



M.I.T. Guild of Bell Ringers

The Constitution

of 2018

I. Name and Purpose

- A. The organization shall be called the M.I.T. Guild of Bell Ringers, hereafter referred to as the "Guild".
- B. The purpose of the Guild is to promote and perpetuate the art of bell ringing, and to provide an opportunity for its members to participate and improve in the group ringing of tower bells and hand bells. The Guild shall ring the bells at the Old North Church when welcomed.
- C. The Guild will abide by the rules and regulations of the Association of Student Activities, the Executive Committee, and the Finance Board. In addition, it will abide by this Constitution and any bylaws as applicable.

II. Membership

- A. Membership will be open to all M.I.T. affiliates, including M.I.T. students, alumnae/i, staff, and faculty, and to members of the broader M.I.T. and Greater Boston communities.
- B. The membership of the Guild will consist of active (voting) members ("Active Member") and non-active members ("Non-active Member").
 1. Anyone who has attended at least three tower bell sessions or handbell sessions in the preceding year will be enrolled as an Active Member of the Guild, unless they wish otherwise.
 2. Non-active Members are those who have been active members in the past but do not currently fulfill the obligation.
 3. Any member may change their membership from active to inactive, or cancel their membership in the Guild altogether, by simply communicating this request to the Secretary of the Guild.
- C. While the Guild includes the ringing of church bells as part of its regular activities, the Guild is and will be a secular organization. No member or aspiring member shall be pressured to participate in the ringing of church bells if they do not wish to do so.
- D. The Guild shall not discriminate based on any characteristic listed in the M.I.T. Nondiscrimination Policy for membership, officer position, or in any other aspect.

III. Officers

- A. The regular officers of the Guild will be a president (the "President"), a treasurer (the "Treasurer"), a secretary (the "Secretary"), a ringing master (the "Ringing Master"), a steeple

keeper (the "Steeple Keeper"), a handbell keeper (the "Handbell Keeper"), and a Clapper Correspondent (the "Clapper Correspondent").

- B. Other officers which include a historian, a church liaison, a tune-ringing master, etc., may also be chosen by the Guild if it is deemed necessary or expedient. In addition, any two offices may be held simultaneously by one person. So, for example, an individual may be both President and Handbell Keeper, etc.; with the exception that the President shall not also be either the Secretary or the Treasurer as stated in the forthcoming clause.
- C. The duties of the President are to be the official representative of the Guild to any other organization and to M.I.T., and to call and preside over business meetings. The President must be an M.I.T. student, and shall not simultaneously hold the office of either the Secretary or the Treasurer.
- D. The duties of the Treasurer are to handle the financial affairs of the Guild. Since the Treasurer is responsible for dealing with the Finance Board, they must be an M.I.T. student and not hold the position of the President. All expenses from the main account over \$50 or recurring expenses which will add up to more than \$50 over the course of the semester must be approved by the Ringing Master and/or Handbell Keeper, as appropriate.
- E. The duties of the Secretary are to handle the correspondence of the Guild, to be responsible for the Guild Library, to take minutes at business meetings of the Guild, and to liaise with the Ringing Master and Handbell Keeper to maintain a list of active members.
- F. The duties of the Ringing Master are to take care of the technical aspects of the ringing: to see to the instruction of new members, to lead the tower bell ringing, to call regular meetings of the Guild, etc. The Ringing Master may be re-elected at the start of each year, and may not simultaneously be the ringing master of any other tower.
- G. The duties of the Steeple Keeper are to monitor the condition of the ringing chamber, bells, and related hardware in the Guild's home tower, and to coordinate any maintenance or repairs need on them. The Steeple Keeper of the Guild shall not be the steeple keeper of any other tower.
- H. The duties of the Handbell Keeper are to care for the handbells of the Guild and to organize the handbell sessions.
- I. The duties of the Clapper correspondent are to send the newsletter of the North American Guild of Change Ringers (NAGCR), The Clapper, information on the Guild's activities.
- J. All regular officers must be active members of the Guild.
- K. All regular officers are to be elected at the end of the spring term and take office immediately. If an office becomes vacant, and qualified members exist to fill the office, a special election shall be held and the new officer shall assume office as soon as possible. If a vacancy cannot be filled, then one of the other officers shall act in place of that office until it can be filled.
- L. The Active Member has one vote in the election of each officer of the Guild. All elections are carried by a simple majority of those eligible to vote. If more than two members are running and no one wins a majority, then the person with the fewest votes is dropped from the ballot and votes are recast.
- A. Officers may be removed by a 2/3 vote of voting members.
- B. If any officer is temporarily unable to fulfill any of their responsibilities for any reason (including, but not limited to: illness, other commitments, pressures of work, or participation in exchange programs), they may, subject to the approval of the Guild, appoint some other member of the Guild to fulfill their responsibilities for the period or occasion in question.

IV. Meetings

- A. Regular meetings will be in the form of ringing sessions. Tower ringing sessions will take place at least once a week, as is convenient for the ringers, the instructor(s), and the owners of the tower. Change-ringing handbell sessions will take place at least once a week, as is convenient for the ringers and the instructor(s). Tune-ringing handbell sessions shall be scheduled as desired, depending upon the level of interest.
- B. An annual election meeting will take place at the end of the spring term. The annual meeting must be announced at least two weeks in advance. In addition, there may be other business meetings during the year to discuss matters requiring the attention of the Guild.
- C. At all business meetings, a quorum will be 1/3 of all active members.

V. Amendments and Bylaws

- A. Amendments to this constitution must be approved by 2/3 the Active Members, and there must be a two week delay between the announcement of proposed amendments and voting.
- B. Bylaws may be passed by a simple majority vote of the Active Members of the Guild, conducted either in a business meeting or via an online poll. There must be a two-week delay between the announcement of proposed alterations to the bylaws and voting. Alterations to the bylaws of the Guild will be subject to veto by the President; this veto may, however, be overridden by the votes of 2/3 of the Active Members.
- C. The constitution and bylaws, as amended, shall be subject to the review of the ASA Executive Committee to ensure consistency with the ASA and Finance policies.

VI. ASA Governance Clause

- A. The Guild of Bellringers agrees to abide by the rules and regulations of the Association of Student Activities, and its executive board. This constitution, amendments to it, and the by-laws of this organization shall be subject to review by the ASA Executive Board to ensure that they are in accordance with the aforementioned rules and regulations.

Amendments and Modifications to the Constitution of 2018

1. Rectified spelling and grammatical errors throughout document.
2. Associate members have been re-named to “Non-active Members” to more clearly reflect their voting status.
3. To reflect the fact that we now have a standing relationship with Old North, we have updated the relevant clauses.
4. As we now own a set of M.I.T. handbells, clauses relevant to the attainment thereof have been removed.
5. The distinction between handbell members and tower bell members (and tune-ringing members) has been removed.
6. The responsibilities of each office have been more clearly defined, and the offices of secretary and treasurer separated.
7. A provision for the passing of bylaws has been added. This provision allows for, e.g., the formation of a sub-committee to run an annual NAGCR AGM.
8. Nouns of each position and entity are consistent throughout the document to ensure coherent and clear language.