

# Household of Faith

*Dana Haight Cattani*

From where we sat on the fourth pew  
the three square windows looked like cubes  
of shimmery gold  
vertically stacked  
like a floating crate  
leaking light through the slats.  
In seasons, from either side of the podium,  
opaque glass filtered the grainy light  
that swathed the pulpit  
or held at bay the dusky darkness.

From the fourth pew, I focused between the windows  
on speakers and choristers and dark-suited men.  
I knew them all  
my brothers  
my sisters  
as they blessed their babies and baptized their children,  
buried their dead and remembered the body and the blood.  
— Listening, I learned of water turned to wine,  
of loaves and fishes  
and glass, darkly.  
I waited for the organ pipes to breathe  
before each chord.

I often sat beside my father  
who rested his arm lightly on the bench behind me  
as I imagined a suitor might.

I felt his breathing  
sometimes heavy and deep  
and heard his singing voice  
resonate against me.

Down the pew sat the rest of the family  
and Grandma with her purse full of candies  
and behind us the familiar basses and sopranos  
and children crawling underfoot after their toys.

We sat

Sunday after Sunday  
in the muted light of the windows  
before going home where Mom pulled from the oven  
a roast with vegetables  
that steamed the kitchen panes.