

## Ward Choir

We brought no gold to make an offering,  
no goat, no lamb, no blood on the lintel—  
only voices. Sopranos a little  
flat, basses consistently faltering  
at entrances, a lone tenor drowning  
out the others, altos slightly brittle,  
wavering through notes like shaking crystal,  
our music held in black binders falling  
apart at the seams. Still we sing praises  
to our God and King, and hold through the last  
chord's suspension, soft, steady, arriving  
finally far from the broken phrases  
where we began, our voices a prayer asked  
and answered, a sweet scent rising, rising.

—*John Alba Cutler*

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This poem won second place in the 2024 BYU Studies Poetry Contest.