

Meet the Westminster Ringers

Amy Archibald

Amy, member of Westminster Ringers, has been ringing handbells for over 30 years. She learned to ring at Milford Mill United Methodist Church (Pikesville, MD) where her mother is the Director of Handbell Choirs. Ringing is definitely a family affair. She is joined by her brother and two cousins in Westminster Ringers also! Amy earned her Master of Arts in Teaching degree from Towson University, and earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Biology from St. Mary's College of Maryland. Amy is a biology teacher at Wilde Lake High School in Howard County, MD. When not working or ringing, Amy enjoys spending time with her husband, young daughter, and young son.

Laura Birkholz

Laura, member of Westminster Ringers, began ringing handbells at the age of seven at Hillsboro First United Methodist Church. She learned to ring under the direction of her mother and later joined her in teaching the youth at the church to ring. Laura is a reading intervention teacher at Oakdale Elementary School in Frederick County Public Schools. When not ringing, she enjoys hiking, kayaking and spending time with her friends and family.

Chris Butler

Chris, member of Westminster Ringers, has been ringing on and off in choirs for the last 15+ years. He is a graduate of Virginia Tech, currently working as a web developer for the US Census Bureau. Chris, and his wife Kaitlyn, recently moved to Maryland which makes getting to bell practice in Westminster much easier! When not ringing, Chris enjoys playing volleyball and spending time with friends.

Cathy Eichholz

Cathy, a member of Westminster Ringers, is the handbell choir director and a frequently featured vocalist at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Gaithersburg, MD. She enjoys arranging music for her ringers and has started learning/performing solo and small ensemble ringing. When not making music, Cathy works as a project manager for a software engineering company and occasionally gets a crafty urge to crochet or sew something. She lives in Damascus, MD with her two teenage daughters.

Alexa Hayman

Alexa, member of Westminster Ringers, has been playing handbells since the age of 7, and is excited to be part of this group for the first year. She also sings with various groups and plays oboe, piano, bass and guitar. Alexa graduated from Messiah University and is currently an Elementary Vocal Music Teacher in Howard County. She enjoys many outdoor activities, teaching music and swimming lessons, and spending time with her family.

Debbie Henning

Debbie, Music Director of Accelerando and member of Westminster Ringers, has been involved with handbells for over 50 years as both a ringer and a director. Besides ringing & directing with Westminster Ringer, Inc., she is the chime director at Homewood at Frederick in Frederick, MD, the co-handbell director at the Westminster Church of the Brethren in Westminster, MD and teaches music classes at a family daycare. In addition to her musical activities, Debbie loves to quilt, sew and cross stitch. Debbie serves as Managing Director/Treasurer for the Westminster Ringers, Inc. and has served Handbell Musicians of America Area 3 in many capacities – currently as the Chair-Elect. Debbie and her husband Larry are the founding members of the Westminster Ringers, Inc. and have three grown children & three grandchildren.

Larry Henning

Larry, Music Director of Westminster Ringers, is a retired seventh grade mathematics teacher. Early in his teaching career, he established the Carrolltowne Ringers – a children’s handbell program for grades third through fifth. Under his direction, they received the National Exemplary School Award from Handbell Musicians of America. He has also directed the Agape Ringers from the Westminster Church of the Brethren and Wesley Carillon from the Westminster UMC. Larry has been a clinician with Handbell Musicians of America Area 3 for their Bronze Conference Choir, Read & Ring Workshops and the Ocean City & Hampton Festivals. He studied conducting under William Payn. Larry and his wife, Debbie, are the co-founders of the Westminster Ringers, Inc.

Nathan Hillman

Nathan, a member of Westminster Ringers, is primarily a violist, violinist, and composer, but began ringing handbells at his small town church in Maine as a teen, and later on with the Penobscot Bay Ringers, before moving to Baltimore to study viola performance at Peabody Conservatory, earning his degree in 2023. He has been playing and writing music for as long as he can remember, and he’s most passionate about chamber music (including handbells!). Nathan currently plays viola in the York Symphony, teaches around the Baltimore/DC area, and does freelance performing. He is a cat and chicken lover, and in his free time enjoys hiking, exploring back roads, baking, and arranging music.

Sheena R. Hunter

Sheena, member of Westminster Ringers, learned what handbells were 29 years ago, and realized they were pretty cool. She joined the Westminster Ringers at its inception when she was looking for new challenges and different music. She moved to the low bass bells after the first season and no one since has been able to pry them out of her hands. When Sheena is not ringing bells, she is driving a school bus in Montgomery County. In the time she has left, she spends at canine Frisbee events or hiking with her rescue dog, Rosie, and riding her bike around the DMV and beyond.

Sarah Loisel

Sarah, a member of Westminster Ringers, began ringing with her church choir in 2005 and has been enjoying it ever since. Sarah is a stay at home mom for her 2 little ones, and enjoys cross stitching and crocheting. When not ringing, Sarah enjoys spending time with family and friends.

Meghan Micheals

Meghan, member of Westminster Ringers, grew up in York, Pa and started ringing bells in the 5th grade at church. She joined the Westminster Ringers in 2011 and is also an accomplished handbell soloist, having studied under Ron Bellamy and plays throughout the year as time permits. Meghan lives in Rockville, MD with her family. When not ringing bells, she enjoys books, movies, games, puzzles, spending quality time with family and friends and enjoying each day to its fullest.

Erin Porter

Erin, a member of Westminster Ringers, began ringing 20+ years ago with her church’s handbell choir, which she has now been the director of for 10+ years. Erin is also a music coordinator at her church and enjoys singing and playing various instruments with groups in her community. When Erin isn’t doing music, she enjoys spending time with her husband Rob and is a Dental Hygienist in Hanover PA.

Dixie Sumpter

Dixie, a member of Westminster Ringers, began ringing with her church choir 13 years ago. She enjoys solo ringing as well as playing in an ensemble. If she is not ringing bells, you can find her playing oboe in various

wind ensembles. She is a scientist at a local biotech company. In her free time, she enjoys crocheting, reading, and hanging out with her cat and turtle.

Laura Swafford

Laura, member of Westminster Ringers, began ringing handbells when her youth choir director dragged her (literally) into practice one day, and she found to her surprise that she actually liked it. She is a research chemist & program manager with the Federal Bureau of Engraving & Printing.

Lin Wolfe

Lin, member of Westminster Ringers, began ringing with her church's bell choir upon its inception back in 1992. She is a Medical Technologist who is currently working as a Program Manager for Becton Dickinson in Sparks, MD. Lin resides in Upperco, MD with her husband. In her spare time, she is a biker chick.

Nancy Wortman

Nancy, member of Westminster Ringers, began ringing in 2001 with the Bell's Bells Handbell Choir of Timonium United Methodist Church. She works in the front office of Cockeysville Middle School. When not playing handbells, she enjoys learning to knit and spending time with her family in Maryland and Minnesota and her new grandson in Indianapolis.

Alex Yates

Alex, a member of Westminster Ringers, started ringing over 15 years ago at Milford Mill UMC, the youngest in a family of bell ringers. He graduated from Shepherd University with a bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies. Alex works in the green construction industry providing guidance and verification services for home builders seeking green and energy efficiency certifications. In his free time, he enjoys reading, video games, camping and snowboarding as the weather allows.

Jeff Yates

Jeff, a member of Westminster Ringers, started ringing handbells at the age of 15 at Milford Mill UMC where bell ringing has become a family tradition. Professionally, he works as a contractor for various government agencies as a penetration tester. Jeff is also the treasurer and a founding member of the Maryland non-profit Unallocated Space where he likes to tinker with computers and electronics.