

## Christmas Eve

*Flesh will freeze in mere minutes*  
the weatherman said

undeterred  
she walks ahead

huffing breath  
a small white cloud

her coat nearly to her ankles  
like a teacher on yard duty

I am a reluctant traveller  
on this long night

of snow crust  
like burnt toast

it's too cold to speak  
so we don't

we simply walk  
red-cheeked

I blink away the blur  
of large snowflakes

we sniffle and shuffle  
inside the church

we are greeted  
with dancing light

fifty people hold candlesticks  
tiny cups catch wax drips

we take ours  
to find warmth

despite soggy boots  
and solemnity

in the cardinal glow  
of this rarest visit