



Philip, Pam and Pat with me at Palm Sunday concert!! ☺

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Dear Balm Benefactors,

Oh, it's my favorite time of year again – Easter! Don't you love it? And don't you learn something new & amazing every year? I can't wait for sunrise service – it's always my favorite.

I got to spend some time earlier in Orlando to start out our Easter-time part of the year. The first part of the week, Cindy & I had an actual vacation – as in, nothing but playing for almost a week! So fun. My sister came out from California & we just became kids at Disney World for a while. A lovely & restful time.

Then, I caught up with wonderful friends...okay, & with some wonderful OLD friends ☺. Joy MCC in Orlando has been a place where I've always been welcomed home. We had a great worship time & many people stayed to pray & to leave some burdens behind them. Their new music minister, Rev. Carol is just the best at hospitality & organization & of course Rev. John Middleton is gentle & gracious about including us in services & concerts. Almost all of the emails I received afterward talked about how much Cindy's testimony meant to everyone. I was SO happy she could join me.

A couple of you pointed out to me that I didn't tell you how it had gone with the Bible college class I was invited to speak to in March. I thought it was great. The young smart techies at the college got me hooked up on Skype. If you don't know what that is, I can't explain it except to say that it allowed me to appear on a big screen in front of their classroom & give a live "testimony" & then answer questions from the students during their class. I think that most of you understand that it is never my goal to change

someone's mind or make them agree with me. It is only my goal to do as Peter exhorted us to do in the New Testament & that is "to be instant & ready to give to everyone an answer, a reason for the hope that is within (me)." Peter also points out that we should do that with "gentleness & respect."

The students were great. When I've had Q & A sessions before, there are usually a lot of innocuous lead-in questions. "Um, so how old were you when you started singing?" That sort of stuff. But they were in class & all ready with their questions. I do have a good time watching people be surprised that I "speak fluent King James," as I often joke about. I think usually people are suspecting that I'm going to be coming to them to be a champion for gay rights OR that I'll be bitter & full of harsh criticism for everyone who has rejected me OR that I'll have a sort of lukewarm Christian experience to share – "God loves me & life goes on," or something like that.

So, when they get to see that Jesus is mighty in my life; that my life is filled with miracles & grace; that I love the Word of God & have no intention of picking & choosing which parts of it I like, I can sometimes win them over enough to actually hear my answers. Agreeing to disagree is a big win in my book. After all, which of us can say we truly believe precisely the way ANYone else believes? Planting seeds is one of my favorite things to do. This year I'll celebrate my 40th anniversary or "birthday" in Christ. One of the great things about hanging in there this long is getting to see so much of the fruit from those seeds. How could I be bitter when God has been so faithful?

The other addition to your prayer lists is Cindy's Mom. Most of you know that we've been centered in Florida recently for Cindy to finish a school program that will hopefully allow us to travel more full-time again. Being here has also been a blessing because we can care for her Mom, Joann, who had a stroke in November. Mom will be moving back with us on Easter weekend to stay a while. She can be a little repetitive with her memory lapses. Of course, this never bothers me since one of her refrains is, "This is my Marsha, she sings like an angel." "Oh do you know my Marsha? She has a voice from God." OTHER people may get tired of hearing that, but...☺

Much love and prayers, Marsha & Cindy

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(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

- ✓ *Prayers for everyone's finances. 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)*
- ✓ *Praises for my nursing job & for time to care for Cindy's Mom after her stroke. Pray for us to have wisdom about the best living situation for her. She is so precious to us.*
- ✓ *Would you all please pray with me for the ability to do a new album? I'd love to do another one & God*

needs to provide the financing.

- ✓ *Prayers for the conferences we'll be participating in this year and prayers for new concerts..*
- ✓ *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's strength. She's in school, working for health insurance and caring for her Mom.*
- ✓ *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

"You and Cindy are often in my prayers. Times are hard and that makes me think of you for two reasons. First, of course, I know that giving is down for most all Christian organizations, and second, I know that you are a rock in the storm to many people and that you must be very busy these days as our economy has so many folks feeling that storm as well as personal storms. I am one person who is grateful that you are out there.

I have appreciated the times you have put me in touch with or let me know about people who need encouragement. You do so much good work in addition to singing beautifully and giving great concerts!"

"Thanks. Once again the song of your heart has reached out and enveloped and injected the richness of His spirit into this old rebel. You and yours just get better.... I could identify with Cindy's every word. The two of you should be heard now, in every home, period. The world is once again getting thirsty for Him and perhaps it will happen. I know that we see it here, in this little Church, as it grows and grows. In the meantime....thanks for the music. You now accompany my work in the Church....and it is good!! For some reason two of your "serious" messages have become needed, and favorites. The first is Peter/Mary, which I got to hear twice, and the other is Jesus Wept....They both seem to exemplify His life...hope and the promise that we are his.... "

Marsha's Schedule

June 6 1st Congregational Church of Wakefield (UCC) in Northwood, NH
6:30pm concert (603)522-3189

www.FCCWakefieldNH.org

June 7 1st Congregational Church of Wakefield (UCC) in Northwood, NH
9:30 am special music (603)522-3189

www.FCCWakefieldNH.org

In July I will be 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.

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