



ICDF Networks

April 2018

AWARE

Network for Academics, Writers and Researchers

This network is for Christian dancers who write, Christians who undertake research, and Christian academics (in Christian or secular institutions) to support, encourage and pray for each other, whatever their discipline or area of interest.



Photo: Rebekah Dyer

For this newsletter the Network members were asked to write about where they were on their life journey and it is intriguing to read about each one, the challenges they are facing and to see the various stages of life that they are experiencing. Maybe you will recognise something of yourself among them but, even if there are similarities, we know that each one of us is unique and therefore the path that we travel is unique too. In all of this we applaud each other's successes, support each other in our trials and share from our experiences when we are asked. Isn't that what a Network is all about?

To find out more about the Network go to ..

<http://icdf.com/en/networks/academics-writers-researchers>

For the AWARE blogs go to ...<http://icdf.com/en/connect/discussion-forum>

On Facebook search for **ICDF Academics, Writers and Researchers - AWARE**

The ICDF website is also worth a visit to see what articles are available for download.

We are continually searching for relevant articles from our members to add to the collection. Visit our publications page for inspirational and academic articles ... <http://icdf.com/en/education/publications>

Creative Collaborations

This year has brought opportunity and challenge in equal measure. Alongside writing my PhD thesis at the Institute for Theology, Imagination and the Arts in St Andrews, Scotland, I have been involved in some wonderful creative collaborations with other artists -- a composer, a poet, and some visual artists. Each of these collaborations paired academic research with creative responses to biblical themes, mainly focusing on what it means to be 'called' by the Holy Spirit. Bringing my academic and creative 'selves' in sync has been a life-giving part of this year. This summer, I will be presenting papers based on my recent research at two academic conferences in the UK.



More details about me and my research can be found at ...

<https://rebekahmdyer.wordpress.com>

For prayer: I'm excited (and a little terrified) to be preparing my thesis for submission in early June. I would value prayers for a smooth examination process! After my PhD, my life currently looks like a blank canvas or an empty stage... I would love prayers for

my transition into whatever comes next.

- Rebekah Dyer

Dancing With Too Many Hats

I am increasingly realizing that often I am attempting to dance with too many hats! By hats, I mean all the different roles I have at present in my daily life. In my home life I am wife, mother and grandmother, and I am not going to attempt to describe the complexities and challenges this often involves. At my church, I dance, lead prayers once a month in services, assist my husband who is a self-supporting ordained minister, and attempt to engage and support the people and activities of a church currently in crisis. I regularly attend local dance classes in contemporary, classical, tap, zumba and Israeli dance.

My main area of paid work is part-time at a church-based community centre (not my own church), where my hats range from administration, finances, writing funding applications, receptionist and general 'dogsbody', to managing and leading the after-school Homework Centre and the Job Club and Life Skills programmes.



Photo: Rosalyn Smaill and Debbie Bright each showing off one of their hats

I have my own website for the promotion and sale of books I and others have written; this needs to be monitored and updated frequently (www.brightbooks.co.nz). I am a regular user of social media. Recently, I have also been working part-time for the New Zealand Census. My census role finished this week, and on 13 April I fly to Australia to spend time with my long-term CDF friend Rosalyn Smaill. In terms of CDF, I have some involvement in CDFANZ (co-ordinator Belinda Andrews) and plenty with ICDF.

In July I will be traveling further south in New Zealand to teach and dance at the CDFANZ conference, and to be general helper and advisor wherever I am needed. With ICDF, I have been writing courses and tutoring ICDF Diploma students, and attempting to keep up with my role as the co-ordinator of the AWARe network which currently involves writing blogs, communicating with members, and co-ordinating the Academic Day and fronting the Network at ICDF conferences.

Finally, I am also often found dancing, teaching, praying and having fun with other CDF members in their various countries.

Whew, it sounds exhausting to write it all down, but I love being busy and I love all the different dances in my life, even if sometimes I wear too many hats at once!

- Debbie Bright

On Being Retired

R = Return to the voluntary "work without pay" force.

E = Entry into providers of services to the community.

T = Try to remember to how say "No," graciously, when time spent on voluntary work becomes greater than time spent formerly in paid employment.

I = Individual "alone time" becomes extremely scarce and precious.

R = Rethink what "Retirement" means.

E = Edit my "volunteer" schedule to include "God and self" time.

D = Deem this phase of life as a daily balancing act.

- Rosalyn Smaill



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Walking on Life's Edges

As a member of a dispersed Christian community (Northumbria Community) I often feel more of the alone of community than the together. Encouraged by some of the other friends and companions of the community who live within a six hour drive, I recently took on organizing and facilitating an Easter season retreat. The community in England has an annual gathering at the mother house, and at a few other houses around England and France, but we had not had one in Western Canada before.

I participated with a team of fourteen other companions, to create materials around the theme of Walking on Life's Edges: Ready for Change. We were following the example of a Celtic saint, namely Chad, who was known for his humility and gentleness in facing the demands in his life, which frequently called for a sudden change of direction. Then, joining with four other friends at a local retreat centre, we moved through the weekend exploring some expressions of the theme.

Walking on life's edges also brings an element of embodiment, as we consider what it is to be fully alive, embracing a readiness to be emptied, to be served and to serve, to be clothed, to be led, to be reconciled, to be awakened, as well as to be changed. We considered, as well, where the edges of our lives are, and whom we meet on the outer boundaries of our lives. It called us to be open to the stranger, the orphan, the refugee.

Our bodies reveal to us so much of the mysteries of God, in relationship to ourselves. We explored what it was to enter fully into these elements of following Jesus, and in the context of our own deaths, to embrace life. "In Him we live and move and have our being."

- Diane Hobelaid



Growing Pains

Who would have thought? I'm AWARE of life-long learning. I've got the Adult Education qualification to prove it, plus a few bruises from the University of Hard Knocks. However, I wasn't expecting to be made redundant prematurely, due to the closure of my workplace and face the prospect of long-term joblessness. Did you see an important part of the word "joblessness"?



I am learning something while I'm writing about what I am currently doing (or currently NOT doing i.e. not being in full time paid employment anymore)! I have realised that I am in a transition to the next season of my life. It hurts. It doesn't feel like release at all. It is hard work, this finding gainful employment gig, at this post-middle age stage of my life. Apparently there is no gain without pain, and as a life-long walker of The Way (I've been a Christ-follower since childhood), I should recognise what it feels like to "grow" and I should be familiar with crossing thresholds into new things... and more importantly, I should understand that LOVE is what life is all about.

Love gets us through. Love generates hope. Love provides a firm foundation for faith. Love transforms. I'm still growing in understanding about all those Love things, and I guess that will always be a life-long learning exercise.

For now, I need to trust that God's Love will provide everything to get me through, across this threshold into freelance consultancy type of work, a new way to bless others through that which I have been blessed. So currently, I have just recently found some part time paid work, of an extremely challenging and mentally gymnastic nature. Going from a situation of confident expertise to one of overwhelmed newbie was not on my wish list, believe me!

Meanwhile, I have to work out how to "package" myself and find a niche market for services I can offer related to education and facilitation using creative movement arts. Then there's the business of trusting that financially, things will work out. Yes, I'm constantly learning and more often than preferred, learning the hard way! It hurts, but hopefully, that's a sign of growing! I've written a poem to vent...

- Lucy Jarasius

growing pains

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It feels like something **might be** happening...

...mmm

maybe not

but it feels like something is gestating

... mmm

oh, INDIgestating, stating the obvious

Obviously just a pain that seems to be growing

is that a “growing pain”?

does a “growing pain” feel different to any other hurt?

Does my “growing pain” have a threshold?

Does a leap of faith require spiritual-gymnast training?

Is that the gain-pain of the race-gait I’m supposed to maintain for breaking through, when it feels like something is hurty-happening, but maybe it’s just indigestion instead of incubation even though it feels like anticipation, a kind of birthing sensation, an inexplicable expectation leading to... what?

Desired manifestation?

...feels more like participation in humanINFESTation than a situation like a saintly athlete’s preparation. And yet..

It feels like something **could be** happening...

...mmm

maybe not

I thought I might be ready, I really really did

But that was before I realised this lifetime-learning marathon was something Holy Spirit led

... into a wilderness of wondering

wandering instead

of racing through the tape, a winner

dragging my feet, trudging through mud

earth-trapped, dreaming of running free, dancing, fully prancing into the next season of release
real ease?

Ha! All I seem to be doing is hoping against hope, believing past belief, facing immanent defeat
a cliff of hanging in there

nudged over the edge of my shortcomings

into a free-fall

failing

... then realising, eerily feeling my downward reeling could be a disciple’s dealing

for healing

re-keeling for smooth sailing

upward falling

past the roaring forties, furious fifties, into the sass of the sixties

finding faith, free-for-all for all to be free

is it just me?

or is something happening?

It feels like something is happening...

Needling into my self-infected needs, injecting Life

into the infestations of my selfish imaginations

transforming my self-conscious limitations

Love hurts