Virus Vigil

Poetry by Jim Blackburn
Art by Isabelle Scurry Chapman

I see to float into embrace, and you daughter draws from a sequence of joy... your secret moon in my emblem there is a pole forming another thing.

The pull of whole-ness I am to the secret places me in it... your mode... Rumi
Wild Turkey 4

Enjoying a shower made from rainwater
Collecting and connecting with a cycle of nature,
Gazing from a window, looking out back,
Encountering a scene from an animator.

The forms emerge from the fog and brush,
A parade of gray heads moving side to side,
It’s the turkey clan from down by the dam,
Moving so smoothly, watching them glide.

The hens are back together as a flock
After spreading out to undertake nesting
Laying their eggs, raising their clutch,
Then joining back up for living and resting.

The fog is moving through cedar and oak,
Twisting and turning along the creek,
Reminding me that a force is pervasive,
A higher power to tap when you are weak.

The unfolding scene links me to the essence,
As revealed to me by the Lutheran minister,
Who explained that the Earth is the Holy Spirit
An aspect of God, and I, a parishioner.

It’s a wonderful gift to be living on Earth
But we just don’t get it through and through
We should focus more on protect and enhance
So the coming generations can enjoy it too.

So welcome to Earth Church
Pull yourself up a pew
Say a prayer for understanding
The Earth’s true value.
Wild Turkey 3

Life has returned to the Texas Hill Country,
It emerged from hiding with the rain,
Wildflowers looking like discs of color,
The landscape painted with a green stain.

In the softness of the cool morning,
The joyous turkey sound is heard,
  From down the creek behind the house
Oh my, what a wonderful big ole bird.

Blue heads bobbing through cedar sprouts,
Spread-tail males gobbling to the sky,
Telling all it is good to be alive,
Sounding out - telling the ladies hi.

The turkey is living in the moment -
Searching for food, seeking a mate,
Always watching and listening for danger
Not taking chances, not tempting fate.

Humans should study this wise old bird,
For we had no guard when Covid came,
And continues to come even after three months,
We are letting it happen – are we insane?

The human brain is considered the best,
Among the species we have come to know,  
But we are lacking something fundamental  
When it comes to dealing with the Covid foe.

So I suggest that we all pay attention  
And adopt the caution of this wily bird,  
Don’t let your guard down, wear a mask,  
And let close social contacts be deferred.

And with that the turkeys move on away  
Saying they’ll return on another day  
Shaking their heads, knowing our trials,  
Hoping that we can find the way.