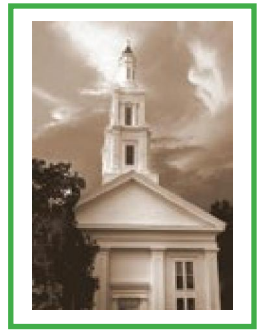


UUMH Newsletter

236 Commercial Street • Provincetown • Massachusetts

April 2022



"The members of the UU Meeting House hold sacred each individual's spiritual and ethical development. We welcome all and seek unity in diversity. We commit ourselves in service to the wellbeing of the congregation and to all of life."

~Mission Statement of the Unitarian Universalist Meeting House of Provincetown

*"Perhaps the secret of
living well
is not in having all
the answers,
but in pursuing
unanswerable questions
in good company."*

Rachel Naomi Remen



In January we thought about the body and in February we reflected on the mind, in March we danced with the idea of soul or spirit.

This month, April, we are pondering Divine Intervention. and that leads us to another--what do you think prayer is? Many religions believe in “intercessory” prayer. From the Latin to “interpose on behalf of,” an intercessory prayer is a plea to God to help someone else. The person praying is asking their sovereign God to intervene, to help.

We can put “Intervening” in the miracle category on the one hand and find abundant examples in the Bible and literature and, perhaps experience. On the other end of this intervention spectrum, is the category where the person believes God “intervenes” constantly, guiding and shaping all our daily lives. Somewhere in this, too, is the person who relates to the natural world as God’s creation. Experiencing life and reality through that understanding might bring a person to a pantheistic sense that God or a belief that God’s spirit is “in” every thing. That is intervention on a non-sovereign yet all pervasive scale.

Whew. Meanwhile, there are those who understand “intervention” as a misconstruing of what human “free will” is. We know we are free (free to do evil or good, help or harm) because certainly an intervening God (we are presuming a loving, caring God) would step in, interfere, intervene, stop the carnage, the illness, the tsunami, the war. Think of the havoc that might create...seriously.

Some understand life, and God, and prayer as “energy”--for want of a better word. When we pray, perhaps we are sending our energy out into the world and that energy links into the energy of the person in need, say, or links into the Divine Energy that is perhaps everywhere, sending healing vibrations. My friend, Kathleen Short, says, “Sending you loving energy!” I have to say, I seem to feel it when she sends it.

Do you think there is a God who intervenes? Does our prayer accomplish something?

Worship Worship Worship
Worship Worship Worship
Worship Worship Worship April



We are Live
and
On-line!
Sundays
11 am
Please register
beforehand
at uumh.org

We will be live-streaming via YouTube.

join in at 11 am
www.uumh.org

Click on Sermons

A note from Rev. Kate A note from Rev. Kate A note from Rev. Kate



Daffodils, Pansies, and... you!



Even though I warned you all that the Spring Equinox would not protect us from winter's last blast, I was not thoroughly prepared for the 2 inches of snow that we received the other day. I'm crossing my fingers that the daffodils and pansies that we planted in the large pots lining the walkway of the Meeting House will pull through. The folks at the garden shop assured me they would.

Pansies and daffodils are hardy, and so are we! They can handle a little snow. We can handle a few more weeks of cold. We can handle some of the other challenges that life is facing us with right now. Often life hands us more than we think we can manage, yet somehow we do. I've never believed in that oft given advice "God never gives you more than you can handle." For one thing, I don't believe in a deity who metes out punishment, rewards or challenge on an individual basis. For another thing I do believe that we all have a tipping point at which it all actually does become too much for us. But I'm constantly surprised at how very far out that tipping point usually is. At how very much we can get through, especially when we have a little support.



My heart is full these days as friends and family and UUMH family face so many struggles. I'm not going to tell any of them/you that God never hands you more than you can handle. But I am going to remind you that you are hardy. That you can do hard things. That you are not alone. That I and we are here for you. And that spring is on its way!

Photos of snowy daffodils in Rev. Kate's and also Ellen's yards!

Hang in there!
Rev. Kate

A Committee Report



Membership Committee, Ada Park Snider

The Membership Committee has gone through many phases in the 17 years that I have been a member of the UUMH of Provincetown. Just as the moon looks different in its many phases, so has this committee. Many people are unaware, when the moon isn't visible in the sky, of what stage it is in, and that is the phase of this com-

mittee right now – barely visible. We keep the Directory of Members and Friends up-to-date, and last spring we helped Rev Kate welcome new members virtually. We were the folks who greeted people at the Welcome Table and recorded attendance, including visitors each Sunday. A few years before, we would have welcomed new members in a special in person service on a Sunday morning, organized a pot luck to help new members meet with each other socially and to meet the Board Members. We would have encouraged other social events like the community pancake breakfast, or a reading group, a craft group, a cooking group, or a history of UU members writing project. Longer ago there was a book sale each year, and a strawberry festival on Family Weekend, selling strawberry shortcake and lemonade outside-- whenever possible we'd have a clown, face painting, and sometimes live music – a band or a singer. Pastor Brenda Haywood told me that in earlier times each new member class was encouraged to cooperate on a project – to hold a dance, show a film, contribute to the upkeep of the various spaces in the meeting house.

New ideas from new members – ideas brought from other places, or remembered from earlier days – helped the membership get to know each other in a social way. One of our current members organized a drum circle during Women's Week. It has always been the effort of those who could offer time to such projects, some of which continued, some of which vanished with waning enthusiasm.

But now, in this still dark, pre-dawn phase of Covid,
now is the time to imagine and dream what it might be like to be an in-person social congregation again –

to recreate committees who have been "active" only virtually – to offer to members whatever ideas, enthusiasm, or time we have available for virtual, in-person, or hybrid activity, all to bring us together as the unique and caring community that we are.

From the Board

From the Board

From the Board



As I transition into my new role as Treasurer for UUMH's Board of Directors, I am pleased to report that we are in good shape financially! As far as I can tell, this is because of the great generosity of our members. Many churches, over the course of this pandemic, have not been so fortunate. Thank you so much to all of you for contributions large and small.

UUMH invests through the Unitarian Universalist Common Endowment Fund (UUCEF). This affords us income that is used for operating expenses. Recently I listened in on their quarterly investors' conference call. The overall UUCEF endowment is about 275 million, while our investment is about 1.3 million. As you may be aware, 2022 hasn't gotten off to a very good start in terms of the market. But the important thing to know about UUCEF is that they are a socially responsible investor (SRI). This means that they make money while making a difference. Being an SRI is not just about avoiding bad companies, it includes making decisions based on human rights and environmental issues.

On the call, they talked about how they are working to move investments to private markets and recently they made a \$4 million investment in "Generation Investment Management," an impact private equity fund focused on making investments in firms that provide sustainable solutions in transportation, agriculture, energy and industrials. (Al Gore is a founding partner.) 90% of the UUCEF is still in the public markets, however. There was also a very interesting presentation on a loan to a company who will align capital to those who really need it in the BIPOC community for small business start-ups.

There were questions about how the sanctions against Russia are affecting the endowment and discussion ensued, but any impact is still very much unknown at this point. The UUA cannot just pull investments out of Russia since those funds are "pooled."

Bottom line is that we can trust our funds are in good hands.

Happy Spring and no stress over IRS deadlines!!
Kat Black, Treasurer

JOIN RACIAL JUSTICE PROVINCETOWN FOR

A SILENT VIGIL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

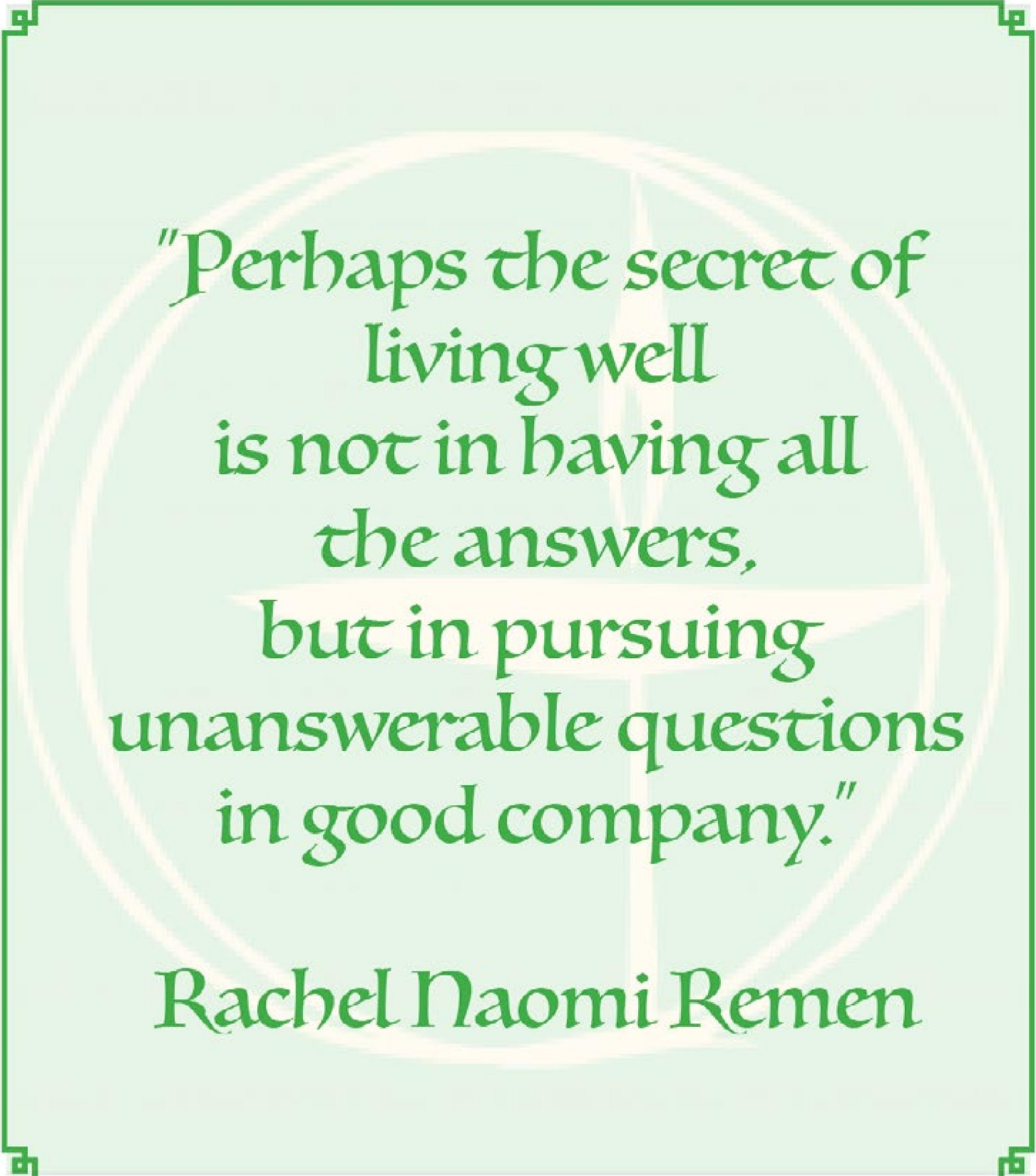


**THE FIRST
SATURDAY**
OF EVERY MONTH

**FROM NOON
UNTIL 1PM**
AT TOWN HALL ON
COMMERCIAL STREET

**WEAR A MASK AND MAINTAIN
SOCIAL DISTANCING OF 6 FEET**

[FACEBOOK.COM/PROVINCETOWNRACIALJUSTICEPROJECT](https://www.facebook.com/provincetownracialjusticeproject)



*"Perhaps the secret of
living well
is not in having all
the answers,
but in pursuing
unanswerable questions
in good company."*

Rachel Naomi Remen



“I used to believe that prayer changes things but now I know
prayer changes us and we change things.”

Mother Teresa

“If the only prayer you
said was thank you, that
would be enough.”

Meister Eckhart

“Be grateful for whoever
comes
because each has been
sent as a guide from
beyond”

Rumi

Poets' Corner



The James Webb Space Telescope, 2 by Heather Ferguson

Out in space, a fragmented eye
follows earth's orbit.

Loop after loop, the cup
scoops up luminous mist.

Fingers play over keyboards:
shall it be many or one?

Let's smooth this shattered mirror,
let's apply the weight of a hair, a snowflake,
the downbeat of wings skimming a lake.

The hexagons slowly merge.
Suddenly the blind see and
the dead walk among us.

The eye traces lineages
teased from invisible whispers.

Bard and soothsayer,
now smooth and whole,
the eye weaves cat's cradles,

tells campfire tales,

and traces the path

back to the first dawn.

Praying

It doesn't have to be
the blue iris, it could be
weeds in a vacant lot, or a few
small stones; just
pay attention, then patch

a few words together and don't try
to make them elaborate, this isn't
a contest but the doorway

into thanks, and a silence in which
another voice may speak.

— Mary Oliver, *Thirst*



Romans 12:12-19 says,

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.
Share with God's people who are in need. Practice
hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Re-
joice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.
Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be
willing to associate with people of low
position. Do not be conceited.

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is
right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it
depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take
revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it
is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.



Unitarian theologian, Theodore Parker (b. 1810) wrote that Divinity expresses Divinity through creation to the level of the capacity for consciousness in the created being. So, the inanimate, or the vegetative, say, are far less capable of being conscious of their inner deity than is the human, but, nonetheless, even the animal and the vegetable are on that continuum. Creation itself could be called a sacrament of God's intervention in the world in that God is "in" the world, expressing divinity "through" the world.

Perhaps the lesson is that in quieting the mind so we can connect with the natural world as well as with our own inner reality, we connect with God. This relationship changes how we act and has the power to bring healing to the world.

And here is something else to ponder for UUMH-ers: the humanists, the agnostics, the atheists, the pagans, the Christians, the Jews, the Muslims, etc. among us all agree that we human beings have the capacity to act for the greater good. When the heart seems to cry out, Oh help me! help me! in the face of sickness or disaster, famine or war, tragedy or malevolence, some call that cry prayer. Some would say those prayers are answered by an outside force called God, some would say those prayers are answered by an inner source called God, some would say those cries are answered by human beings who take compassionate action.

To me this sounds like agreement on the question of intervention, be it divine or otherwise, but perhaps we should call it inner-vention.


Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Phil. 4:8



God is depending on us
for the mending:
the loving, and caring,
and healing
and such
And gives us creation
and freedom and
wisdom
and prays that we use
them
for loving and caring
and healing
to touch
one another.
God sent are we.
Oh
and
God sending.
KMH



Photo: Marty Cowden



PROVINCETOWN, MA --On Sunday April 3 at 5pm, the Unitarian Universalist Meeting House of Provincetown (236 Commercial Street) and pianist John Thomas will present a concert of meditative and inspiring music to raise funds to help Ukrainians inside and outside of their home country.

The concert will include Ukrainian folk melodies, compositions by Ukrainians, and other music intended to provide a sonic environment for reflection and action.

100% of the free will donations collected at the concert will directly benefit the Ukrainian people. Half of the donations will be sent to the International Rescue Committee, and half will be sent to Oastea Domnului Chisinau, a church in Moldova that is directly involved in housing, feeding and helping refugees crossing the southwestern border of Ukraine.

Health and safety precautions at the concert are in effect, including indoor masking and social distancing.

The concert will be live-streamed on the YouTube “Great Music on Sundays @5” channel and will remain available for several days thereafter. Links for donations will be listed under the viewing screen.

More information: 508.487.9344 (UUMH office phone)

International Rescue Committee:
<https://www.rescue.org>

<https://johnwthomas.com>

<https://ptownmusic.com>

<https://www.uumh.org>

<https://www.youtube.com/c/GreatMusiconSundaysat5>

Ed.: Apologies that the newsletter came out after this concert--but we can still donate and we can catch it, still, on youtube.



From John Thomas: This is Anne MacAdam's hand and my hand when we visited together at Seashore Point on April 15, 2021. I noticed just before I held her hand that we had almost the same shirt. We both liked long-sleeved plaid shirts in all seasons but summer. And looking back now on that moment, I am more aware that in those few seconds we held the hands of art and music together. Human hands of divine creations in sight and sound. Anne was (and is) one of my dearest mentors and supporters and guides in my life so far. A true friend for 32 years (since my arrival here as a seasonal and then year-round Provincetowner in 1990).

Love is the Spirit of this Meeting House

Among Ourselves



The Quilt

You pull the tiny
stitches through your
layers,

Pattern on pattern:
An uneven measure,
A wheel of calico when
gingham was planned,
A pucker where the
layers have not met,
yet.

Imperfect.
Better than perfect
would be.

I am a stitch or two in
your quilt.
You pulled me through
the layers of yourself.
And I will be there al-
ways.

And you, too, are
stitches in mine,
Especially remembered
in love and gratitude,
When, cold,
I reach for warm.

KMH

Every month, it seems, we have a page commemorating yet another life lost or tragically wounded because of systemic racism. If we fight the good fight together, if we make “good trouble,” we can change the world.



We started this page two years ago and we have listed many, many sad and horrific injustices.

For 2022, let's list the positive challenges that are being made to the system that has created such havoc and destruction in the lives of its citizenry. For 2022, let's proclaim the acts of righteousness that stake the just claim for dignity and respect. Let's tell those stories, always remembering that good trouble can change the world.

Here's one:



Amanda Gorman

We've braved the belly of the
beast,
We've learned that quiet isn't
always peace,
and the norms and notions
of what just is
isn't always just-ice.
Somehow we've weathered and
witnessed
a nation that isn't broken,
but simply unfinished.

Excerpt from "The Hill We Climb."

Getting to Know You

--a new segment in the newsletter--interviews with a couple of lines telling us something we don't know about you! Compiled by Lorraine Kujawa



In high school I played in the class play as a lady of the evening. The only line I had to say was: "It will do you good!"

Dianne Kopser

*Editor's Note:
okay, Dianne, we ALL
want to know where
you went to high
school!*

In 1962, I “borrowed” my sister’s prom dress, put it on and went out on the town in drag!”

Jimmy Rann

Ed. Note: Blue is definitely your color, Jimmy.





From the Editor

[Ed. For a number of years now, Rev. Kate and I have had a seasonal discussion of the celebration of Easter at the UUMH. You don't need me to tell you that she always listens, empathizes, analyzes, and moves a discussion forward. She is well aware that I wrestle when it comes to UU Easter. Her insights are always helpful to me, but my discomfort still remains despite her kind and thoughtful responses and her patient and wise sermons on Easter.]

For a Christian, the belief in resurrection of Jesus Christ the Son of God from the dead is perhaps the central tenet of the faith. In 1 Cor. 15, Paul says, "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is without foundation, and so is your faith." Much theological ink has been spilled on the topic of the Resurrection of Jesus, no need to go into it here. This is my point: As UUs we welcome all faith traditions and we promise to respect them.

Let's put a pin that.

For ancient pagans, the Saxon celebration of Eostre (note "Easter" is probably a derivative of this word) heralded the Spring Equinox and honored renewal and fertility. Many ancient cultures had rituals for this time of year.

A Sumerian legend [<https://www.christianity.com/wiki/holidays/what-are-the-pagan-roots-of-easter.html>], similar to the more familiar Greek myth of Persephone and Demeter, tells of the married couple Tammuz and Ishtar. Tammuz dies and Ishtar in deep grief follows him to the underworld where she is judged and killed. After Ishtar is missing three days, Ishtar's aide goes to the gods and asks for help. Help comes in this form: Ishtar and Tammuz are granted the ability to come back to the living every six months (explaining the cycle of the seasons). We have a resurrection. During the three days of Ishtar's death the myth explains that all that is fertile on earth ceases to be so--crops die, animals stop bearing, nothing grows. The resurrection of Ishtar means that fertility is renewed. There is also a Germanic myth based on Eostre rituals that describes a woman named Ostara (again, a word probably derived from Eostre) who found a wounded bird in the woods and healed it by changing it into a hare. Because it was still partly a bird, it laid eggs to thank Ostara for healing her. Put a pin in that!

Now jump forward to recent centuries and we have Madison Avenue and Hallmark and ca-Ching, ca-Ching cash registers touting candy bunnies, marshmallow chickies, plastic eggs, and fabulous headwear. SIGH.

If you are a pagan, the Spring Equinox—or, if a Christian, the festival of the Resurrection of Jesus-- is extremely important to you. If you are a UU, respecting and honoring how important these holy days are to others is fundamental to your own faith. So, I wish we UUs would call the service we hold on Easter Sunday something like, "Respecting the Christian Easter."

Easter is deep and significant and OLD and it means something specific to millions of people on earth. As UUs, we are called to be respectful of our Christian brothers and sisters as well as to those in other denominations and to the nonbelievers. KMH

Praying isn't magic that makes the tragic disappear.
Praying isn't memorizing lines.
In the silence we sense that God is near.
Praying opens our eyes.

I never say it lightly when I say I'll pray for you.
I say the prayer nightly when I say I'll pray for you.
I say the prayer day by day when I say I'll pray for you.
I never say it lightly when I say I'll pray for you.

Praying is my love song, my promise to be true
Face to face with God, shoulder to shoulder with you.
I never say it lightly when I say I'll pray for you

Praying isn't magic, isn't memorizing lines,
Praying is my love song and my vow.
In the silence we see within our eyes
Praying shows us the here, the now.
KMH

