

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*

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