

# The Marshan Chronicles

*For regular supporters of BALM Ministries.*



*Cindy and I have tried to get creative with the recordings we make for local church services. Oscar Scherer State Park was beautiful and peaceful.*



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Well, May was fun. Lots of singing at Sunday morning services and a fair amount of recording things for online services. I am not at all creative in recording myself for these things. I see other people with lovely staging and backgrounds and I am lost. BUT, Cindy suggested finding an outdoor kind of open-air chapel and this place was nearby. I loved recording here and it was such a peaceful place to stay and worship even afterward.

In June, Justin Ryan and I will be doing the first Balm fundraiser to raise funds for the Marge Ragona Student Scholarship in Birmingham Alabama. In order to do this, we'll be going back to the UMC (United Methodist Church). I am so excited to be able to sing and minister with Justin again. I never know whether the last two years seemed long or non-existent. Some things I think just happened recently turn out to be three years ago. It's hard since there are none of the regular time landmarks like holidays and birthdays. Then there's Justin who I feel like I haven't seen in forEVER. Both Justin and I are hopeful that we can do more work together this year. A Florida tour is already being planned!

Jane Syftestad, who was the music director at MCCLA when I was there in the early 90s, is moving to MCC Sarasota (now my home church) as our new music director. We have written songs together before

("All Things Are Possible") and hope to do so again after she gets here.

The other news for us is an addition to the family. You might remember that we lost both of our little rescue dogs last November. We really thought we'd be a year or more without another pet. But they found this tiny 7 pound Shih Tzu wandering the streets in Jacksonville. She had no collar and no chip. She was pretty raggedy and her claws had grown clear into her paw pads, so she'd been out there for a while. They tried to find her people, of course, but no luck. She was in such disarray that they thought she might be what they call "a senior." But when we saw her pic on a rescue site, I just had a feeling. Once we got her cleaned up, vaccinated, CHIPPED, and groomed, the vet experts said that she's a purebred Imperial Shih Tzu and not even two years old yet. You can clearly see who her Alpha Mama is!



Happily, ministry opportunities are opening up again. I plan to collect two years' worth of hugs so be ready.

Most of all, of course, we need to be praying for the seemingly endless violence in our country. It's impossible not to put that pain out there for all of us.

**We have been blessed with generous supporters for BALM ministries. This means that you do not need to worry about expenses if your church or organization would like a concert or special music. The first one is this weekend in June! Please email me at [ssbalm@aol.com](mailto:ssbalm@aol.com) to get information, book a concert or organize a fund-raiser. This would be the perfect time to do that since there would be no expense for you or your church this year.**

*With Gratitude, Marsha & Cindy*

**BALM Ministries P.O. Box 14937, Bradenton FL 34280-4937 [www.BalmMinistries.net](http://www.BalmMinistries.net)**

**Please note our PO Box 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 2 years 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.

*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 resume mission trips.

**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://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**

- † ***Prayers for victims of gun violence & for leaders who will do more to be sure it stops.***
- † ***Praises for our supporters who have made returning to music ministry possible.***
- † ***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 me to be able to set up more concerts and special music.***
- † ***Prayers for all of us to find ways to gather safely (and resume hugs!)***
- † ***Prayers (and praises) for Cindy's safety as she rides her bike.***
- † ***Praises for the ministry opportunities opening up and for ALL of your support***

**What You Have to Say**

*"I'm so glad I found your video, even though it's been around for a few years. I first heard this song at Bible camp back in the late 80s. It was always my favorite yet not many over the years have heard it. My cousins sang it for my wedding. I would sing it to my mom. She passed away May 12<sup>th</sup> 2022 suddenly. She loved the Lord and I know she would have loved to have heard this video. I think my cousin will sing it again June 4<sup>th</sup> for her memorial. She is holding my hand from heaven. Thank you for this song that has stayed with me all these years."*

S

*"I am a singer songwriter from Canada. I am working on a book, a memoir for HarperCollins to be released in February 2023. It is the story about my life and music. I grew up in the Evangelical church. Though I loved the teachings of Jesus of course, I found the church had a devastating affect on my family dynamic. But music was the thing that kept me afloat and your song, For Those Tears I Died, was one of the first I learned as a child. My sister and I would sing it together all the time.*

*She passed 20 years ago.*

*A week ago, I sang it to my dying father. He was also a songwriter. I was hoping I could include the lyrics of the chorus in my book, as I speak about how music was the life raft that kept us inspired, kept us rising and connected. My father (used to travel with a well known songwriter). They were a duo for 20 years.*

*From what I have read of your journey, I believe you would feel comfortable with the content of the book. It stays true to the teachings on love, while calling out the hypocrisy and dangers of fundamentalism, homophobia, and the patriarchy. But it's all done with compassion and love, poetry and song. The thesis of the book is that nothing is unforgivable. I just want to thank you because that song is so deeply engrained in my heart that it is a part of everything I have ever written."*

**Upcoming ministrc.com**

**June 4** Woodlawn United Methodist Church, Birmingham AL. 6:30pm Concert with Justin Ryan for Marge Ragona Scholarship fundraiser.

**June 5** Woodlawn United Methodist Church, Birmingham AL 10:30 am service, Special Music

**July 11-12** day in New York City with Dr. Ralph Blair!

**Aug 14** Pass-A-Grille Beach Church 10:00 am service special music [www.pagchurch.org](http://www.pagchurch.org)

**Sep 1-3** TEN conference Louisville KY see [www.TEN.lgbt](http://www.TEN.lgbt)

**Oct 13-15** Dallas TX at CenterPeace retreat conference

**Oct 22-23** Jacksonville FL Concert – location and times are tentative at Trinity Lutheran Church.

[www.CenterPeace.net](http://www.CenterPeace.net)

**Please consider reaching me at [ssbalm@aol.com](mailto:ssbalm@aol.com) to book something for your church!**

*A word from a longtime supporter of Balm ministries: [ChristianGays.com](http://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>*