

# The Marshan Chronicles

*For regular supporters of BALM Ministries.*



Cindy and I pray for a blessed Christmas for all of you.

**December 2017, Volume 20, Number 12**

Dear Balm Benefactors,

What a wonderful whirlwind the end of the year been. I wrote to you last month about our time in San Diego and at the Methodist women's retreat. Next I was in Chicago to sing and present with friends at The Reformation Project Conference. They had some seminars on "intersectionality" so I talked to my friend Dr. Jim Brix who was teaching psychology at a Christian college 8 years ago. He emailed me back then to say that he hoped I would not count his email as "hate mail" but that his college age daughter had come out to him and her mom and they didn't know how to respond. I think he was pleasantly surprised back then that I was actually conversant in the Scriptures and we had some very long email exchanges. Long story short, Cindy and I went to his daughter, Trish's, wedding – I sang – and both Jim and his wife made the 180-degree journey to real wholeness within their family. Trish went on to become a therapist working with at-risk youth. I thought that was a cool "intersection," and so did the Reformation Project, so Jim, Trish and I had a seminar explaining what things we had gone through that brought our journeys together. I sang "Can't We Find a Way," the first song that I sent to Jim and one to which he had responded strongly. They shared their stories. I expected Jim, a professor long accustomed to public speaking to be pretty smooth, but you could tell that this was coming from his heart, not his head, and that made it all the more tender.



Flying back to Nashville took me through Midway (Chicago) airport on a Sunday morning where I heard an announcement for a church service in the chapel. Since I was traveling with my guitar, they asked if I could sing. You probably know me well enough to know I hesitated...NOT! It was great. There were people there on their way to a mission trip in Nigeria, people headed home after long separations, and members of the military home on leave. Great ministry opportunity 😊.

I got home in time to work two days at Vanderbilt, then flew back out to Saint Louis for the Rolling the Stone Away pioneers' conference. What an amazing group of people. Troy Perry could not make it and he was very disappointed to miss it, but Revs. Freda Smith and Nancy Wilson were there with some other MCC leaders. Peggy Campolo, who has been such a strong ally-voice for the LGBTQ community, was there. Most of the early voices from several church denominations were there – people who started Dignity (Catholics), Kinship (SDA), United Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ, Presbyterian, Lutheran (ELCA) and the United Methodist group Reconciling Ministries Network. I know I'm leaving out a lot but it was like a living-museum tour. Amazing. I got to sing Free to Be, and of course, For Those Tears I Died.



Freda and Peggy (and poor selfie attempts!)



Much better when someone else does the pic with Nancy and Nathan



Last, but definitely not least, was a concert at MCC Winston-Salem. This was the best because Cindy & I drove over there together and did the concert together with some of Cindy's new guitar-playing & her stories as well. They treated us like queens...well, you know what I mean. It was great ministry in a church whose hearts clearly love that encouragement. And we ran into Jan, who sang In the Hollow of Your Hand on the BALM Praise album and Jo who lovingly cared for our puppies through our wedding ceremony in 2003. SO sweet!



*Love and Gratitude, Marsha & Cindy*

**IMPORTANT!! YEAR END info**

We date your year-end giving by the date YOU put on your check, NOT by the date we receive your donation!

**Cindy's Mission Work**

Many thanks for those of you who have chosen to support Cindy on her mission trips. Next is Honduras in January. Keep her in prayer. Any gifts to BALM noted to Cindy (continue to be tax deductible) will be used for her 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**

- ✦ *Pray for more concerts- starting with YOUR church! And for all the concerts that are in the works right now.*
- ✦ *Gratitude for your prayers Prayers for Cindy on all her mission trips & the computer work she does to help them.*
- ✦ *Praises for our new church home in Nashville – Brentwood United Methodist. I'm used to being the burr in someone's saddle, and right now the UMC church needs some queer burrs!*
- ✦ *Prayers for wisdom for outreach here in Nashville for the LGBTQ community who mostly continue to gather in bars.*

✦ *I hoped to be recording at least two songs still this month, but the studio I was using has a glitch – pray for quick repairs or another studio.*

✦ *Praises for all of you!!*  
*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.*

✦ *Please pray for the book reviews that are being pitched in larger markets.*

✦ *Prayers for upBeat! artists*

✦ *Please keep sweet Mark Moseley & his wife Donna K in your prayers for COMPLETE healing from his stroke. AND please remember that if you or someone you love has symptoms of a stroke, you basically have 3 hours to get to a hospital where they have meds that can HEAL you before all the damage becomes permanent.*

✦ *Praises for the songs I finished writing & the ones in progress. Prayers that I tune in on writing the things God wants to say today.*

**What You Have to Say**

"For Those Tears I Died" is a well-loved praise song that Marsha Stevens wrote when she was just 17, back in the '60s Jesus Movement. The Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian Music calls her "the mother of Contemporary Christian Music". Her famous song's title is now the title of Stevens-Pino's autobiography.

For nearly half a century, millions have identified with her words that were, to her, very personal. Her angry, drunken, preacher father was abusive & he sexually molested her. Her childhood was a constant effort to escape his attacks. Yet, with faith in Jesus, she wrote, prayerfully:

'You said You'd come & share all my sorrows, You said You'd be there for all my tomorrows. I came so close to sending

You away, But just like you promised, You came here to stay; I just had to pray. And Jesus said, 'Come to the water, stand by My side, I know you are thirsty, you won't be denied; I felt ev'ry teardrop when in darkness you cried, And I'm here to remind you that for those tears I died'."

In the mid-'80s, she "came out" as lesbian. Friends shunned her, buying into the lies of Fundamentalist preachers. Her music ministry was cut short. She got involved with both Evangelicals Concerned & Metropolitan Community Church. There was a lot of woundedness in the lives of so many. [But] I longed for honest conversation that was spiritually challenging without being viewed as judgmental. I backed off those types of discussions in MCC. My connections with Evangelicals Concerned expanded." She has performed in concert at EC summer connections across America. Unlike so many other wounded souls, she still identifies as "a conservative evangelical, strongly committed to the authority of Scripture, passionate about having a personal relationship with Jesus."

**BalmMinistries.net for booking!**

**Jan 18-21, 2018** Gay Christian Network conference in Denver, CO (brrrrr!)

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

**April 28-29** Forgiving Heart Christian Community Church 7pm concert Saturday night with Justin Ryan and special music Sunday morning.

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

(706)681-5246

(I would love to see you for the holidays. You can reach us through the website or at [ssbalm@aol.com](mailto:ssbalm@aol.com) – I know, I'm old, I still use aol!)

**Check the website for updates ☺**

**[www.BalmMinistries.net](http://www.BalmMinistries.net)**

*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. Join us now at*

**<https://ChristianGays.com>**