

The Marshan Chronicles

For regular supporters of BALM Ministries.



Hannah and Dar starting a family of their own.

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How was your Easter? Our was wonderful. Of course, for my Florida friends I have to say that it was 36 degrees. But it was a clear, beautiful morning. Chip Davis came and sang the Sunrise Service with me and it was glorious.

Our United Methodist Church (UMC) continues to need your prayers. Many of the larger UMCs in the US are meeting this month – once again trying to figure out how to deal with the fact that God keeps creating queers and keeps calling them to love Jesus. So inconvenient!

But the other fun part of this last month was seeing some things come full circle. Nancy Wilson says that one of the great things about being a Christian and living many years, is that you get to see things you planted grow and blossom and bear fruit of their own.

One was a guy named Trace. A mutual friend introduced us when I was singing at a conference in the 90s. He shared with me that he was struggling with staying sober. “In and out of recovery...mostly out,” and he thought I might not want much to do with him. He’s a wonderful musician and we had planned a duet in a concert that was coming up. Instead, for one of the very few times in my life, I lost my voice. I ended up standing up there with him, but having him sing the song. I learned a short time later that Trace was back in prison and our mutual friend passed away, so we sort of lost track of each other. Recently, he wrote me to say that he is now married, 10 years sober, and minister of music at a UMC in Northern

Virginia. As you might imagine, he has some pretty strong testimony to give about how God has touched and healed his life – and who was there to bring the Good News to him. It was very sweet to hear from him what I knew all along – that the One who has started a good work in you, will complete it until the day of Christ Jesus. (Phil. 1:6)

Quote of the month:

“What’s offensive about the Gospel isn’t who it keeps out. It’s not who it keeps away from the table, it’s who it invites in.”

Rachel Held Evans

Another seed that I got to see grow was from the woman I wrote about in my book. If you remember, Hannah was the young woman whose family had utterly rejected her when she came out and whose Calvary Chapel pastor had kicked out of church along with the woman she fell in love with, Darlene. She and Dar came to the conference I wrote about in the book. I told her the long version of my testimony and watched her connect with lots of people at the conference. Some of them were the parents of gay kids, and some of them felt that they didn’t handle their own kids coming out the way they wish they would have. Robert and Susan Cottrell ended up writing blogs, counseling, doing classes, and even giving a Ted Talk about how Christian parents need to react to their LGBTQ kids.

Last weekend, Hannah and Darlene got married. Darlene’s family came around and were there to support her – even an aunt who flew in from where she lives in Spain. But the Cottrells were there for Hannah. Other parents she met at that conference were there for her. Robert “walked her down the aisle” (or the path on the beach where the wedding was). People from the UCC where we were members in Florida came and the associate pastor there officiated for them. They made it, not just with their faith intact, but with it renewed and strengthened

Cindy and I are rehearsing for a couple of the concerts in June by singing for Sunday School classes at our UMC church. There are dozens of classes with 5 to 100 people in each one and it’s another chance to say, “You can argue about doctrine, but you can’t argue with *this*, because it happened to me.”

Love and Gratitude, Marsha & Cindy

Cindy's Mission Work

Many thanks for those of you who have chosen to support Cindy on her mission trips. Haiti was a wonderful success. In June she will head back to Uganda. Keep her in prayer. Any gifts to BALM noted to Cindy (continue to be tax deductible) will be used for her mission trips. She has some pictures posted on her Facebook page and you can link to video of her most recent trip on BalmMinistries.net or by going to the link on YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I89AAhnZ4R0&feature=share>

In June she will be continuing to teach the computer labs. She is also working on ways to make the computer programs she uses available to all the missions she travels to, particularly to those our church runs in South Africa.

The programs track everything from school attendance and performance to health and vaccination status to who is sponsoring that child or teacher and whether they are up to date on their donations.

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

- ✦ *Prayers for my health. Sometimes it feels like a whack-a-mole game!*
- ✦ *Gratitude for your prayers for Cindy on all her mission*

trips & the teaching she does to help them.

- ✦ *Praises for our church home in Brentwood United Methodist, & the changes that need to be made.*
- ✦ *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 keep Mark Moseley in your prayers. He was able to get back in the studio with help from friends.*
- ✦ *Praises for the songs I finished writing & the ones in progress. I did finish recording 4 of them you might like. I'll post the one I recorded with Cindy on her clarinet at THE VERY BOTTOM OF THE FIRST PAGE OF OUR WEBSITE www.balmministries.net*
- ✦ *Prayers for ChristianGays.com – the outreach they do which is so inclusive, and their gracious support of us.*
- ✦ *Prayers for me to be able to set up more concerts for the 50th anniversary of "For Those Tears I Died" Consider YOUR church.*

What You Have to Say

"I really identified with your story about the lies of fundamentalism, and how they can color our every reaction to God. I had drifted so far away from the love of Jesus, because I had become convinced that there was NO WAY that He really does love gays. I was a long way from that teenager who first learned about Jesus from your song, "Come to the Water". I love your live album--thank you so much for the reminders of who I am because of who He is!"

"My favorite song as a teen was "For Those Tears I Died." Written by Marsha Stevens-Pino. I loved this song. In my 30s, when I felt like I

would never be used by God again, I went to a concert by Marsha. From her very first song, I sobbed. Through her whole concert, uncontrollable, but healing tears flooded over me. At the end of the concert she came and asked me to come sit with her awhile. I was still trying to pull it together. So while she was signing things for folks and listening to their stories, she would reach over and pat my leg. After the last person had gone through the line she asked if she could pray with me. And again the Holy Spirit came over me and healed my broken heart. About 10 years ago I had the privilege of opening for Marsha in Salt Lake City, and got to remind her of who I was and what she did for me. She's an amazing woman of God. She oozes the love of Jesus in her life!!"

Upcoming travel

June 8 Punta Gorda FL. Details to be determined. Watch the website.

June 9 Marsha's 50th birthday as a Christian AND Sunday am concert Suncoast Cathedral MCC, Venice FL and Cindy will be there!

Info@suncoastcathedralmcc.org
www.suncoastcathedralmcc.org
941-484-7068

June 16 Haven Berkeley concert 10:30am www.havenberkeley.org

June 23 the 50th anniversary of "For Those Tears I Died" and a concert at 10 am at Oak Life Church, Oakland, CA www.oaklifechurch.com

June 30 MCC General Conf Orlando, FL www.mcccchurch.org

(I would love to see you. You can reach us through the website www.BalmMinistries.net or at ssbalm@aol.com – I know, I'm old I still use aol.)

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>