



# The Coupler

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## *The Dean's Letter*

*One of the stranger pieces in Bach's Orgelbüchlein is *Das alte Jahr vergangen ist* (The old year that has now gone by). At first sight, it's all very obvious: the chromatic fourths, the sighing motives - rhetorical devices, we declare expertly, to express the sadness for what was, or what could have been ... However, a look at the hymn text reveals not a melancholy for the old, but prayerful confidence in the new year, and a lugubrious *molto adagio* may not be the most convincing way to convey this. Perhaps we can say that Bach's piece delivers a "mixed message" - at least to our ears: would Widor and Schweitzer have had any use for such a concept?*

*Das alte Jahr that will have gone by in another month is a mixed message, too, as are the prospects for the new, and we might as well brace ourselves for the impact of the recession on the organ world. Please know that the 2010 Convention Steering Committee is acutely aware of this, as are, of course, the national organization and our own DC Chapter board.*

*On behalf of the Chapter board I wish all of our colleagues the a musically uplifting Advent and Christmas season, and the confidence to find the convincing interpretation of this and next year's chromatic fourths and *Seufzer*.*

*Ronald Stolk*

## Programs

Our colleague **Aline Otten** has graciously offered to host the AGO Young Organist Competition at **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**, 4900 Connecticut Ave NW, Saturday, **2pm February 21, 2009**  
Please come and hear what the future holds for the AGO! Stay tuned for details.