

Baptist universities face watershed changes: Bach at Old West Church

by [Sarah M. Brownsberger](#) in the [January 23, 2007](#) issue

(for Anne Kazlauskas)

I did not want to come here through the gray
corridors of cold, to join this pious
crush for pew space; my heart is too distant,
still bound to a scrap of earth which twice now
has frozen over the husk of my love;
I'm hemmed in, flanked by strangers' overcoats,
and sure enough the first notes strike against
every strand and cell of me, marrow to
tear glands, but, by the air, I'm not alone:
we're all faltering weak-kneed up a shining
staircase, against torrents, a muscled flood
which shatters January's blank-dead ban
on thaw, roughing us to struggle upward,
a torrent of free grace into our lungs.