

The Marshan Chronicles

For regular supporters of BALM Ministries.



From top left: me with Jim East; Rev. Nancy with the Barbaras; Cindy playing and me singing at Rev. Collis' ordination; me with Bob and Lawrence; me with Rev. Catherine and Nancy

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We started August out with a couple of special celebrations. MCC Tampa was celebrating their 50th anniversary – two years delayed because of Covid. That was fun to catch up with people we don't get to see so often. Rev. Jakob invited me to sing. I would try to list all the wonderful people I caught up with there, but I'd miss someone. Rev. Phyllis Hunt preached. I saw my sweet friend Chad & managed a picture with Lawrence & Bob that you can see above.

We drove up to Trinity MCC in Gainesville the next weekend for their 40th anniversary. They have a trailer hookup so we were able to spend the whole weekend with them in their celebration. Rev. Catherine Dearlove had recent losses in her family, so it meant a lot to us to be there with them. Rev. Nancy Wilson & her wife Paula came up on Sunday. We were surrounded by friends.

I think most of you have heard by now that our lovely little trip up the east coast for 4 weeks was rudely interrupted. We were supposed to head up to Massachusetts in the second week of August, right after

our visit to Gainesville. But on August 4th Cindy was diagnosed with breast cancer. It was not a shocking diagnosis because several women in her family have had breast cancer. (Genetic testing was negative.) Cindy & her oncology surgeon decided pretty quickly on a double mastectomy & the surgeon had an opening on August 15th, so we postponed our trip. Everything started out as expected & Cindy came home the same night. But my "Oh, Cindy is strong & will heal quickly - I'll just have a hard time keeping her in bed" ended when she started having terrible symptoms at home. The surgeon had told us to call if there were any problems, but no one answered my pages. Apparently, a new guy on the phones texted the surgeon instead of paging, which of course did not wake the surgeon. I hesitated to call EMS. I wasn't sure they would listen to me or even if they would take Cindy back to the same hospital where she'd had surgery, so I called & left messages for everyone in our church. About 5am, sweet Jim LaChappell answered & came immediately. He helped me get Cindy into the car & I drove her back to the hospital. On the drive, I finally reached the surgeon, so the ER was ready when we got there. I think there were 8 doctors who went immediately to work on her.

The next few days were dramatic even for this drama diva. She had two severe medication reactions. One caused heart damage the other caused kidney damage. They had to reopen her surgical site to clear out hematomas. Five days later, she was stable enough to come home again. My church family was with us every moment, even keeping watch so that I could sleep. She came home on my birthday, the 20th and said, "Oh honey. I didn't even get you a card. Well, I didn't die. So happy birthday!"

Today is Aug 30th, our 20th wedding anniversary. She is healing & doctors feel confident that she is strong & enough of an athlete to heal completely. Unsurprisingly, all of her doctors & nurses loved her & even in her bed, she tried to grin for the camera:



We plan to fly together to Maryland for a concert at Covenant United Methodist. The surgeon says Cindy can fly. We cannot thank all of you enough for your prayers.

With great thanks, Marsha & Cindy

BALM Ministries P.O. Box 14937, Bradenton FL 34280-4937 www.BalmMinistries.net

Cindy's Mission Work

Many thanks for those of you who have chosen to support Cindy on her mission trips. She is working with a ministry centered in St Petersburg that plans to have more in the future.

Please be assured that all of the donations you sent are in savings for her opportunities to travel!

We will let you know when she schedules more trips.

(Cindy is also a keynote speaker at Evangelicals Concerned this summer:

<https://ecinc.org/cindy-stevens-pino/>)

You can support BALM when you shop online

You probably know that Amazon has stopped its auto-donations through AmazonSmile. This is a loss for Balm Ministries. Amazon made it very easy to support us online. Igive.com is a good substitute for us, but more work for you.

You can read the instructions for igive.com online but the simple thing is this: when you want to shop online at a major store, you go first to www.igive.com/BALM. You put your info in & then it gives you a list of most stores you've ever heard of. So, for instance, you go to igive.com/BALM & pick BestBuy, it takes you to that site & you order whatever you want to online. All your coupons & 'special deals' still apply. There's no extra charge to you at all, but that way, they automatically donate part of their profit to BALM Ministries.

Prayer List & Ministry Opportunities

- ✠ Prayers for Justin's husband, Scott, who has been diagnosed with an especially aggressive form of colon cancer. And please remember to pray for Justin, too, as he battles fears for another loved one with cancer. Scott has started chemo.
- ✠ Prayers for Cindy's complete healing.

- ✠ Prayers for Justin's new weekly recording called Southern Gospel Sissy. Every week he covers the history and make up of another gospel group or song, with clips of their previous concerts, and then sings his own version of the song. Look on YouTube under "Justin Ryan Southern Gospel" (my favorite is <https://youtu.be/xOK2lXx2JjE?si=QIA1UC43hef1rGx>)

- ✠ Prayers that we can get back out on the road sharing Good News!

What You Have to Say

"I got to perform Come to the Water on request at our church yesterday.

Our speaker requested it and although I had not heard it in years, I was able to pull it off. Thank you for writing it! She and I are both 'vintage' that when we sang it, the song was new. I was not aware of your story. I am now! Thanks again and God bless you."

"We sing FTTID in church and people weep. It is a presbyterian church and our people know the story. Your influence is far greater than you can ever imagine."

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"Thank you from Korea. This is also a famous Gospel song here and it was good to see on YouTube the original singer/author."

"I sang For Those Tears and loved it since I heard the Speers release of the song. I just found your website. Now I know why it resonated so much with me. I'm getting your book!"

"I feel blessed, really blessed, to have shared in your music ministry because it uplifted me more than you could ever know. Thank you, Marsha, for being obedient in carrying out the Great Commission."

"Last night about 3am and the chorus of For Those Tears came to mind as I was praying for a young police officer in critical condition, and for the families of those who died after a recent shooting. This was a song I often sang and played on my guitar as a teenager and the Lord brought the words of peace and comfort to mind. So wonderful to find you on YouTube and hear you sing this morning."

Upcoming ministry opportunities

August 30th – Marsha and Cindy's 20th wedding anniversary

Sept 10 Covenant United Methodist Church, Montgomery Village, Maryland 10am special music, Concert/picnic after church
www.covenant-umc.org

Sept 22 at 6:30 Church of the Trinity MCC in Pierce Hall. Marsha and Cindy in artist-in-residence concert.
www.trinitymcc.com

Oct 26-28 Reconcile and Reform in Nashville, TN
www.reformationproject.org

Nov 3 at 6:30 Church of the Trinity MCC in Pierce Hall. Marsha and Cindy in artist-in-residence concert...again! www.trinitymcc.com

Nov 11-12 concert and special music at New Life Community Gospel Church, New Port Richey, FL
Marsha and Cindy in concert

(watch the website for updates)

Please consider reaching me at ssbalm@aol.com to book something for your church! We have no fees required at this time!!

A word from a longtime supporter of Balm ministries: ChristianGays.com is a community for ALL LGBT people to meet & develop friendships based on faith & other common interests. We offer Chat Rooms & Forums, & all information is private, accessible to members only. WE need this now more than ever! Join at www.ChristianGays.com