

Gotta love those cheeks, huh? 😊



February 2009, Volume 12, Number 2

Dear Balm Benefactors,

First of all I want to thank so many of you for your prayers, especially those for Cindy's mom. Her name is Joann and for those of you just catching up with us, she had a stroke in November and moved in with us. Since then she's had other health problems that have put her in and out of the hospital, and now she is in rehab. The good thing is that she was able to be in the hospital where Cindy and I work right now. That meant, of course, that our colleagues treated her like a queen. It was fun for Joann especially to see how much people there like Cindy.

Of course, like most of you caring for an elderly parent, this has also meant countless hours of labor. We are both exhausted – Cindy more than I since she is trying to balance work, mom AND school. You have all been amazingly generous in seeing us through this time. We plan for Mom to be moving to an assisted living facility next week, so I can get back to singing! We cannot thank you enough for your faithfulness though.

Another ministry coming up for your prayers has to do with that man I told you about e-mailing. The one whose daughter came out to him – he and his wife had cut her off for a time. Turns out he's a professor at a

Bible college in New Jersey. Our e-mails back and forth have been so thought provoking for him that he has asked me to participate in a class. I spent most of yesterday learning how to use Skype and a WebCam. Next Friday I will be on the big screen in front of his Theology class giving my testimony and then taking questions from students. How cool is that? Last week he played the gay positive film "For the Bible Tells Me So." He said he could watch the consternation and pain on the faces of some of his students as he played the film. He also said he related to that pain since he had come to challenge his own beliefs recently as well. Don't you just love that old God? I always say that the best argument for whether someone can be gay and Christian is to go be one. Pray for my wisdom. Pray for my words. Pray for the light of Christ to shine even through the Internet!

I can't believe it's been almost a year since we were in Israel. God's timing was perfect. Please never give up on praying for the peace of Jerusalem. That trip changed all of our lives for many different reasons. As you can imagine, we are not planning another trip at this time. We will keep you up-to-date on any future plans though.

Another thing that has been on my heart, especially watching mom's illness, has been how rarely we all talk about something that is going to affect every single one of us. We are all going to die. (You know what I mean. Even if Jesus returns, we won't be here.) Don't you think that's weird? I mean in some sense, there isn't anything we can do about it, right? So why discuss it? But it sure seems like we could be getting our hearts ready. Please take a few moments today. Pray a version of David's prayer. "Search me and know me, oh God. See if there's any broken way in me and heal me. Lead me in Your way from now on."

Concerts start up again next month. I can't wait! Some of them are in eastern Florida with friends that we grew closer to in Israel. Say special prayers for Cindy and all she has to juggle in life right now. As always, we are humbly grateful for all that you make possible.

Much love and prayers, Marsha & Cindy

Free Ways to Help BALM Ministries Raise Much-Needed Funds.

(It's simple: when you want to shop online at a major store, you go first to www.igive.com/BALM. You put your info in and then it gives you a list of most stores you've ever heard of. So, for instance, you pick BestBuy, it takes you to that site and you order whatever you want to online. Then they automatically donate part of their profit to BALM Ministries.) Every time you shop at any of 700+ online stores in the iGive network, a portion of the money you spend benefits BALM Ministries. It's a free service, and you'll never pay more when you reach a store through iGive. In fact, shoppers will enjoy iGive's repository of coupons, free shipping deals, and sales. To get started, just create your free iGive account.

> Start iGiving at:
www.igive.com/BALM

(PS from Marsha: I tried this for my online shopping and after the first time, it was very easy and Balm did get the percentage they promise.)

Prayer List

- ✓ Golly, prayers for everyone's finances, huh? Special prayers for upBeat! artist Justin Ryan who has been looking for work for several months now in Louisville. (His music & booking info is available at www.justinryanonline.com)
- ✓ When we are not traveling we offer extra support to some of the upBeat! artists & other ministries. You make that possible, so thanks to God for you.
- ✓ Prayers for all the upBeat! artists as they struggle to find "tentmaking" jobs to support their ministries.
- ✓ Praises for my nursing license! Golly it's good to know I have a job.

- ✓ upBeat! artists Carolyn Marshall & Pat Grant are booking summer '09. See their videos on YouTube! www.MarshallGrantMinistries.org
- ✓ Prayers for new songs I'm working on ☺ & for our health.
- ✓ Prayers for Cindy. She's in school, working for health insurance and caring for her Mom after the stroke.
- ✓ Prayers for wisdom for the dozens of emails I answer each week & for the still-closeted Christians who are hoping for answers!

What You Have to Say

"I have to tell you that your song, "For those Tears I died" has been a tremendous blessing to my Christian life. As a child I grew up with emotional/verbal abuse and have shed many tears as a child and adult. To hear those lyrics about Jesus caring about me and my tears touched my heart. I just now saw your performance on your website. WOW! I wish I could have been there to see it live in person. You are so gifted and a blessing to others. I am glad you are taking a stand for Christ."

"For those tears I died was a major blessing to me in my life a few years ago. My dear sister was in a very bad car accident when she was 16 that left her with a traumatic brain injury. I listened to that song over and over during that trial. She is fine now. She is a healthy happy Christian woman with a good career & she just has a small trach scar to show for her accident. She will be turning 30 this January. Your music is a blessing and God bless you for being a beautiful light for others."

"I thought you might like to know some of my daughter's reactions to your music. I can't believe she will be six in less than two weeks! We were in the car and Where Else Would I Go came on. She asked me if they were

trying to get away from God. She thought it was pretty silly to try to get away from Him or His plans because "God is with us EVERYWHERE!"

After Love's Place played, she responded with "Mommy, Love is the most important thing, isn't it?" With that combination of comments, I had a wonderful thought. YAY!! My kid gets it! I love that your music starts these wonderful faith filled conversations with my daughter. Keep writing!"

Marsha's Schedule

Mar 6, 09 Union Congregational Church, West Palm, FL 7:30pm concert. www.unionucc.net 561-686-0330

Mar 7 First Congregational Church of Fort Lauderdale, 7pm concert www.uceftl.org 954-563-4271

Mar 8 Jensen Beach Community Church, FL 3pm concert 772-334-0716

www.jensenbeachcommunitychurch.org

Apr 5 Joy MCC Orlando, FL, 2 Sun am services at 9:30 and 11:30, then a 6pm concert. www.joymcc.com 407-894-1081

(BIG BONUS TO THE ABOVE CONCERTS!! Cindy will be there!)

In June I will be in New Hampshire and in July in Pittsburg. More on those concerts later.

What Date Would You Like??

PLEASE!! As always, check the

phone numbers for updated

times & info. Go to

www.BalmMinistries.net

for current listings.

ChristianGays.com handles BALM Ministries sales outside the US. Also check out 5,000 pages of Resources, Education, Chat Rooms, List Serve, Prison Ministry, Blogging, Books & Music For Sale & much more