

The Marshan Chronicles

For regular supporters of BALM Ministries.



Cindy is so happy to be outdoors now that winter seems to be over. Very sad to miss mission trips, though.



The puppies happy and snug guarding their humans at home. And me in the backyard trying to record a message for a Balm Ministry message for a church.



April 2020, Volume 24, Number 4

Well, above is a sort of picture of life as we now know it. What a difference a month makes!! Cindy is going nuts not being able to HELP someone. Her mission trips were canceled. Then she tried to volunteer for local tornado clean up, but that was shortly closed to volunteers. She is working from home full time and they have her focusing purely on getting insurance companies to pay their claims. Usually there's this whole runaround of them denying something and the hospital has 30 days or so to appeal the denial and then another round of denials and appeals over 90 days and so on. Some insurances have actually denied things over failing to get pre-approval for your heart attack or for your premature baby to go to NICU (neonatal ICU). And you can imagine that now of all times, hospitals need bills paid in a timely manner so that staff can be paid and medications and equipment properly stocked. BUT, Cindy has way more energy that she needs for that, so the dogs are getting VERY long job/walks and her bicycle is out on the empty streets.

I am in the backyard or the living room attending or leading Bible studies for our church, calling older (than I!) congregants (including one who assures me that 90 is the new 70), and getting ready for Easter music online. I'm also working the phones for Vanderbilt 20 hours a week

helping people get the lab work they need, their prescriptions appropriately filled, and talking to people who are home with COVID 19.

The dogs, as you may imagine, are the only ones who are thrilled with the situation. Why sleeping on the sofa WITH humans is so much better than sleeping on the sofa WITHOUT humans is not clear to me, but they love it.

The main thing I miss is singing and seeing all of you. We are going to (try to) make all the music on the website free starting April 8th. Sooner if I can figure it out! I hope that will help a little. Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson and I are going to do a Zoom Easter Sunrise service online in Florida (Eastern Standard) time. I will post the link on my facebook page AND on the www.BalmMinistries.net website. Orgena Rose, who was one of the first upBeat! artists to go through the Balm Ministries program (and who has long since surpassed us all with her online presence!) is organizing an Easter concert at noon Pacific Standard Time. I'll post information on that in the same places.

If there are any of you who have online classes that you'd like me to participate in with a song – or a few songs – I'm set up to do that.

The only thing I did get to do in March, was the service at Gresham United Methodist Church near Portland Oregon where my son-in-law and daughter and granddaughters live and work. I'm so blessed that I got a chance to see them all before travel was restricted. Chris, my sweet son-in-law, did a video of my daughter, Naomi, and I singing For Those Tears so I'll try to get that on the website too.



Love and Gratitude, Marsha & Cindy

Cindy's Mission Work

Many thanks for those of you who have chosen to support Cindy on her mission trips. She is also working on ways to make the computer programs she uses available to all the missions she travels to, particularly to those our church runs in South Africa. The programs track everything from school attendance and performance to health and vaccination status to who is sponsoring that child or teacher and whether they are up to date on their donations. Unfortunately, as you might guess, the trips for this year have been canceled so far because of the concerns over COVID 19 (the new corona virus). Cindy is sad about this since she feels that people need the mission teams more than ever. But she also respects the concerns of the mission leaders. So for now, she is working on the computer programs for each of them, and writing to the kids we sponsor to keep in touch with them.



These were some of the Ugandan classrooms she set up before the temporary closure for COVID



You can support BALM when you shop online

(You can read the instructions 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.)

(I forget myself sometimes, but it makes a big difference if you can remember.)

Prayer List & Ministry Opportunities

- ✦ Praises for our church home in Brentwood United Methodist, & prayers for the changes that need to be made. Special prayers for guidance for us and our role/s here with "Draw the Circle Wide."
- ✦ Prayers that we may all keep on sharing the Good News with the least, the lost and the hungry – to give as we've been given to; to love because Jesus first loved us and we have SO much to give away.
- ✦ Prayers for wisdom as Cindy and I figure out our place in the middle of all this.
- ✦ Prayers for me to be able to set up more concerts online.

What You Have to Say

"I first heard For Those Tears in late 1971, soon after, I too met Jesus. The song was a salve for my soul as I struggled to make sense of my inner chaos Thank you for allowing yourself to be inspired by His love."

"Thank you for letting God use your talent? Countless souls are being drawn to the Gospel because of your masterpiece."

"Marsha, thank you thank you thank you for sharing your stories and songs (online). Thank you for trusting the Spirit's leading in your life. I am a trans and queer pastor of an affirming church in rural Arkansas. I grew up singing For Those Tears and always felt a connection to it. Now I'm so excited to add it to our worship set list at our inclusive church. Bless you."

"It's only been about 8 years since I first stumbled on your beautiful inspired song and I still love it. I'll bet you wrote this as if taking dictation...?"

I get this question a lot. I thought this might be a good time to answer it. I know that there are lots of times when a line in a song, or even a sermon, seems like it was just "written for me" and is a message from God. I think that's true. God is not limited in using us to bring heavenly messages to one another – or in bringing them at just the right time that we need them. But to me that only means that the writer or preacher is open and willing to be a vessel for the Lord. At the same time, I also believe that Jesus uses our own pain and redeems it to bless others. SO I don't feel like I just hold a pencil in my hand and wait for the automatic handwriting to start. Instead, it means we have to feel the pain we have, trust God to find a way to redeem it, be open to the Holy Spirit about how to share it, and then be willing to work on whatever craft we are called to in order to share it effectively. I don't feel like that is in any way stealing credit from the Holy Spirit. I feel like it's working to faithfully show God's redemption in our lives.

Upcoming travel

April 12 Easter! Hurray. I will do a Sunrise Service online with Nancy Wilson on Eastern Standard Time Noon Easter concert with Orgena Rose on Pacific Standard Time
Get on the website for links.

Please consider reaching me at ssbalm@aol.com to book something online for your church!

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 us now at <https://ChristianGays.com>