

## Handbells and Handchimes

St. Joseph Parish is the proud owner of a three octave set of Schulmerich Handbells and a three octave set of Marlmark Handchimes.

The handbells were purchased in 1991 and the handchimes were donated several years later. There have been many handbell "teams" or "choirs" over the years. The choirs have been combined intergenerational, as well as separated into adult, youth and children's choirs. There have been as many as five different groups at one time. The handbells at St Joseph Church are rung frequently at Parish Masses, special events, interfaith services in the community and beyond.

The music class curriculum for the St Joseph School 8<sup>th</sup> Grade consists of learning to ring handbells. They then ring for various Masses during the school year and as a part of their graduation ceremony.

St Joseph Parish is a member of the Handbell Musicians of America national organization which offers many ringing and learning opportunities outside of the church.

Their mission statement is:

*Handbell Musicians of America is dedicated to advancing the music art of handbell/handchime ringing through education, community and communication.*

Vision Statement:

*Uniting people to create a diverse community in which handbell musicians of every skill level realize their full potential through a musically-respected art form.*

[Handbellmusicians.org](http://Handbellmusicians.org)

Many of our members have participated in local or state "rings or festivals" with groups from around the area. These are day long ringing events usually with classes included. Beyond local and state rings, some ringers have participated in Area 1 (New England) Festivals and educational events which occur throughout the New England States. Some have attended national events and even international events (Australia, England, Canada)! A few of our members have become clinicians for these events and have served on the Area board.

Everyone is invited to try handbell ringing. No previous experience is necessary and all skills, including music reading, will be taught to anyone interested!