorn is now part of Omaha and the church added on a gymnasium/fellowship hall and made the old fellowship hall into more office and meeting space a few years ago. It was exciting to see these beautiful renovations.

About 60 people attended the concert. Phyllis knew several from when she was there and was very glad they introduced themselves. Faces were familiar, but remembering names was a different matter. It was interesting how some people heard about the concert. It had been on various Facebook outlets, and someone found out from the Theatre Organ Society. An article had also been in the county newspaper. After the concert, just about everyone stood in line to greet us and tell us how moved they were by the concert.

First Presbyterian Church, North Platte, NE, 7-25-12

Like at the Elkhorn concert, we heard from a couple of people how they found out about the concert. One man's sister saw us at the Nampa concert and mailed him the program, encouraging him to come. He and his wife drove 60 miles and were so glad they did. Someone at the Elmhurst concert called her friend in North Platte and told her to come to the concert. The church has a beautiful pipe organ which Sean played for prelude and also accompanied Phyllis on one piece. A large post was totally blocking his sight of her, but we each knew what the other was doing musically so it worked fine.

Our contact, Ann, did a wonderful job publicizing the concert, and 57 people attended. She also provided a delicious light dinner for us at the church prior to the concert and organized a beautiful reception with homemade goodies afterward.

One person who has vision impairment asked Phyllis about the techniques she explained during the question time. Phyllis had her come up and taught her “4-in-hand” as well as basic ringing and marts. She then helped her play “Mary Had a Little Lamb” and “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star.” She was thrilled to be able to feel and experience how the bells work.

Rawlins Music Academy, Rawlins, WY, 7-26-12

The concert was at Rawlins Music Academy, a part of *Jubilante Ensembles of Carbon County*. Jubilante exists to create community instrumental groups, which will provide musical playing and performance opportunities, as well as encourage and facilitate musical growth for the players and the community through varying musical genres. They have piano teachers, a concert band, and adult handbell choirs with a beginning handchime group started this past year. The various community groups are quite involved in civic activities, parades, arts in the park, etc. One of the girls taking piano lessons played a song for Sean before leaving. They also assist the schools by stocking reeds and other supplies that students may need.

One of the girls who did sand blocks last year for *Glory Bound* was at the concert and did the sand blocks again. She saw her picture from last year on our display boards.

Jenita, the handbell director, also attended National Seminar and was one of the 227 ringers who, along with Phyllis, rang and sang the National Anthem at the Cincinnati Reds baseball game. She is planning on a handbell camp to introduce handbells to those interested as well as hone the skills of the current ringers. Phyllis was asked several questions afterward about various 4-in-hand styles.

A new local caterer provided delicious finger foods after the concert. Then Sean did a special 35 minute piano concert which was requested when Phyllis set everything up. Most of the people stayed and enjoyed a variety of music from a rag to Chopin.

Draper Historic Theatre, Draper, UT, 7-27-12

Although the audience was small, we had a great time sharing the gospel with those attending. We made it a little less formal and had some questions and comments during the concert. Our contact for the concert, Joey Calkins, is a tenor and sang two songs, with some bell parts added.

We headed home the next day, thanking God for the safe travel and opportunity to share His love and salvation with all those who attended one of our concerts.

Kirkpatrick Memorial Presbyterian Church, Parma, ID, 8-9-12

The church has a beautiful gazebo surrounded by large trees providing wonderful shade. Each summer they have a gazebo concert once a month with a cookout beforehand. We were doing the one in August. Because it was so hot, they decided early in the week that our concert would be in the sanctuary instead. That made a difference in what Sean played. If outdoors, he would have been using an electronic keyboard; instead he played their beautiful grand piano.

Since these concerts tend to be more secular to encourage community participation, we adjusted what we played from our normal concerts. Phyllis included a couple of patriotic pieces including *My Country*, *'Tis of Thee*. Since the Olympics were in progress and the tune is the national anthem for England, we had fun introducing it as such. It was also fun to include one of the most played songs, *It's a Small World*, and one that we hadn't played for several years, *Shenandoah*. Most of her other pieces were spirituals.

Sean did two fun songs, *Kitten on the Keys* and *Charleston Rag* plus his own arrangement of *Over the Rainbow*. His final piece was Gershwin's entire *Rhapsody in Blue* written for solo piano. Wow!

For ring along, we did some of the songs we often do at schools – *The Star-Spangled Banner* followed by Phyllis telling about ringing the National Anthem with 226 others at the Cincinnati Reds game July 20 and showing the special shirts everyone wore. This was followed by *Take Me Out to the Ball Game* and *America the Beautiful*.

Adults and a couple of youth provided the sand block train for *Glory Bound*. It is always fun to see how a rhythm develops and the enthusiasm they put into it.

Covenant Presbyterian Church, Boise, ID, 10-14-12

The concert was part of Covenant's Afternoon Concert Series. To help advertise, Phyllis played special music for the two morning worship services and their organist graciously accompanied her. During the concert, Sean played an organ prelude and also accompanied Phyllis on the organ for one piece. He also had a very good visit with one of his past organ students that he has known for 22 years. Phyllis's 3-1/2 year old granddaughter was the youngest in the audience. She really enjoyed, especially ringing the chimes and playing the sand blocks for *Glory Bound*. A couple of youth and adults joined her with the sand blocks.

Two Rivers Correctional Institution, Umatilla, OR, 11-11-12

This concert began close to a year ago when Duane Brudevold at Faith Presbyterian Church in Hermiston called Phyllis and told her about a chaplain contact for the Umatilla prison. As Phyllis was putting together this short tour, she got the information from Duane, contacted Chaplain Jamie, and got everything set.

We left Caldwell around 12:30 pm. After an early dinner in Hermiston, we headed to the prison to figure out where to check in. There were a couple of guards leaving an area so we asked them and they were very helpful. All of the staff was extremely helpful, and like the other prisons where we have performed, are very thorough when we check in and out. This time the equipment was checked as it was loaded onto a cart by the van. Then the guard wheeled all of it into a gate while we checked in elsewhere. The one item not on the equipment inventory was programs which Phyllis showed them. As the guard was looking through them, Phyllis mentioned that there was no contact information on them. He said that's what he was checking for!

Concerned that the chapel wouldn't be large enough, Chaplain Jamie had arranged for us to play in the visitor's center and brought in an electronic keyboard. Unlike the other prisons where we have played, there was no precise time frame. When we were set up, Jamie just called to have the men be released to come. Afterward, he let them know when they were heading back. As the guys came in, they all wanted to come up and say hi. Afterward, there were a lot of questions with the first asking when we were coming back. It was a very Spirit-filled room that night as we all worshiped. As we were packing up, Jamie thanked us for stressing God's grace. He said the guys hear more about judgment rather than grace.

As we drove to Milton-Freewater to spend the night with our host families, we thanked God for opening up the opportunity to minister at Two Rivers.

Park Plaza Retirement, Walla Walla, WA, 11-12-12

Since we were spending the night in Milton-Freewater after our concert at Two Rivers, I asked our contact, Jeanne, to see if there was a retirement center that would enjoy a concert. A few people from Grace Presbyterian Church in Milton-Freewater live at this retirement center. When we arrived and Jeanne told the activity director we were here, she was horrified because she had forgotten that we were coming! It is always so great to see how God works in these situations. The activity director and a co-manager went door-to-door inviting people to the concert which was held just before lunch in the area next to the dining room. We ended up with one of the largest audiences they said they have ever had for a program! The residents and staff were so appreciative, and one co-manager expressed her gratitude for how we included the gospel in our program.

Phyllis's daughter-in-law, Jenn, had made a quilt hanging of our Ring Praise Music Ministry logo. This was the first concert where it hung beautifully on the front of her table!

After the concert, one lady come up to Phyllis and asked if she knew a certain lady at her church. She noticed in the bio that Phyllis was part of Crossroads Community Church and that is where her sister-in-law attended. Well, Phyllis not only knew her, but she is one of the ringers in her handbell choir! Then we were guests for lunch and enjoyed good food and wonderful conversation with a retired pastor and his wife who occasionally fill in at churches in the presbytery.

Grace Presbyterian Church, Milton-Freewater, OR, 11-12-12

Phyllis stayed with Mel and Jeanne Brady who have been our contact for all the times we have been to Grace Presbyterian Church. Sean stayed with Jim and Sherry Rowan who hosted Phyllis last time. Such wonderful food and hospitality!!!

The church has called a new pastor, Terry, who has an American Baptist background and is enjoying his calling at Grace Presbyterian. The average attendance is around 35 and growing! It was wonderful meeting him and his wife and seeing the enthusiasm he has for the church.

Phyllis's solo student, Ellissa, who graduated from Gem State Academy in May, is attending Walla Walla University and was able to get a ride to the concert. It was so exciting to see her! She travelled with us in December 2011 to Malad City, Idaho, and played a solo as well as a duet with Phyllis at the concert. Dorothy Heard, who is 100 years old, has been to all of our concerts in Milton-Freewater. She still writes for the newspaper that she and her husband started many years ago and is a College of Idaho graduate.

The trip home took a little longer than anticipated. When we got to the interstate, it was closed heading east, so we turned around and headed back toward Milton-Freewater turning off to take the road over Tollgate and into LaGrande. It was a beautiful Winter Wonderland so we listened to Christmas music!

7th Annual Kettle Konkert for Nampa Salvation Army, Nampa Civic Center, 12-16-12

Since 2006, we have been giving a benefit concert for the Nampa Salvation Army. This was the third year we have rented the Nampa Civic Center for the concert and sought out partners and sponsors to help with raising money for the Salvation Army. Partnering with us were the Idaho Press-Tribune, Nampa Civic Center, and Saltzer Medical Group. These partners also gave Christmas songs for Sean's "On the Spot Medley": *What Child Is This*, *Silver Bells*, *A Holly Jolly Christmas* plus *Carol of the Bells* from Ring Praise Music Ministry. Sponsors for the concert were Donna Watson at Rumours Hair Design, Andy Dodson at Edward Jones, Tim's Auto Repair, King's Pro-Tire Center, Heart 'n Home Hospice and Palliative Care, and Crossroads Community Church.

This year Treasure Valley Bronze Handbell Choir was our guest. Phyllis directs the choir and Sean rings in it! Around 250 people attended the concert and between partners, sponsors and the offering, we raised \$2,131.30 for the Nampa Salvation Army.

New Meadows United Methodist Church, New Meadows, ID, 12-20-12

In April, 2007 we gave a concert at this church. This fall Phyllis received an email asking if there was any possibility of us doing an Advent concert. We checked our calendars and figured we could make Thursday, December 20 work and they agreed that the date would work for them. When we arrived and went into the sanctuary, it was so welcoming and beautiful. The decorations invited you in to worship.

Thirty-four people attended and were excited and very generous with the offering for us. Everyone seemed to enjoy ringing and singing some Christmas carols and had many questions for us. Afterward there was a reception with a huge variety of delicious homemade cookies. It was also a nice opportunity to visit with many of the people.

We were so blessed by the warm hospitality of our hosts and everyone in the congregation.

St. Francis De Sales Cathedral, Baker City, OR, 12-22-12

In February, Phyllis contacted Father Julian regarding a concert in the spring. The date Phyllis had in mind didn't work and Father Julian asked if we could do a Saturday afternoon sometime, like Christmas. It worked out that December 22 was clear for both of us so it was set at 1:00 pm. Father Julian has seen our concerts a few times, the first around 2005 in Mt. Vernon.

When we arrived and went into the cathedral, we could easily see why he preferred an afternoon concert. The sun shining through all the stained glass windows was incredible. There would not have been the same ambiance in the evening. Some of the windows date back to 1923.

About 150 people attended and it was a very Spirit-filled church as we worshiped and celebrated Christ's birth. They have a beautiful Wicks pipe organ in the balcony which Sean used to accompany Phyllis on *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*. Sean's adapted accompaniment worked very well; the only problem was we couldn't see each other and the distance added a sound delay. Luckily we had played the piece enough to know exactly what the other person was doing and the exquisite acoustics assisted.

The nine-foot grand piano was celebrating its 100th birthday this month so Sean played and we all sang "Happy Birthday" to the piano! We decided to have Sean do an "On the Spot Medley" and the songs people called out were *Joy to the World*, *Lo How a Rose*, *Carol of the Bells*, *What Child Is This*, and *O Holy Night*. There were

quite a few kids including some in the balcony so Phyllis asked them to come down and be sure to get chimes for the Ring Along. What a glorious sound with so many voices singing.

CarolFest!, a medley of six Christmas carols arranged by Phyllis and Sean, has just been published and they recorded their performance of it at this concert. You can see it on RingPraise's channel or search Phyllis Tinchler on YouTube.