

The Marshan Chronicles

For regular supporters of BALM Ministries.



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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! We coasted through December on the joys of our November concerts. It still feels like the world is on a road to recovery from the pandemic. I imagine I will be operating on a hug-deficit for a couple more years. But we did get a few hugs in.

One set was with Jim Brix, who helped me with the book, and his wife, Carol. So, an early Christmas at their house was perfect.

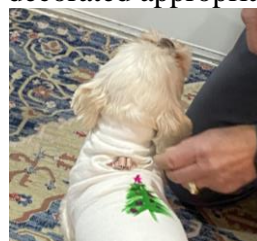


Our Church of the Trinity MCC hit some challenging times this month with both music leaders ill. But what could have been an overwhelming time turned out to be a lighter burden when it seemed like *everyone* pitched in to help. Ollie Dill (our fabulous baritone soul singer) and I ended up both practicing for a variety of Christmas duets and solos. Unfortunately, we were sick on separate Sundays so that we each ended up with a solo on different days.

The other thing was that our amazing sound-person-et-al, Jesse, broke her wrist and could not climb the ladder to the sound booth. Cindy jumped in to do set ups, tear downs, sound control, and her gift of “whatever needs to be done”.

Most of the rest of December was spent either being sick or avoiding the illnesses of others. Remember when someone used to have a cold and we all got together anyway??? I was supposed to have surgery on the 5th which I thought would mean I could sing by Christmas. The best laid plans...were derailed by a plain old fashioned cold. Truthfully, I’d forgotten how miserable a cold is after not being sick at all for three years. Of course, I’m 3 years older now, too 😊! That meant that I had to put the surgery off a couple of weeks while I got well...and shared the cold with Cindy and Nancy.

Another gift of so-many-friends is that everyone walks one another’s dogs, and our dogs often come with us on visits. Cindy made sure that our Emmy was decorated appropriately for the season.



And, of course, we had Christmas day with our friends Nancy and Paula. As great as a “family holiday” sounds, we were glad to avoid long lines and airport fiascos and canceled flights and be able to enjoy the day at home. I think I’ve mentioned before that my favorite season is...wait for it...Florida. Hence my new Christmas shirt:



I do SO appreciate all your prayers. The surgery was a sort of girl-parts thing, so we won’t go into it any further than to say the doctor says I should be up and running by the end of January. Hope that means I’ll see you soon!! 😊

With great thanks, Marsha & Cindy

Our year end bookkeeping enters your donations by the date on your check; so even if we don't receive your gifts until Jan 5th, for instance, if the date on the check says "Dec 30th" we enter it as a 2022 donation. Email me with any questions or problems

ssbalm@aol.com

Cindy's Mission Work

Many thanks for those of you who have chosen to support Cindy on her mission trips. Once we learn more about the political problems in Peru I'll be able to update you.

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.

(Cindy will also be a keynote speaker at Evangelicals Concerned later this year – more on that later)

You can support BALM when you shop online

You can go through Amazon Smile and support Balm from there through your amazon orders. It's very easy. No charge to you, but every Amazon order will donate a small portion to Balm Ministries

<https://Smile.amazon.com>

ALSO, 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 is having health problems*
- ✦ *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 our health – esp Marsha who had surgery again in December.*
- ✦ *Praises for our safety and for the safety of those with whom we minister. God please keep us in the palm of Your hand.*
- ✦ *Praises for the ministry opportunities opening up and for ALL of your support.*

What You Have to Say (or in this case, what I had to say when you wrote to me)

"I'm so sorry you're going through this kind of pain. I totally have the "been there done that's" as you know. I think the scariest thing is to realize you are actually going to have to go back to the Bible and to prayer and find out what YOU believe. I don't know, of course, what exactly your questions are about why God would NOT be okay with you.

The other thing I would say is to remember that when you read the Word of God, we have already been shown what the Word looks like, because He was made flesh and dwelt among us, ya know? And Jesus was interpreting the Scripture for us. "You've heard it said that you shouldn't kill, but I'm telling you and that even hating is the same thing," and so on.

Jesus wasn't afraid to "interpret" the Scripture according to what was going on around Him. So for instance, we're not going to find any place where it says that we can use computers, or fly in airplanes, or wear bathing suits, but we do our best to understand the spirit of the Scripture so that when we do those things, we do them in a way that we feel can best honor God in our behavior. When Jesus said that a 'man will leave his father and mother and

cleave to his wife', Jesus was quoting Genesis. And we know that for thousands of years everyone who read that Scripture in Genesis did NOT take it to mean that one man should marry one woman. King David didn't think so. If we had a great leader in this day and age who cheated the way David did with Bathsheba, we might say we'd forgive him because he admitted he was wrong. But what about when David was old and all his people went looking for a young woman to get in bed with him and "keep him warm." I mean, we'd totally say he was a pervert. Acceptable sexual behavior has changed dramatically over the centuries. So we have to look at the spirit of the Scripture. We clearly shouldn't cheat on or lie to someone we love, for instance. I don't know where you live, but I would find a church where you can be all of who you are and start building a foundation, because your world really is going to rock. I have to say, though, that in the end living and walking in the Light is a much more joyous road than you can even guess from where you are."

Upcoming ministry opportunities

Aug 31-Sept 3 The Evangelical Network conference in Louisville, KY www.TEN.lgbt

Oct 26-28 Reconcile and Reform in Nashville, TN

www.reformationproject.org

(watch the website for updates)

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