

Poetry by Jim Blackburn
Art by Isabel Scurry Chapman

The background of the entire page is a deep blue, starry night sky. In the upper right quadrant, there is a large, golden, textured sphere that resembles a planet or a bright star. A horizontal band, slightly darker than the rest of the sky, runs across the middle of the page. The title 'THE STAR GUIDE' is printed in white, serif, all-caps font within this band.

THE STAR GUIDE

The Box of Stars

A box came today with a ribbon and a bow,
With a birthday card and a ho – ho – ho,
It looked rather strange, cloaked in mystery,
It seemed a bit different, a departure from history.

I opened the card that was signed by a friend
Saying turn off the lights before you begin,
I pulled on the ribbon and found the top
That I rotated up, releasing a pop.

In the darkness I lifted the top of the box,
As my eyes adjusted a smile simply popped,
For to my delight, the universe lay inside,
A fabulous scene - a place I could hide.

Now when I can't get outside to my church,
And I don't want to feel left in the lurch,
I go to my room and turn out the light,
And gaze at my universe to my delight.

My box of stars reminds me of hope,
Of getting my head straight – not being a dope,
I let my mind float into the gifted space,
And I'm winning my own personal race.

And then I go outside to view the real thing,
To see what the church of the Earth can bring,
It allows me to see that I'm part of the plan,
Small but essential – what a concept grand.

Small but essential – humble with meaning,
It puts me in touch with every living being,
Grateful for all that comes my way,
Appreciative of the star box every day.

Back in my room I turn out the light,
To gaze in the star box for another night,
To swim in the mystery of the universe,
Living my life on a grateful course.

So welcome to Earth Church
Pull yourself up a pew
Pray a friend sends a star box
With a universe for you.