

# The Marshan Chronicles



Enjoying our new home – and the photo booth at the 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary of friends 😊

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Being in church is more of a blessing than we knew, isn't it? I love it. Singing "Stand Closer" in church for the first time was gratifying, too. The whole song is a labor of love and the accompanist did a wonderful job. Getting to see people's faces and talk afterward; such blessings after the past year.

Later in June Cindy and I were invited to participate in Jim and Carol Brix's 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Some of you remember that Jim figured prominently in getting out the book I wrote. He listened to stories, clarified details, honed down repetitiveness and most of all gave me encouragement. So it was a huge honor to be included in their celebration. Cindy prayed a beautiful prayer (of course) of blessing, reminding us that God had prepared for this moment from the beginning of time. I got to sing. Their daughter, and our friend, Trish, made a beautifully edited video of their lives – which included pictures of their kids' weddings, including her marriage to Jonna and we got to do more in-person fellowshipping! There was a lot of feeling of coming full circle. Carol has made a huge loving mother's journey in all this so it was time to bask in miracles, too.



For regular supporters of BALM Ministries.



So you can see the fun selfies when we hung out with the younger crowd...and the elderly folks who just asked someone else to take the pic 😊 (last column with Trish and Jonna, left with Jim and Carol.)

On the "what can we be praying for" front, I'm going to be having some surgeries in the next few months. The only one likely to impede travel is next week. Some of you have noticed that walking has become more and more difficult for me. Happily, walking is not necessary for singing! But the doc finally did an MRI of my left knee. Now, being an RN, I thought, "Well I'll just download the results and read them myself." That may have been a bit hopeful. While I know what each word means, I don't necessarily know what they mean all strung together. So "axial proton density" seems a little obtuse. But one thing I am pretty sure about is that nothing in one's body is supposed to be "severe" or "macerated." I'm thinking the maceration was the give away. Naturally, I've tried any number of alternatives but at this point, my left knee gets dislocated easily and is only put back in place with more pain and grinding than Cindy can handle.

So next week, I'll have surgery on the left knee and I would appreciate your prayers. It should only put me out of it for about 4 weeks, so I'm planning on being right back up in early August. I have sweet friends here who have prayed over me, anointed me, and promised to be here after surgery. This weekend, a very special friend, Mark Hahn, is whisking me away to the happiest place on earth for a couple of days to get my mind off of pain, physical therapy, and time in bed! I very much appreciate his kindness. Sitting around thinking about it drives me nuts!

So that's about where we are. You can see on the next page that travel is picking up. And anyone who wants a concert or service on the days I have noted there should for sure drop me an email. We'd love to see you, too.

We appreciate all of you who make our ministry possible. We feel you with us every step of the way.

***With Gratitude, Marsha & Cindy***

## **Please note our new address – it's too long to remember!**

### **Cindy's Mission Work**

Many thanks for those of you who have chosen to support Cindy on her mission trips. Unfortunately, as you know, the trips for the past year have been canceled. 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. It looks as though it might be January before she heads out again.

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

We will let you know when she can travel again.

### **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](http://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](http://www.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**

- † **First of all, prayers for our family of color. For the lives taken and anger unabated, for justice to finally come.**
- † **Prayers for Marsha's surgery on July 7th**
- † **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.**

- † **Praises for our move – safety, health.**
- † **Prayers for me to be able to set up more concerts and special music IN REAL LIFE – hurray!**
- † **Prayers for our country & for all of us to find a way forward together.**
- † **Praises that some of our get togethers are getting scheduled in the fall. I will be there!!**

### **What You Have to Say**

"...a million thanks for the inspiring song you sang this morning in your rich and beautiful voice! You are so talented and obviously your son and daughter in law are too. The tune is wonderful and the words are tremendously inspiring....."Stand Closer.....actions **can** be heard." Dear God, how very true. "Thoughts and prayers are not enough".....absolutely right..... and thought provoking and motivating. Hopefully it will motivate our Outreach Committee to help our congregation stand a little closer to those who need a boost up. It's inspiring me. (I'm co-chair and it will be a good theme for the coming two years.)"

"Thank you for writing (For Those Tears I Died). I used to sing it since I was a teenager and it touch my heart so much because I feel the love of God through the lyrics."

"I just found this video (of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of For Those Tears) while looking for the original one placed on YouTube to share with a friend. I played guitar and sang with my best friend 1970-1975. To this day – and I'm 63 years old now, and I still cry as my heart fills with the spirit. This song, changed this hippie's life so many, may years ago. God bless you for the love and spirit this song has spread through so many years. I taught this song to all 5 of my now grown children through voice and sign language as 3 of them were deaf. It is beautiful – seen and heard."

"I have been thinking and praying for you and your family. I listen to MCC music around the world and I remember who started the beautiful voice and song of God's inclusive church. You Marsha Stevens. Just wanted to send a quick hello and thank you for being my friend and for offering that good of angelic music on earth your gift of song. Take care my friend please take care of yourself give your family my best. And hopefully we will meet again sometime as things open up."

### **Upcoming ministry**

**July 11-18** Marsha part of virtual choir for UCC General Synod

**August 12-15** 2021, The Evangelical Network (TEN) conference in Chicago.

**August 15** (morning service time to be announced) Mini concert in sermon time, First Church of Lombard 220 S Main St, Lombard, IL [www.fcol.org](http://www.fcol.org)

**Sept 16-20** Portland OR area.

**Dates are open this weekend!**

**Oct 1-3** Beersheba Springs

Brentwood UMC women's retreat

**Oct 28-31** Reformation Project in Phoenix AZ **Dates are open this weekend!**

**Nov 6-7** The Villages FL, United Church of Christ (times to be determined)

[www.villagesUCC.org](http://www.villagesUCC.org)

Please consider reaching me at [ssbalm@aol.com](mailto:ssbalm@aol.com) to book something online for your church! A concert or a single song or two.

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>