

Donald Rotermund, Minister of Music Emeritus, Zion Lutheran Church, Dallas, TX., leads workshops, writes, and does some composing. He serves on the Executive Board of the Dallas AGO Chapter, of which he has been Dean and Sub-Dean, and the Advisory Board of the Dallas Bach Society.



His choral, organ, and instrumental settings have been released by several publishers, including MorningStar Music, whose catalog includes his three volumes of *Introductions, Interludes and Codas on Traditional Hymns* for use throughout the church year. He has written many articles for professional journals and church publications, along with several books.

Rotermund's undergraduate degree and Doctor of Letters (hon.) are from Concordia University Chicago; his Master's was conferred by the University of North Texas. He and his wife Doris have two children, Deborah and David, and three grandchildren.

Off the Page, his initial self-directed compendium featuring accessible extemporization techniques that are based largely on hymnal harmonizations, is designed to assist organists who do not consider themselves improvisers, but who are comfortable playing hymns. Using these techniques, organists with either modest or more advanced skills will be able to create pleasing hymn-based settings, such as introductions, interludes, organ verses, or small partitas, organ stanzas, petite toccatas.

Off the Page demystifies the art of hymn extemporization! Designed to assist a wide range of organists, including those with limited background in music theory or keyboard harmony, this resource will also be an asset for those with little or no previous improvisation training. Using hymnal harmonies as well as familiar, everyday terminology, Rotermund's approach is accessible and user-friendly. He guides organists to proceed in a self-directed manner with the development of possibilities for immediate application in the worship service. This treasury of tips and techniques for enriching congregational hymn accompaniments, as well as creating organ settings based on hymns both old and new, will be a welcome addition to organists' libraries.

—Naomi Rowley, DMA
Dir., Committee on The New Organist for the National AGO

The techniques introduced in *Off the Page* were liberating for me! Taught by Dr. Rotermund in a workshop setting, I found that I could extemporize simply and confidently, using just my hymnbook. The tips I learned took the apprehension out of introducing hymns, helped me "play the text" and add variety to the stanzas. For beginners and those with no improvisatory study, this book is invaluable.

—Susan Sipe, SPC
Organist

Most organists find the need for improvisation in the service, sometimes just to fill a gap or provide a bridge. In *Off the Page*, here is a new resource for those who prefer to have the hymnal in front of them and to follow the printed harmonization. Clear organization and coding of techniques help organists to become more confident, to build on their skills, and to *remember* what they have done. Abundant musical examples provide models for growth. Some techniques will be helpful even for those who are more comfortable with improvisation. This book is easy to use and will appeal to musicians of various abilities and range of experience.

Here is a resource, finally, that every organist can use.

—Steven Wente, D.Mus.
Professor of Organ, Music Department Chair, Concordia University Chicago

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