

The Marshan Chronicles

For regular supporters of BALM Ministries.



Centerpeace retreat with me, Pastor Amie, Kai and Sally

September 2019, Volume 23, Number 9

August was a whirlwind. I got to see several of you. It started out with my middle granddaughter, Joan, joining me to minister in an assisted living facility here in Nashville. She was such a good sport. (Raise your hand if you remember your grandmother asking you to do something embarrassing when you were 13 years old!) But once she saw how much the residents were enjoying the singing, she jumped in. So sweet.



When Joan went home I was off to the Chicago area for The Evangelical Conference (TEN). I really love this conference every year. There is not much politics or delineation of doctrinal differences here. There is a lot of fellowship, sharing of stories about God's work in our various lives and ministries, worshipping, and Bible study. Sweet Shawn Thomas led up the music ministry and we got hear Sam Sampson and Debra Lynn – two of my favorite people. I sang, of course, but it was a deeply relaxing time of testimonies and catching up. (Clearly I was so relaxed that I forgot to take pictures – I was too caught up in the moment!)

While I was there, I heard from long-time friend and Balm supporter, Bob Cochran who asked if I could stay Sunday morning and sing at his church nearby. This was a perfect end to the weekend. The 1st United Church of Lombard IL is an open and affirming UCC. The sermon was about the woman at the well, so how perfect is Come to the Water and they asked for more special music as well. Of particular blessing to me personally was that Bob works at a place that makes a sort of generic hearing aid. Similar to reading glasses you buy at the store – no test or doctor's

prescription needed. Really nice for me since my hearing tests out just fine at the audiologist, but I still can't hear conversation in a noisy room. So be careful what you say the next time I see you – I might hear you this time!

The next ministry was in Beaverton, Oregon with an organization called Centerpeace. This was incredible. Rev. Amie Scott invited me to do a sort of mini-concert at each of the weekend sessions, but I was not sure what to expect. It turns out that Centerpeace is an organization that does Christian retreats for various parts of the LGBTQ-and-ally community to bring people into understanding of their relationships to each other and to the Body of Christ. Now, I hope you're sitting down. This group is related to the Church of Christ denomination! This is entirely different from "United" Church of Christ, btw. I have certainly known of Church of Christ – since I know they don't allow instrumental music in church. And my understanding is that they are very – well, I would have said, fundamentalist. So I was shocked to learn that each Church of Christ is entirely independent and some of them are extremely warm and welcoming to all parts of the LGBTQ+ community. Part of the fun was that none of them had ever heard of me or Balm Ministries or anything like us. (Sounds like a song "*getting to know you, getting to know all about you, getting to like you, getting to know you like me...*") But, they've heard now. We'll be doing another event with them near Nashville in November!

I visited briefly with Bri Joy, who is still in Portland and with my son-in-love, Chris, who had not been able to visit us this summer with the girls. Then I flew home, gathered Cindy, and headed by car for Tallahassee. One of my sweet friends, Rev. Kay Casey, ministers there. I'm always humbled by the trajectory of faithful people who happen to be called back to God at one of my concerts. Do you remember the song that I wrote called "I Found You"? My favorite line from it is, "*and in those quiet moments if my faith seems to have flown, I hear one of your voices say, 'You're the one who led me home.'*" SO Rev. Kay is one of those. Sweet of Jesus to weave us all together so well. Cindy came with me, so along with playing on one of the songs, she shared her story Saturday night at the United Methodist Church in Tallahassee and then again on Sunday morning at United Church of Tallahassee (UCC). It was fun that the UCC pastor came to the concert Saturday night and made a list of the songs he wanted in his service at the other church on Sunday morning – it was the exact same list that we already had made. Clever God 😊. The pastor's daughter, Cansas, Dowell, is fabulously talented. You'll be hearing about her. Anyway, it was a wonderful way to end the month with friends and generosity and amazing hospitality.

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 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. Next she'll be in Vietnam and Cambodia in January!

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

- ‡ *Special prayers for my sweet friend (and co-writer) Danny Ray who is in rehab after a serious brain infection.*
- ‡ *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, & prayers for the changes that need to be*

made. Special prayers for guidance for us and our role/s here.

- ‡ *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.*
- ‡ *Praises for my friend and record producer Mark Moseley. He's moving back to Texas to live with his sister. I think he will do so much better living with family that can care for him.*
- ‡ *Four new songs are posted FREE on the website: <https://balmministries.net/store>*
- ‡ *Prayers for me to be able to set up more concerts for the 50th anniversary of "For Those Tears I Died" Consider YOUR church. Please contact me. We have supporters helping with travel. Pray about it & write me at ssbalm@aol.com*

What You Have to Say

"These words, this song, this woman, [Marsha Stevens-Pino](#) ! How many lives have been saved? How many lives have been healed? How many lives have sought comfort and solace? God bless and thank you! 50 years and many other inspiring songs, testimonies!"

"Thank you for letting God use your talent! Countless souls were and are being drawn to the Gospel because of this beautiful masterpiece."

"I am listening to you on Pandora as I get ready to go to the doctor. Your music continues to give me strength and peace as I do this physical therapy. Thank you very much for the beautiful gifts - from your wonderful soul and your gift from God.."

"Dear CJ (Cindy) & Marsha, (from a high school kid at our UMC church) It has been an absolutely crazy summer for me... Now that I've finally been in one place for longer than 4 days, I wanted to say thank you. ...For your continued love and support through the craziest times in my life. Not only are you willing to really listen to me as an individual, you also inspire me – people – daily and give me the courage to be myself. Thank you for giving me a safe space. I will be sure to contact y'all if I ever need anything. I hope God seriously blesses you two."

Upcoming travel

Sept 6 Fundraising dinner & concert at North Long Beach Christian Church starting at 6pm

www.nlbcc.net

Sep 8 MCC San Diego, mini concert at both 9am and 11am services www.themetchurch.org

Oct 4-6 Special music for BUMC women's retreat in Beersheba Springs TN www.BUMC.net

Oct 12 First Congregational Church Hendersonville, NC 7pm concert with Cindy 😊

www.fcchendonville.org

Oct 13 Sacred Journey MCC Hendersonville NC 5:30pm service www.mccsacredjourney.org

Oct 20 MCC Windsor Canada 2pm concert www.MCCWindsor.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>