

# The Marshan Chronicles

*For regular supporters of BALM Ministries.*



Donna Kay with me a few years ago. Don't stop praying!!

## **September 2018, Volume 21, Number 9**

We have all felt your prayers this last month & I can't tell you how grateful we are. So, to catch you up, Mark is still in rehab. He is able to sit up in a chair now & his speech is a little clearer. He is accommodating more to the results of his stroke, but still very disappointed not to be in the studio producing albums.

Donna Kay is adjusting too, but for her it's adjusting to "this is how my life looks when it all turned out." She's doing all she can, of course; eating well, taking her chemotherapy drugs, going in daily for radiation treatments. But she is also saying goodbye, making amends, & drawing closer & closer to Jesus. She is no longer angry for the loss but grateful for each day. It's an amazing process & I'm blessed to be part of it.

Of course, I've been blessed to be a part of their lives for so long. And any of you who still have a Free to Be album know that Mark has been recording me for decades. I'm getting a few new songs recorded right now & as much help as I'm getting from Kerry Marx & Justin Ryan (& Kyle the engineer), I miss Mark in the studio. It has been fun to get down some of the new songs & re-do some favorites. Fortunately, Kerry worked hard to get my vocals down *before* I had to be intubated for surgery. I cannot tell you how badly intubation messes up my vocal cords for several weeks.

So that brings me to the surgery. I'm not sure what the right way to talk about that is. When I tried saying "it's girl stuff," I had people write me & say, "that's okay. I have incontinence too." So then I tried just saying it was "personal," but then someone thought I was getting plastic surgery. (Hey, where do you think I need plastic surgery?) Let me tell you what I can. Even as a nurse, when they asked me at the hospital, as they do everyone who is having surgery, "So can you tell me what Dr. Jambusaria is doing for you today?" I had to admit I did not know the names for all of it. If you've read even the first part of the book I wrote, you know that early on in my life at about age 8 I had to have some surgery after physical damage from my father. A lot of that damage was fixed by suturing parts of my colon & female organs to muscles to hold them

in place – & it worked through two pregnancies. But now, with the deteriorating muscle thing I've told you about before, those muscles were giving out & the damage was becoming worse again. My surgeon was perfect. She understood my past without getting nosy about it & set about fixing things in innovative ways. She even attached some parts of my guts to the inside of my tailbone. *That* won't be giving out like a muscle could. But as you can imagine it was a very extensive surgery that basically took me out of commission for several weeks. This meant no tentmaking ministry as an RN & no singing for a while either. That means that all of your monthly donations have gone into the new recordings and I am SOOO thankful.

People have asked me if it raised anger issues from my past & honestly it hasn't. In some ways it has been sort of validating. A little like the person everyone called a hypochondriac who died & had a tombstone made for him that said, "I TOLD you I was sick." That might seem a bit lighthearted, but I think all the prayers & healing over the years really have taken root in my heart. Bad things happened. God's seen me through them & used them all for my good.

I went in to work for just an hour today so that I could attend a class. It was intended to help nurses understand the viewpoints of different religions & how they impact healthcare. I know this is sensitive, & I think it's important for us to respect our differences, but also to understand them. If we just pretend that all religions are alike then we don't even know what this Good News is that we bring to the table.

Today as I listened to the number of religions that believe that the purpose of suffering is to pay for your sin, I realized how much guilt can drive us. Somehow that "paying for your sins" thing is written into our DNA. We do things we shouldn't do & we feel like we need to be punished for it. Many of you have heard the story that I read about a woman who had a tumor removed from her cheek. The doctor told her & her spouse that he had gotten the whole tumor but had to cut a nerve in her face & half of it would be paralyzed. The doctor watched as her spouse went carefully over to kiss the patient & tell her the her "new smile" was cute, then leaned over to kiss her. The doctor saw that the spouse twisted their own mouth around to meet hers & let her know that their kiss still worked. That's who we serve. A Savior who took all of our sins; who became human & went through all the pain & suffering that we have gone through, just to meet us where we are; to let us know that "the kiss still works."

Be sure to check on the new concert dates & see which one is near you!

***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. She was in Uganda. She is in Honduras right now. Haiti will be in January, but I don't have dates yet.

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 picture posted on her Facebook page and they've made a video we'll try to get up on the BALM website soon.

### **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 my healing and complete recovery.***
- † ***Gratitude for your prayers Prayers for Cindy on all her mission trips & the teaching she does to help them.***
- † ***Praises for our church home in Brentwood United Methodist, & MANY prayers for the Methodist Council of Bishops who are currently meeting to help prepare a suggested "way forward" for the United Methodist church and the LGBTQ community.***

† ***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 upBeat! artists***

† ***Please keep sweet Mark Moseley & his wife Donna K in your prayers for God's healing from his stroke & of course Donna K's brain tumor, treatment, & peace.***

† ***Praises for the songs I finished writing & the ones in progress. Prayers I can get at least this short recording done and ready for your to hear.***

† ***Prayers for ChristianGays.com – the outreach they do which is so inclusive, and their gracious support of us.***

### **What You Have to Say**

*"Your first song has been such a lifesaver to me over the years. Thank you!!! For the past couple of weeks, I have been sinking into a depression and unable to control my anxiety. I lost my appetite so haven't been eating and have had really bad back and groin pain.....you know....we all concentrate on the when it rains, it pours thinking. I keep having harsh talks with God...so angry to be so sad and anxious. Well, this song popped into my head today and I had to sing it. God bless you Marsha Stevens for these words.....I know you are thirsty. You won't be denied."*

*"Oh Marsha, I'm so sorry to hear this news. We have all been fortunate to have the support of the Moseleys for so long when others would shun those like us. I wish the Moseleys peace at this difficult time. I also wish you success with the surgery and quick healing. You are a special person in my life and I thank you."*

*"My heart was aching as I read the newsletter. Just want you to know that you (and your needs/wishes/friends/family) are forever in my prayers. I have never forgotten my debt to you for rescuing me from the depression of not being able to reconcile my faith and Christianity. You changed my life one email at a time. Thank you!!!"*

### **Upcoming travel**

**Aug 31-Sep 8** Cindy in Honduras  
**Sep 23** 10 am Pleasant Hill UCC Pleasant Hill, TN 931-277-3193, then 3pm concert with Marsha & Cindy

**Sep 27-30** All Nations Gathering special music/concert, Glory Center, Bellflower, CA  
[www.GloryCenter.org](http://www.GloryCenter.org)

**Oct 13** 7pm concert at Trinity MCC in Grand Prairie, TX  
[www.TrinityMCC.org](http://www.TrinityMCC.org)

**Oct 14** 11am Special music at Trinity MCC Grand Prairie, TX  
**Oct 18-20** Beersheba Springs, TN campground women's retreat – everyone is welcome. Go to BUMC.net and search for Breathing Space or Women's Retreat to register, or call the church for information.

(I would love to see you. You can reach us through the website [www.BalmMinistries.net](http://www.BalmMinistries.net) or at [ssbalm@aol.com](mailto: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>*