

# The Marshan Chronicles

*For regular supporters of BALM Ministries.*



*These seem to epitomize my 70<sup>th</sup> birthday: my sister sent me tie-dyed bell bottoms, Cindy gave me a VERY cool globe with amazing details, and...you know, friends!*

September 2022, Volume 25, Number 9

Hmm. Another year older. So hard to believe that I'm 70!! In the early 1960s we were all sure we would die from the atomic bomb. By the late 1960s I was sure Jesus was coming back way too soon for me to have to do something as mundane as finishing college. But here I am all these years later. I think the hardest thing about having lived this long and having been a Christian all these years is that I'm not better at it than I am! I thought for sure by now I would be the picture of patience and love and tolerance; that I would have deep understanding of my fellow humans; and that traffic jams would no longer bother me.

I did have a lovely birthday. Walks on the beach with Cindy and food and fun with friends. And a lot of gratitude for my health and for your support for us to continue in ministry. Today, August 30<sup>th</sup>, is also our 19<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Therefore, you guessed it, we went out to walk on the beach again. I love it here. Such a beautiful family of choice all around me. And I'm blessed with kids who stay in touch and who are living their own loving and productive lives. All in all, lots to be thankful for.

Music ministry this month was local. As you can see, that is going to branch out pretty quickly in the next couple of months, but it was nice to be home so much. Church of the Trinity MCC was doing a series this month on how music impacts our lives, including contemporary praise and worship, hymns, Black gospel, and secular music. Our music director, Jane Syftestad, did some great presentations. At age 70 I am now old enough that my music was included in "hymn week." I remember when it was considered so avant-garde that churches would not allow it in their regular services – especially if it involved a *guitar!* Wild and crazy kids. Now I'm "hymns." I don't mind being in such grand company, though. Hymns are the way that women have been able to write the theology of the church without the men in charge noticing so much. I mean, do you know "Jesus loves me" because you can quote the Scripture that says that? Or because Anna B. Warner wrote that song that we all learned so young?

Our other ministry opportunity this last month was in Passagrille Community Church in St Pete Beach where they welcomed us many years ago when our granddaughter really needed a group to be a part of. I'll never forget the pastor of that church when I called him one Saturday night. My grandkid was only 15 and doubled over in pain in the ER. The ER physician did NOT want to hear from me, a mere RN, about how sick she was. Even though it was a Saturday night, I phoned the pastor and told him what was happening and he immediately showed up, had a heart to heart with the doctor, and got the grandkid transferred by ambulance to All Children's where emergency surgery that night saved their life. Then he preached on Sunday morning. That is a pastor's heart. Anyway, he and a lot of the music department there were traveling to Oberammergau for the passion play that weekend, so Cindy came with me and we did music together. It was great to hear the associate pastor and to catch up with friends from up there, many of whom we have not seen since the pandemic. Lots of grateful memories and renewed connections.

As always, we are thankful beyond words for all that you make possible with your prayers and support. Hope to see you out there on the road again.

*With great thanks, Marsha & Cindy*

**I think most of you have kindly switched over to our new PO Box in Bradenton, FL. Thank you!**

**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.)

You can also go through amazon smile and support Balm from there through your amazon orders <https://Smile.amazon.com>

**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 all of us to find ways to gather safely (and resume hugs!)*
- † *Praises for our safe return from vacation & prayers for trailer repairs. (We blew a tire on the freeway when we were almost home. Felt like old times! 🙏)*
- † *Praises for the ministry opportunities opening up and for ALL of your support.*

**What You Have to Say**

*"I want to thank you for the amazing music you wrote, sang, and played. The words and tune were beautiful. And the clarinet accompaniment Cindy played was the most wonderful surprise. So evocative..... Oh I wish we had that music more often. It just draws me in, personally. (Never been much of an organ person!!!). But I also love guitar. I hope you two present together a whole lot more! We are heading to Florida mid September and hoping to see you then."*

*"My daughter came out as gay to my wife and me in 2006. It was unexpected and took a while for us to come to a place of full acceptance. She joined me a few years ago to lead a workshop at a Reformation Project convention, in which we shared the process that led to healing in our family. In our case, a Christian singer, Marsha Stevens-Pino, was instrumental in helping me work through my feelings and my theological understandings as well."*

*"Finally see what you look like on YouTube. Love this video. Have to sing your song again.....love you much."*

**Upcoming ministry opportunities**

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

**Sept 12-14** Dallas TX, writing with Danny Ray and concert Wed night to be announced – watch online for details

**Sept 24** Dinner and concert at Suncoast MCC to celebrate Nancy Wilson's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in ministry

[www.suncoastmcc.com](http://www.suncoastmcc.com)

**Sept 25** Suncoast MCC, Venice FL morning service, special music for Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in ministry

[www.suncoastmcc.com](http://www.suncoastmcc.com)

**Oct 7-9** Casa de Cristo Apostolic Church, Phoenix AZ All weekend we'll be celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary (delayed by Covid)

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

**Oct 22** Christ Church of Peace, Jacksonville FL Concert 7:00pm

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

**Oct 23** Christ Church of Peace 10:30 am special music

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

**Nov 3-5** Centerpeace Conference Cindy and I will both be at the Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas, TX for this conference. Other guests include our dear friends Justin Lee and Matthew Vines. [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! 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.*

<https://ChristianGays.com>