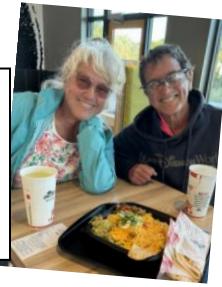


The Marshan Chronicles

For regular supporters of BALM Ministries.



I hope all of you had a lovely (and loving) Valentine's Day!



March 2024, Volume 27, Number 3

Many thanks to all of you who prayed for my rapid healing after my many falls-on-ice in Portland! When did it start taking THIS LONG to heal boo-boos? Plus, my primary care doctor got very serious with me about getting something that would notify my emergency contacts if I fall...again. I am newly grateful for Steve Jobs, since having an Apple watch seems young and cool, where having a "help I've fallen and I can't get up" device seems just a little more agéd!

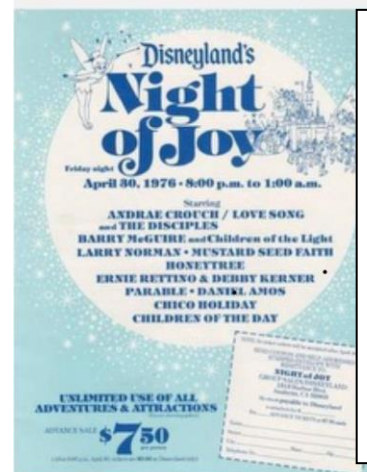
Doing the artist-in-residence concerts at Church of the Trinity has been a huge blessing for me. I've done them with Ollie (Oliver Dill) for the most part, but others have come along and been a great addition. This month I'll have JT Priar with me. He is our new young adult minister so he's full of ideas and energy, plus he can *sing*! We hope those can continue. He is also singing with me on Easter morning.

Both Palm Sunday and sunrise service will be at Suncoast MCC in Venice, Florida. Cindy will be joining me on guitar at sunrise – which you all know is my favorite service of the year!

The other place that Cindy joined me on guitar was at a funeral. I have attended a cancer support group several times at the hospital where Cindy had her (many) admissions for breast cancer. Once the doctor leading the group decided he had sung For Those Tears in Tagalog in the Philippines where he grew up, I became the go-to for singing at funerals for the group. One man in the group died about 3 months ago and I sang For Those Tears at the very fundamentalist church where he and his wife were members. Even then we could see how hard the pastor was struggling to let me family decide that *lesbians* were participating in the service. So when the wife, who was also struggling with cancer, passed away a couple

of weeks ago, the family immediately asked me to sing at her funeral as well. Sitting in the planning session, the daughter of the family said that her mother loved disco music and she wanted that at her service. The smoke began to curl from the pastor's ears. But he talked her into having disco music at the meal afterward. Which left him to deal with...me. I got Ollie to come along, and Cindy learned the old hymn and the praise and worship song that family wanted. I thought the pastor was handling it pretty well until we got to the pastor's message at the funeral where he managed to say that "true marriage is between one man and one woman" SEVEN times in 15 minutes. On our part, we all three managed not to smirk (or make out in the pew) once! I did, however, see a post on Facebook later that week that declared the invention of a new word, "Evangelentials." That would be fundamentalist Christians who seem to be fascinated by what's in someone else's pants.

Another fun finding this month was this poster for Disneyland's Night of Joy in 1976:



The miracle of this night was not JUST that Disney allowed "Jesus People" to sing at the park, it was that you could get into Disneyland for just \$7.50!! These event nights were the only times that you had full park access for just the admission price. Otherwise, you had to have your "E" tickets ready for the best rides.

Just for the record, every group on this list stayed to pick up all the litter in the park afterward!

Please don't forget to follow Justin Ryan & his Southern Gospel Sissy series. It is SO good. (Many of you have asked about Justin's husband, Scott, and his cancer battle. They're struggling. Keep praying!)



Blessings 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 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.

In the meantime, she is doing work with our own Church of the Trinity MCC teaching ASL, leading book studies and more.

You can support BALM when you shop online

Igive.com is a good charity for BALM, but it is 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. He has finished his chemo and radiation. Those did not clear his cancer, so he will be having surgery to remove part of his intestines, his prostate and his bladder. This will leave him with two ostomy bags to live with. He is amazingly positive about all this – impressing even Justin with his hopeful attitude.
- ✦ Praises for all the wonderful prayers you sent up for

Cindy. She is finally getting back out into ministry opportunities and...yes, on her bicycle. She's even able to ride without her protective vest now.

- ✦ Praises for my own healing. Honestly, I am so grateful that my bones are as hard as my head 😊
- ✦ Prayers for Justin's 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 Sissy" (my favorite is <https://youtu.be/xOK2lXx2JjE?si=QIA1UC43hefl1rGx>)
- ✦ Prayers that we can get back out singing and sharing the Good News. You have all been amazingly generous.

What You Have to Say

"I'm autistic, and often suffer from emotional input overload—leading to meltdowns. When (a recent news story broke) that said someone had died asking for water, I went into emotional input overload big time and I kept thinking about the parable Jesus told about the Sheep and the Goats. Then your song came into my head, "For those tears I died", and in my mind I constructed Jesus saying the chorus to (the person who died). My autism makes it hard for me to go to church and either get sensory overload, or get caught up in pointless political controversy. Anyway, I thought the song was an old classic church hymn until today, when I decided to look up who wrote it. I'm not trans in the common sense but I also definitely do not fit the gender binary, not uncommon with autism, so today when I saw you specifically minister to the LGBT community that I am a part of—it made that song even more special to me. Thank you."

"I truly love your song (For Those Tears). I had personal struggles for

years. I would go out near the creek on our 20 acres and sing it over and over. Beautiful and inspired by God."

"I learned For Those Tears at the church my mother made me to to during a very rebellious season in mt life. She decided maybe church would help me. I learned to play it on my guitar and it became a family favorite as our family all drew closer to God. My dad went to heaven in 1988 and he wanted us to sing this song to him. As we sang it to him he departed for heaven and his last word was "victory." Thank you for writing this song. I know it was Holy Spirit inspired."

Upcoming ministry opportunities

Mar 15 Church of the Trinity MCC Pierce Hall artist-in-residence concert with Marsha, Cindy and other local artists. 6:30pm

www.TrinityMCC.com

Mar 24 Suncoast MCC, Venice FL Palm Sunday special music. 10am

www.suncoastmcc.com

Mar 31 Suncoast MCC Venice FL Sunrise service 6:30am

www.suncoastmcc.com

Mar 31 Special Easter music for Sunday morning service. 10am

www.TrinityMCC.com

More to list once we're confirmed

Watch our website for updates:
www.BalmMinistries.net

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