

# DENNIS UNION CHURCH

an open and affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ

## A Celebration of Creation

**Seventh Sunday of Easter**

**May 17, 2026**

*We claim as our mission the promotion of justice, human dignity, and peace. Thus we bind ourselves to follow where the Spirit of God shall lead, revealing God's will for our lives and the life of the Church.*

Bells Toll the Hour

Welcome and Announcements *(teaching gestures and congregational music)*

\*Passing of the Peace

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

\*Call to Worship <sup>1</sup>

No hymn is more inspiring than the wind rustling the leaves of the deep forest,  
**no sanctuary more hallowed than the snow-touched mountains,**  
no prayer or praise more glorious than the sweep of the birds before the morning sun.  
**The holy lives all around us, the sacred grows beneath our feet.**

Creation writes its own testimony of faith,  
**presenting us each day with a reason to believe and a mission to fulfill.**

Here, on this brilliant blue planet,  
on this emerald ball dancing before the stars, is our temple,

**our place of worship,**

our spiritual home...

**our once and future heaven.**

Special Music

“Canticle of Brother Sun”

Jim Scott & Paul Winter

*see insert for congregational part*

\*Invocation <sup>2</sup>

God of hope and wonder, God of earth and sea, God of love and glory,  
we give you thanks for all the ordinary wonders of each new day:

**for bees and butterflies, for primrose and pansy,**

**for the sweetness of strawberries and the tartness of lemonade.**

We give you thanks for the countless forms of beauty that tell us of your abundant love:

**for all the colors of skin and hair and eyes that adorn the members of your Body,**

**for all the languages and sounds in which we sing and pray,**

**for all the hopes and dreams, that help us to live the vision of your holy realm.**

Because Christ is always risen,

**we give our thanks and praise to you aloud and in the silence of our hearts.**

**Amen.**

Special Music

“Kyrie” - Animal: Alaskan Tundra Wolf

Paul Winter & Paul Halley

“Sanctus and Benedictus” - Animal: Humpback Whale

Paul Winter, Oscar Castro-Neves & Paul Halley

Scripture Reading

Adaptation from Genesis 1:1-2:2

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Now the earth was a formless void. There was darkness over the deep.

God's spirit hovered over the water...

**“And God saw that it was good.”**

God said, “Let there be light and there was light. God saw that the light was good.

God divided light from darkness. God called the light, “day” and the darkness, “night”...

**“And God saw that it was good.”**

God said, “Let the waters under the heavens come together into a single mass and let dry land appear.” And so it was. God called the dry land, earth, and the mass of waters, sea...

**“And God saw that it was good.”**

God said, “Let the earth produce vegetation; seed-bearing plants and trees bearing fruit with their seeds inside. And so it was...

**“And God saw that it was good.”**

God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate day from night and mark the fixed times. God made the two great lights, the greater one to govern the day and the lesser one to govern the night. And God made the stars...

**“And God saw that it was good.”**

God said, “Let the waters teem with living creatures, and let the birds fly above the earth within the vault of heaven. And so it was. God blessed them saying, “Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the seas and let the birds multiply upon the earth”...

**“And God saw that it was good.”**

Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth all kinds of living creatures; cattle, creeping things, and wild animals of all kinds.” And so it happened...

**“And God saw that it was good.”**

God said, “Let us make humankind in our image to be like us. Let them be stewards of the fish of the sea, the birds of the heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts, and all the reptiles that crawl upon the earth.” And so it was...

**“And God saw that it was very good.”**

Thus the heavens and the earth and all their array were completed. On the seventh day God had finished all the work of creation, and so, on that seventh day, God rested.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

\*Hymn #22

"All Creatures of Our God and King"

*All creatures of our God and King, lift up your voice and with us sing;  
Alleluia, Alleluia!*

*O burning sun with golden beam, O silver moon with softer gleam,  
O praise God, O praise God, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!*

*O rushing wind with voice so strong, you clouds that sail in heav'n along,  
O praise God, Alleluia!*

*O rising morn, in praise rejoice, you lights of evening find a voice,  
O praise God, O praise God, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!*

*O flowing water, pure and clear, make music for your God to hear,  
Alleluia, Alleluia!*

*O blazing fire who lights the night, providing warmth, enhancing sight,  
O praise God, O praise God, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!*

*And all forgiven tender hearts, forgiving others, take your part,  
sing praises, Alleluia!*

*You who long pain and sorrow bear, praise God, who knows your ev'ry care.  
O praise God, O praise God, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!*

Call for the Offering

Offertory

"Agnus Dei"

Paul Winter &amp; Jim Scott

Animal: Harp Seal

Prayer of Intercession<sup>3</sup>

*During the silence after each bidding, the people offer their own prayers silently.*

Let us pray for the revealing of the reign of God in the world, now and always.

In the beginning, **God was.**

Here and now, **God is.**

In the future, **God will be.**

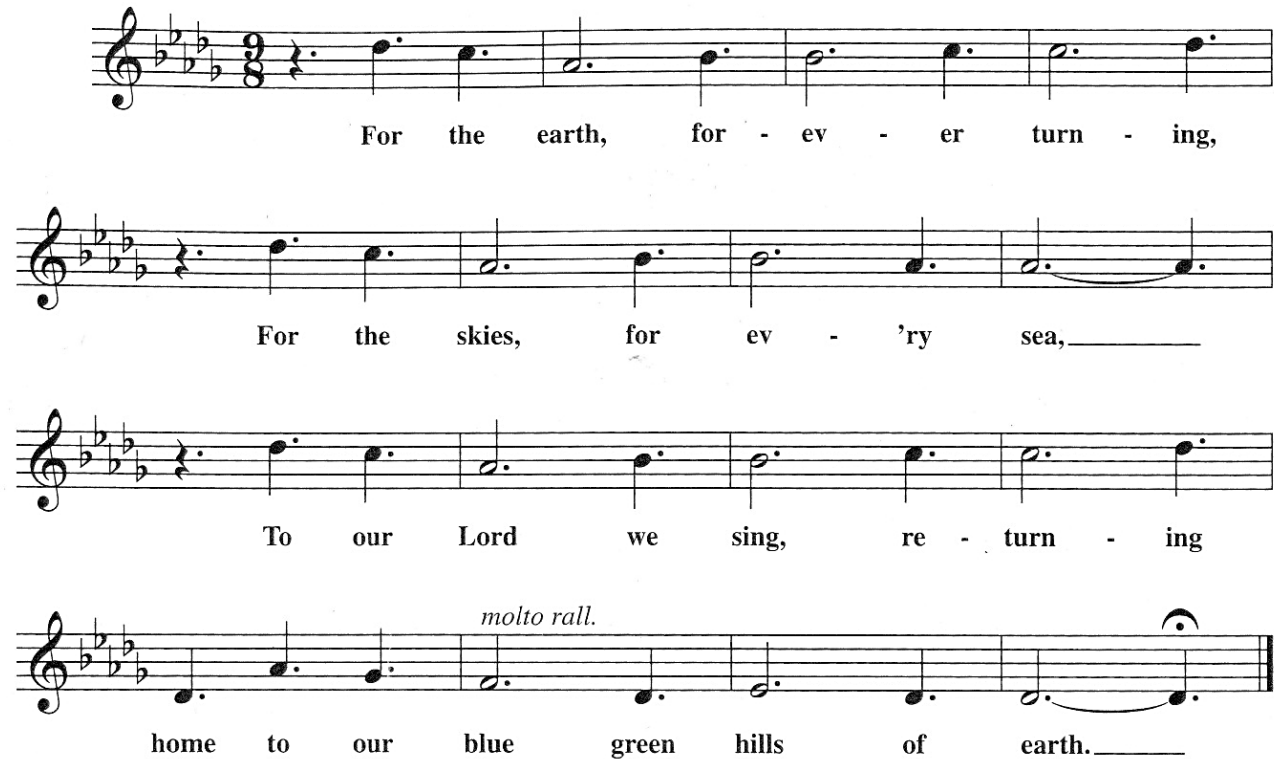
*Silence*

God, Giver of life, **hear our prayer.** *(repeat after each bidding)*

Let us join our voices together to pray as Jesus taught us:

**+Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory  
forever. Amen.** (+Our Father/O Holy One)

Lois André, solo



For the earth, for - ev - er turn - ing,

For the skies, for ev - 'ry sea, \_\_\_\_\_

To our Lord we sing, re - turn - ing

*molto rall.*  
home to our blue green hills of earth. \_\_\_\_\_

## Blessing of the Soil

Closing Prayer <sup>4</sup>

May we always walk gently upon the Earth, in right relationship, nurtured by your love, open to the wind of the Spirit, taking only what we need, always open to the needs of others, making choices that bring wellbeing, living with generosity, striving for justice, honoring all with reverence, reconciling and peacemaking, mindful of those who will come after, recognizing our proper place as part of your creation.

**Grant us the strength and courage, Lord, for such a radical transformation into your Kingdom. Amen.**

## Concluding Music

"Let Us Depart in Peace"  
["Canticle of Brother Sun" Reprise]  
*see insert for congregational part*

Jim Scott &amp; Paul Winter

**\*Please rise in body or spirit.**

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Deacon of the Day: Kim Seserman

Ushers: Dennis & Patti Goyette, Lisa Sherman

Greeters: Bob Bullard, Dottie Damon

The Rev. J. Mary Luti, Ph. D. is a retired seminary professor and pastor, having taught for more than 24 years in the fields of Christian History and Liturgy at Andover Newton Theological School, where she also served as Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Director of the Wilson Chapel. From 2000-2008 she served as Senior Minister of First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, United Church of Christ, in Harvard Square.

A member of the United Church of Christ Stillspeaking Writers' Group, she is a regular contributor to the UCC Daily Devotional, and the author of books and articles on various aspects of Christian life, history and practice, as well as a frequent keynoter, retreat, and workshop leader.

### "Canticle of Brother Sun (Let Us Depart in Peace)"

Tune: ADORE TE DEVOTE (13th Century Plainsong)

For the beau - ty of the Earth,  
sing oh sing to - day.  
Of the sky and of our birth,  
sing oh sing al - ways.  
Na - ture, hu - man and di - vine,  
all a - round us lies. Lord of  
(Source)  
all, to thee we raise grate - ful hymns of  
praise. *molto rit.* Broth - er Sun.

## Musicians and Participants for “Missa Gaia”

The Chancel Choir of Dennis Union Church and Friends  
Ben Colgan, Piano                      Mason Allison, Bass  
Claudia Landall, Organ                Matthias Bossi, Percussion  
Earl Harmon, Soprano Sax              Margaret Bossi, Conductor  
St. Francis: Robbie Furey

Production design, visuals and engineering created by Victoria Schuh, Susan Overstreet and Jeff Drake  
Sound: Jim Sherman. Tech Crew: Sally Bullard, Pat Burke, Amy & Luke Furey, Sue Schofield, Lisa Sherman.  
Wardrobe: Carole Green-Weishaupt (choir stoles) and Karen Belfontaine (St. Francis’ robe).  
Special thanks to Dan Rabold for sound assistance.

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### A Note About the Visuals

In the creation of *Missa Gaia*, Paul Winter and company have interwoven his signature lyrical melodies with wolf, whale and harp seal voices from the wild. Along with these, animals are depicted that are either directly endangered or are suffering from the loss of habitat. These include: the black rhino, African elephant, the Sumatran tiger, the Bornean orangutan, the whooping crane, the polar bear and the loon. The banners depicting the rain forest, arctic, savanna, and coral reef are intended to draw attention to habitat destruction, which unchecked, will endanger life on our miraculous, sacred earth.

### LOOKING AHEAD

Monday, May 25 - Memorial Day Holiday - Church Office Closed  
Sunday, May 31 - HAC Walk for Hope -- see hallway board to sign up  
Friday, June 5 - Memorial Service for Mary Morrison at 11 am  
Sunday, June 7 and 14 - New Member Classes  
Sunday, June 14 - Youth Sunday  
Sunday, June 21 - Receive New Members during worship

### EASY STEPS TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

1. **Reduce food waste:** Plan meals, don't overbuy, store food properly. Compost food scraps. Dennis Transfer Station has two receptacles for food waste which then gets distributed to our local farmers.
2. **Save energy at home:** Call Cape Light Compact for a home energy audit. It costs nothing and will provide you with many suggestions about how you can save energy and lower your electric and heating/cooling costs.
3. **Protect Cape water:** Become a member of our Association to Preserve Cape Cod ([apcc.org/get-involved](http://apcc.org/get-involved)) for updates and education about the work they are doing to improve the quality of our lakes, ponds, streams and to replenish wetlands and cranberry bogs.
4. **Protect the Ocean:** Tell United States Senators to support the Global Ocean Treaty.

5. **Conserve water at home:** Install low flow toilets, abide by town water restrictions and use rain barrels (available through APCC).
6. **Eliminate use of pesticides and insecticides:** Everything we put in our gardens and on our lawns eventually runs off into our lakes, ponds and ocean. Pesticides kill and repel organisms thought to be pests. Insecticides kill insects. Pesticides and insecticides kill everything around the organism and insects they were designed to kill. Remember birds eat insects.
7. **Plant pollinator gardens:** They provide critical ecological support by creating habitats for bees, butterflies and moths, aiding in the recovery of 40% of threatened insect species.

*Thanks to Nancy Davison for sharing this information!*

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**Dennis Union Church**  
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**Dennis, Massachusetts 02638 508-385-3543 [www.duchurch.org](http://www.duchurch.org)**

Pastor: Rev. Nancy S. McHugh  
Director of Music: Margaret Bossi  
Director of Faith Formation for Youth & Adults: Doreen Mayer  
Children's Ministries Coordinator: Evy Nickerson  
Finance Secretaries: Elise Gordon and Doreen Mayer  
Office Administrator: Jane Wilson  
Sexton: Dave Crocker