

The Marshan Chronicles

For regular supporters of BALM Ministries.



Marsha with
Chip Davis

April 2018, Volume 21, Number 4

Oh you all know how much I love Easter. This was a great month that ended with sunrise service for us, so it was perfect.

In the middle of March, I had my first chance to sing for regular services at my own church. Keep in mind that this is an 8000 member church in the middle of Music City USA, so there are *plenty* of fabulous singers and songwriters around. Still, when I spoke to the music director, Dr. Gregg Bunn (family! 😊), about the themes for upcoming services, we talked about the last things that Jesus said on the cross. We were going to have a sermon series about the last 7 phrases of Jesus recorded in the 4 Gospels. There was one week for the sermon on “I thirst,” or “I am thirsty,” depending on the translation you use. Gregg thought it would be a perfect time for For Those Tears.

I think I may have told you that we have (I think) 18 clergy people on staff at our church – only two of them people of color. So I had to find out who was preaching that “I thirst” weekend (Saturday night and three Sunday morning services). Imagine how happy I was to find that Rev Toi King, an African-American woman, was preaching that Sunday. It was not lost on those in the congregation that they had a *black, female* preaching and a *lesbian* leading the response. Gleeful me.

Besides all that, Toi is just a great preacher and she brought it on down. People in my big white quiet Methodist church were shoutin’ amen and raising a hand here or there. She was great. My sweet, talented friend, Chip Davis, sang with me and played the piano. He tours now with Alabama (the band, not the sports team/s), but he made time to come to all four services with me. He started playing piano at just the right time at the end of Rev Toi’s sermon so that as she ended, after talking about all the

things for which Jesus thirsted, by saying, “I’m thirsty. How ‘bout you?” and we started right in with, “And Jesus said, Come to the water...” Cindy has taught me the ASL signs for the hearing impaired to use while I sing, and the deaf folks there were *so* kind and excited to be included in the service as well.

It was a lot of things that came together for a huge blessing for me, and I think for a lot of others – in the closet and out. Chip drove out again for Sunrise Service and we sang a couple of songs that he wrote. For some reason, sunrise service here in middle Tennessee seems to be an almost throw-away service. It’s often cold and rainy. Most people already go to church every week here. There’s the conspicuous lack of an ocean over which to watch the sun rise. In fact, the area is growing so quickly that there are few outdoor areas to have a large gathering.

Nevertheless, our church generally plans it outside, all standing in a garden, but moves it inside to a small chapel. Two years ago there were about 16 people there. Last year, when I also sang with Chip, there were about 30. This year there were 65. I hope that means some of my friends here are falling in love with that service. Once again, we did miss watching the sun rise over the ocean with our friends in Florida (where they expected 2500 extra people to show up).

Speaking of Florida, I will be back there in a couple of weeks to sing at our former church, Passagrille Community, with my friend Brian Feist, on Sunday morning. If anyone has Saturday night April 21st, or Sunday evening April 22nd ideas, email me at ssbalm@aol.com.

BALM is continuing our work with unifying organizations including the RMN (reconciling ministries network), TEN (the evangelical network), and the Reformation Project among others. I will be at most, if not all, of the conferences related to these groups. Again, please look at the dates and let me know if a church near you would like to have our ministry while we’re already in the area.

One of our supporters has indicated that there might be a gift coming that would enable me to do another CD, which would be so exciting for me. My sweet friend, producer Mark Moseley, is still confined to his wheelchair and has some trouble speaking, but he has said he would get to the studio to help all he can, which blesses my heart. Please remember to pray for him and his wife, Donna Kay.

Cindy will be with me at the Maryland concerts. When I started to struggle with the guitar (weakness and arthritis in my fingers), Cindy took lessons so she could play with me. I have a wonderful wife. Please let us see you on the road! And thank you for all you make possible in ministry.

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 Uganda in June.

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. 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.)

(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 church home in Brentwood United Methodist, & some truly open minds and open doors.*
- ✦ *Prayers for a friend named Reza who works here. His father in Syria is critically ill, but Reza dares not leave*

the US and not be able to return..

- ✦ *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 God’s healing from his stroke.*
- ✦ *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

“I am so honored to have come across your song and have you answer the email yourself. I understand I need to get permission from the publishing company, but I couldn’t just send in a form. I had to let you know that I may not be gay, but I’ve done plenty of things that I thought made me unfit for the Body of Christ and I was blessed to find that you went through all you did (and continue to go through) and still kept your faith and your relationship with Jesus intact. You give me hope and I wanted you to know that I support you.”

“I found your link, as I guess others have, by going to an anti-gay website that told me all about you! Sometimes what your enemies say about you rings especially true. I am, after all these years, finding my own way back to Christianity and I missed it so much. Even in the darkness of the antigay sites, you are a beacon of light. Thank you.”

“God even hit me with some revelation yesterday and a bit of a vision. Seemed to come out of nowhere. I know He is not absent. Things are being stripped away and I have to find new ways to connect and also recover old ways is the first step in figuring out the rest of things. One day at a time. Thanks for the venting space and for your music.”

Upcoming travel

April 22 Passagrille UCC 10am service, special music with Brian Feist

April 28-29 Forgiving Heart Christian Community Church, Columbus GA 7pm concert Saturday night with Justin Ryan, special music Sunday morning. www.forgivingheartchurch.com (706)681-5246

June 21-23 Sandy Cove Ministries North East, MD. Cindy & I will do a concert and special music for the camp. Info@SandyCove.org

June 24 The Green Church, Glen Mills, PA 11am mini-concert with Cindy. 610-459-5050

(I would love to see you. You can reach us through the website or at ssbalm@aol.com – I know, I’m old, I still use aol!) Check the website for booking openings. www.BalmMinistries.net and re-check the website for updates!

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>