

Level
3+

THE CYNTHIA DOBRINSKI
HANDBELL SERIES

HOPE Publishing
Company

Since 1892

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

Martin Luther

Arranged for 3-5 octave handbells by

Cynthia Dobrinski



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Since 1892

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In memory of John Hendel
Commissioned for the Jubilee Ringers and New Horizon Ringers in honor of
ten years of handbell ministry at Our Saviour's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Hastings, Minnesota
Marilee Anderson, Director

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

This setting of A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD is intended to depict the text of the four verses of the hymn. After an energetic introduction, the first verse is played more stately with massive chords used to depict the strength of God as our fortress. Verse 2 begins rather merrily with the melody lilting over a bouncing staccato bass. Though we may merrily go our own way, when we confide in our own strength, the foundation of our life is not strong and steady, but shaky and bumpy as heard in the bass staccatos. When the Man of God's choosing (these words are emphasized by rather unexpected harmonies) walks by our side helping us, we hear the music move in parallel motion and in a smoother fashion. The rest of verse 2 is set with harmonies designed to give a mystical or heavenly quality to depict the eternal Christ. The descending motive of the malleted high bells is symbolic of Christ's descent from heaven to come to our rescue and the long pedal point is descriptive of His eternal, unchanging nature. Verse 3 is loud and fiery and in a minor key to describe our battle with evil. Shakes are used to portray "we tremble not for him" but are absent on "not". Tone painting is also used in the bass bells on the word "rage". The notes on "doom is sure" are cut short to show that the power of evil is doomed to be cut off. The verse ends on a major chord as evil is vanquished. After a transition the stately final verse depicts the triumph and strength of our God, whose kingdom is forever.

Eb7 and F#7 not used in 4 octave version

optional

Handbells used: 3 octaves (37 bells);
 4 octaves (46 bells);
 5 octaves (58 bells)

MARTIN LUTHER

Arranged by CYNTHIA DOBRINSKI (ASCAP)

Tempo 1 ♩ = c. 120–132, with energy

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MEASURES 4-17

* 3 octave choirs omit notes in parentheses; 4 octave choirs omit notes in brackets; 5 octave choirs play all notes.

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Stately, ♩ = c. 88–92

molto rit.

ff Tempo 2

* 5 octave choirs double melody an octave higher.

Measures 18-29 of the musical score. The score is in 2/4 time. Measures 18-20 show a stately tempo with a tempo marking of c. 88-92. Measures 21-23 are marked 'molto rit.' and 'ff'. Measures 24-29 continue the piece. A large diagonal watermark 'PREVIEW COPY NOT FOR PERFORMANCE' is overlaid on the score.

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Measures 30 and 31 of a musical score. Measure 30 features a treble staff with eighth-note chords and a bass staff with a whole-note chord. Measure 31 continues with similar textures. The time signature is 2/4.

Measures 32, 33, and 34. Measure 32 begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measure 33 shows a change in the bass line. Measure 34 includes a crescendo hairpin. The time signature is 2/4.

Measures 35, 36, and 37. Measure 35 has a crescendo hairpin. Measure 36 features a change in the bass line. Measure 37 continues with dense chordal textures. The time signature is 2/4.

Measures 38, 39, and 40. Measure 38 includes a crescendo hairpin. Measure 39 continues with dense chordal textures. Measure 40 features a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The time signature is 2/4.

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41 42 43 44

rit. Tempo 3 $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 76$ *p* *simile*

45 46 47 48 49 50

R *f*

51 52 53

Broaden ($\text{♩} = \text{c. } 68$) *molto legato* *pp*

* 5 octave choirs double melody an octave higher.

** Bells are struck with mallets while on the table. If mallets are unavailable, plucking (and tap plucking) or thumb damping may be substituted.

*** Bells are struck with mallets while off the table and are allowed to vibrate.

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54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64

rit.

Tempo 4 = c. 112

f

R

Pl

* 5 octave choirs double melody an octave higher.

65 *poco rit.* 66 *a tempo* 67

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68 69

70 *rit.* 71 *a tempo* *f*

72 73 74

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75 R 3 3 3 3 76 Sw

77 78 79 R R R

Pl.

80 81 82

molto rit. R R *p*

83 84 85 86

accel. e cresc. poco a poco

* In this measure make the attacks of the ▼↑'s louder than the duration of the notes so that the run can be heard clearly even while the LV is in effect.

** 5 octave choirs double melody an octave higher.

87 88 89

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90 91 92 93

94 95 96 97

♩ = c. 68–80

Very stately and grand with great strength

98 99 100

molto rit. *ff* Tempo 5

* 5 octave choirs double melody an octave higher.

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101 102 103

104 105

106 107

108 109 110

f

3

3

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The musical score is for piano, spanning measures 101 to 110. It is written in 4/4 time. The score is divided into four systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clef). Measure 101 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). Measure 102 has a key signature change to one flat (Bb). Measure 103 has a time signature change to 2/4. Measure 104 has a time signature change to 4/4. Measure 105 has a key signature change to two flats (Bb, Eb). Measure 106 has a key signature change to two sharps (F#, C#). Measure 107 has a key signature change to one sharp (F#). Measure 108 has a key signature change to one flat (Bb). Measure 109 has a key signature change to one sharp (F#). Measure 110 has a key signature change to one flat (Bb). The score includes various musical notations such as chords, single notes, and triplets. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) appears in measure 109. A repeat sign with a first ending bracket is present in measure 110. A large watermark 'HOPE Publishing Company Since 1892' is overlaid on the score. A diagonal watermark 'PREVIEW COPY NOT FOR PERFORMANCE' is also present. A small asterisk (*) is located above measure 105.

* 5 octave choirs double melody an octave higher.

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LV

ff

Sk

rit.

fff

Sk

* 4 octave choirs play A6 as a quarter note and omit G6.

Price Code: H

