



# Flags & Banners

December **2016**

## Reflection: "As it is in heaven"

When I was first asked to write this Christmas message I thought, "What a privilege, I should be delighted". Now as I sit late at night, in Bristol England, in front of a glowing log fire I'm thinking, "What can I say? Is Christmas still Christmas, in the true sense of the word?" The vast majority of people around the world are caught up in the Christmas machine preparing to have family together and to show their appreciation of one another - worthy values for sure. But are they frantically buying because they are wishing to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ? This is not a criticism just an enquiry. The religious festival has been increasingly swamped in consumerism. So what are we, as followers of Christ, left with?

I have been reading the first letter of Peter and applying the text to my Advent reflections. The Christian community who received the original letter were placed in a social context into which they would bring strange and different core values. 'For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ' 1 Peter 1:18

They brought a new way of living and being and doing; they believed that life without Christ is empty and as an ordained minister I know that many face the post Christmas season with emptiness. Christians were not to go out of their way to be offensive or condemnatory ... you can read about this in chapter three; Christ did not abandon the world, neither were his followers to do that. Faithful Christian conduct could effect change in whatever cultural/social context. We are called to honour everyone and love the family of Believers (1 Pet 2:17) but, year after year, I'm probably looking to survive more than be influential. I will make an impact at some level, not least because it's my job, but am I fully grasping the opportunity to be different.

I suppose the Big question is: "Where is the balance?" Chapter four in this letter written so many centuries ago may give us the key. We hear the answer is living for God and for His will and purposes. What is God's will for us this Christmas? There is no prescriptive answer; and no response is better than another. We just have to simply ask.

I am convinced of one thing: As dancers for God we carry a precious and influential gift and call. I exceedingly admire the testimonies of so many of you, your heart for the Lord, your obedience and surrender. You effect change and bring influence wherever your feet may touch. You may not be able to witness, this Christmas, outside your family circle but your private adorations in movement bring change in the heavenlies which, in turn, changes the earth. The physical reflects the spiritual.

Your dancing will help keep the balance, for yourselves, for your families, friends and communities. In the final chapter of 1 Peter we are exhorted to be caring, humble and on the alert. In all the busyness it's hard to find space for personal growth but, as we dance with all our might to honour the Lord (ref 2 Sam 6:14 - 15), the Holy Spirit I believe, will transform us so that we bring life, in all its fullness, whatever our circumstances. Please, be encouraged, keep dancing!

'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests' Luke 2:14

*Reverend Erica Bebb is an Associate Minister - Pastor for the Arts (Christ Church and the Diocese of Bristol) in the UK. Erica is also one of the Pastoral Advisers for ICDF.*



**JOHN 1:14**

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. - NIV

*Reverend Erica Bebb*



## Network for Flags and Banners

There are still many Christians for whom Flags and Banners is a newly discovered means of praise, and many more who have no idea how they can be used in spiritual warfare, prophecy, intercession and healing. The Flags and Banners Network brings together those who already have an interest in this area, as well as those who simply want to learn more.

To join the Network or more information ..... Marie Bensley ([bensley@clara.net](mailto:bensley@clara.net)) or Darlene West ([info@westworksflags.ca](mailto:info@westworksflags.ca))

To visit the Network webpage ..... <http://icdf.com/en/networks/flags-banners>

To visit the Network Blogsite ..... <https://icdfnetworks.wordpress.com/category/flags-banners/>

### Network Leaders



#### Marie and Andrew Bensley

*Marie has been the Flags and Banners network coordinator since 1997. She had been introduced to using them in praise and worship at a workshop led by Andy Au at the York ICDF conference and was immediately captivated by the sense of the Lord's presence, His power and His anointing. Andrew joined her as joint coordinator a few years later and together they have been teaching workshops and dancing up to this present time. They have many wonderful stories to tell and encourage all to open their hearts to what God can do through them as they move and dance to His glory with a flag or a banner.*

The reason we use flags is because I believe there is a power released from the heavenlies when God sees surrendered and obedient hearts moving out in this way. Anyone can stand in a congregation and sing, but it takes passion, conviction, humility and courage to pick up a flag and announce to heaven and hell (and the assembled congregation) that you are following the Spirit's instructions.

Many people would love to try to dance with a flag, but are put off by "what others may think". My answer to that is simple - your audience is only One, the Lord Himself! We must also remember "Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart" - so you need only to have that willing heart to be accepted by Him.

If this is you; go to workshops, learn all you can, and practise at home before dancing in the church.

*Marie Bensley*



#### Darlene West

*Darlene lives in Alberta, Canada and her ministry, Westworks Flags, has been in operation for 10 years. She teaches using flags in praise and worship, intercession, warfare, prophetic and processions. She also designs, paints and stitches the majority of flags in 6 different styles that are offered for sale.*

When I'm dancing with flags I'm not thinking about how I'm ministering to others. I'm more so moving with how the Lord is moving me, to minister back to Him.

*Darlene West*

### Resources: Flags and Teaching Material

There are many who have a ministry of banner-making. Here we list some of those connected to ICDF:

- Marie Bensley, United Kingdom - [bensley@clara.net](mailto:bensley@clara.net)
- Darlene West, Canada - [info@westworksflags.ca](mailto:info@westworksflags.ca)
- David Stanfield, Australia - [david@worshipbanners.org](mailto:david@worshipbanners.org)
- Penny Whalley, South Africa - [pawhalley@telkomsa.net](mailto:pawhalley@telkomsa.net)

# Impacting the Nations

*We have invited David Stanfield to share with us from his experience on how banners can make a contribution to bring restoration to the nations through prophesy, healing and warfare.*

I believe that the Lord has released banners (or flags as they have also been called) for us to use again in this stage of the Kingdom. I am seeing banners used in dozens of countries in a new way- to bring the prophetic word of God where it has been silenced, to bring healing and courage to believers and through obedience, warfare and declaration to establish His Kingdom on earth.

So why release banners again? We need to look at why they were released in the first place – in fact why were banners commanded to be used? As the children of God came out of bondage in Egypt - God released a new tool and weapon for them to forge His people into a united whole for the first time in history. Might it be time for a reformation and restoration of forging of a united people in our day?

If you understand the basic building blocks of banners, you can build anything He tells you to out of them:

- Banners are symbolic; they are physical manifestations that represent spiritual truths important for kingdom living.
- They speak of identity, reminding us that we are part of something bigger than ourselves and that our God is even bigger than the limits of our mind.
- Banners add a visual dimension to worship: they add a dramatic, colourful and joyful aspect to worship.
- Banners can help intercessors and prayer warriors extend what they already do. They can also be used for gentle healing and deliverance ministry, with or without words.
- Banners have very strong precedence in Scripture, including a direct command from God for men to use them.

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron: "The Israelites are to camp around the Tent of Meeting... each man under his standard with the banners of his family." Numbers 2:1-34

- God the Father uses banners.

"He lifts up a banner for the distant nations." Isaiah 5:25;

- Jesus Christ is a banner.

"In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and His place of rest will be glorious." Isaiah 11:10

- Holy Spirit uses banners.

"When the enemy shall come in, like a flood the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him and put him to flight." Isaiah 59:19

- Banners release movement: they are visual and add impact to worship. Movement in worship and liturgy has largely been lost from the church. Jesus and his disciples moved when they worshipped and banners help to bring movement back.
- Banners provide a language that crosses cultural and denominational boundaries. They speak to the unchurched.
- Banners encourage people to understand their authority, to speak forth God's Word and to be more obedient in taking and using that authority to change the atmosphere around them.
- Banners provoke confidence in God, encouraging men, women and children to step into their authority, to intercede and to prophesy. Properly used, banners help godly men to rise up into their destiny.



## **Banners are powerful tools for Worship**

They enlarge and extend our worship which is the foundation for prophetic release, for healing, and for warfare. They encourage a deeper and broader experience, drawing out from our innermost being a yearning to move in response to God.

Banners reduce the fear of man by allowing us to be extravagant and expressive and help us to keep our focus on God and not ourselves.

Banners are a catalyst for corporate worship. They express the manifold presence of God, and rally us to flow together more naturally and organically. They allow us to spontaneously interact with others in worship in a way that the total becomes greater than the sum of the parts.

## **Banners are powerful tools for Intercession**

Banners allow us to pray with our whole body; they provide focus and unity and take our intercession to the next level. They remind us how big our God is. They enable us to stay on task either as individuals or as a group. They also make for an easy flow between worship, intercession, and warfare.

## **Banners are powerful tools for Healing and Deliverance**

Banners can be used in prophetic acts which make the truths of God more real and physically present, bypassing the rational, verbal and auditory channels. People who have trouble receiving ministry are often deeply touched by banners.

## **Banners are powerful tools for Warfare**

Banners enlarge our focus and give courage in warfare. Because they are physical, they help bring unity and put a face on our warfare. Using our whole body in intercession or warfare removes feelings of powerlessness. Using a banner gives us boldness and confidence to remember how big and powerful God is in every situation.

Knowing this one can move confidently into any situation in the world and expect God to turn up and tell you what is needed. With this simple understanding and some banners God is "let off the leash" to be Himself. To spontaneously direct us to use this tool to encourage and equip local Christians to stand in the Godly authority He has given them to change their own nations. Banners are an ancient tool that God is re-issuing for His Great End-time Army. I strongly encourage you to investigate and use them!

*David Stanfield*

*David lives in Toowoomba, Australia and can be reached at [david@worshipbanners.org](mailto:david@worshipbanners.org) for more information.*

Out of Our Minds Banners

[www.worshipbanners.org](http://www.worshipbanners.org)

# BANNER MAKING

## Introducing Rosalyn Smail

*Rosalyn's journey with ICDF began as a member of the Charter Committee, formed at the 1988 CDFAustralia Conference in Bathurst. She became Founding Co-ordinator of CDF Aotearoa New Zealand in 1989 to 1996, and designed and made the ICDF and CDFNZ banners for the 1991 ICDF Conference in Jerusalem, Israel, where she was Administrator. At the ICDF Conference in York, 1994, she was elected Assistant Co-ordinator for ICDF, a role she held until 2003. She has taught at CDF conferences and workshops in New Zealand, Australia, USA, Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, Ireland, England, and Jerusalem, Israel.*

## Banners in the Bible

### A Look at the "How, When, Where, Why, What and Who?"

As Christians we turn to the Bible, the Old and New Testaments, for our rationale for the use of banners in worship and in Christian activities. There are a number of words in the Hebrew of the Old Testament which open up for us God's use of "banners", and they commence in Genesis.

Genesis 1:14 Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years". The word "signs" is pronounced "owth" in Hebrew, and means: "sign, signal, a distinguishing mark, banner, remembrance, miraculous sign, omen, warning, token, ensign, standard, miracle, proof". On the fourth day of creation, God is proclaiming God's intention to use symbols to guide humanity, even before they are created.

Another example of the use of this word is in Chapter Nine, where God is speaking to Noah. Genesis 9:12, 13, 17 And God said: "This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth."

And God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth."

In Exodus we meet a new word.

Exodus 17:15 And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-Lord-Is-My-Banner...

The word "banner" is pronounced "nissi" and means: "something lifted up, standard, signal, signal pole, ensign, banner, sign, sail, standard (as rallying point), signal, standard (pole), ensign, signal." Hur and Aaron had held up the arms of Moses, while he held his staff, or pole, aloft. While it was held aloft the Israelites gained victory over their enemy, but if it was lowered, the enemy gained ground. The truth being proclaimed here to the heavens is that God is the Banner, victorious over the forces of evil.

Once again in Numbers we meet the word "nissi" as we read of Moses obedient to the Lord's command to lift something up – this time a bronze serpent, which would bring healing to those who looked upon it. So this time the truth that is proclaimed is about healing.

Numbers 21:8-9 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live." So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

We meet this word again in Psalms:

Psalms 60:4 You have given a banner to those who fear You, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah

This speaks of God giving banners to those who fear God, who will speak truth into a situations through the use of banners. This, I believe is the why we use banners and flags in Christian settings. We are lifting up the truths that God has given us to declare to the heavens and to the earth that God is in this place, working out in our lives, that truth that we are proclaiming.



*Reverend Rosalyn Smail*

For the full article please go to <http://icdf.com/en/publications-inspire> and follow the link on the page.

# GALLERY



