



# INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN DANCE FELLOWSHIP MAGAZINE

ICDF NETWORKS

ISSUE 1 | 2023



## The Future of ICDF Networks

AN ICDF EXCLUSIVE

5 NETWORKS  
ICDF RESOURCES






Welcome to the first of our new look ICDF magazines. These quarterly magazines are a way for us to celebrate the good work of all our members from around the world. Each year, our March and September issues will concentrate on our Networks and the June and December issues will look at the wonderful work happening in the countries.

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## Joint Coordinators' Note

This magazine will share articles from five of our networks.

-  Dance Artists
-  Messianic Dance and Tambourine
-  Dance for Children
-  Dance Teachers
-  Movement in Prayer

Each network brings together people from around the globe with similar interests, with the aim to encourage and inspire one another. A recent article by the University of Chicago highlighted three keys to effective networking.

These keys are important not only for business but also for us in our networks.

### **Be authentic, reciprocate and think about the long-term relationship**

Our networks are about relationships, to share stories and experiences. To be authentic is to be open to one another especially when things are challenging, and to receive encouragement to continue.

### **Prepare and perfect**

Join a network on a topic that interests you, read up about it, and meet with people who share your interest. Listen to and learn from one another. We all have something to give.

### **Take time and take action**

Be patient because it takes time to get to know others in a network and to deepen your relationships. Also, be patient because you may not agree with everyone or everything said in the network. Be humble to receive from others.

Proverbs 27:17 says "As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend." (NLT) Let's sharpen and equip one another in our mission to show the world the love of God.

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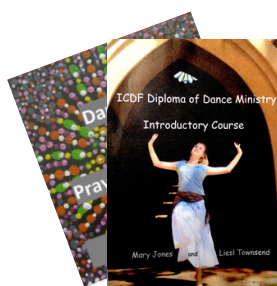
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Check out the latest products and resources in our ICDF Shop



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# ICDF NETWORKS

ICDF's networks give opportunities for global networking and communicating between people who share the same interests, callings, or passions.

Visit our Website for more information on all our Networks [WWW.ICDF.COM](http://WWW.ICDF.COM)



## DANCE ARTISTS

This is a network of professional and semi-professional dance artists who are involved in ministry, professional companies, independent dance artists, mission work, or educational roles.

**ICDF**  
[icdfworld@gmail.com](mailto:icdfworld@gmail.com)



Cynthia Newland & Randall Flinn are Professional Dance Artists



## MESSIANIC DANCE & TAMBOURINE

This network aims to share ideas and choreography for Messianic Dance and Tambourine. Messianic Dance can also be known as Davidic, Israeli or Hebraic. The title is not as important as the fact that they all have Jewish roots

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Vera Chierico



Ralph & Mindi Seta



## DANCE FOR CHILDREN

The Children's Dance Network is for all who are or would like to be involved with teaching and leading children in Christian dance. Through cyberforums we can share ideas, teaching methods, learn from one another's personal experiences in teaching children, share dances, share resources.....and most of all share our hearts.

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Belma Vardy



Anna Gilderson



## MOVEMENT IN PRAYER

The ICDF Network for Movement in Prayer aims to share ideas for movement and prayer; for members to support each other in prayer projects; to answer the call for prayer internationally through support in prayer or in person; to celebrate the outcome of prayer; and, where possible, to meet in our countries / localities to move and pray.

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Jackie Young



## DANCE TEACHERS

"God has given me a heart for dance teachers. I know the joys and difficulties they can face. We can encourage each other and pass on helpful information in such a Network."

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Beth Bluett-Spicer



Sue Hodson



## DANCE ARTISTS

**"Take a Seat"** is the title of my newest choreography. This work depicts the busyness of our lives, the uncomfortability of idleness and being still, the choice to extend and receive invitations for engaged encounters, and the decision to take a seat with others to be still, patient, and wait.

I was inspired to create this dance as I listened to a sermon on the topic of "have a seat". Questions by the speaker stirred me as I thought about my own life, how comfortable I am, and how frequently or infrequently I extend or receive an invitation to just sit with others.

Our lives are often packed to the brim, full of hustle and activity, allowing little time for introspective reflection or deepening relationships. When we choose to sit and take a seat, we are committing and investing our time to being, not doing. In the moments of non-motion and being still, we can find countless opportunities and possibilities. Sitting may bring us physical relief and make space for comfort and care. Being quiet can also make us anxious as we may anticipate the uncertainty of the forthcoming conversation, an expectation of how the time is to be spent and hopes for the outcomes of time spent together.

As I read the scriptures in reference to sitting and taking a seat, there were various scenarios.

One that stood out to me was when Jesus spoke to a large group. Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So, the men sat down, in number about five thousand" (John 6:10). Jesus asked for the multitude to sit down.

Why did they need to sit? I can imagine His motive was to bring rest to their weariness and to allow them the opportunity to commune with each other and to be still so they could receive His blessing. As I created "Take a Seat", I thought about our comfort with busyness and discomfort with idleness. Many of us admittedly prefer to make contributions to society and at least appear to be productive. However, this state of being does not allow us to fully receive. "Be still and know that I am God" and "Be still and wait patiently" don't often make it to the most popular scripture list. For some of us, it requires more of us to be still than to navigate physically demanding and challenging tasks.

During the creative process, the dancers and I spoke about our challenges and struggles related to the theme of the work. As we actively talked and prayed, we also paused and were able to receive. We were recipients of grace and encouragement towards one another and most importantly we were reminded of God's desire for us to have a seat with Him.

### "Take A Seat"

by Cynthia Newland

<https://youtu.be/sfMoE2mJE90>

During the presentation and performance of a dance, it is a great blessing to be a conduit to inspire others to consider matters of significance. It is the graciousness of God that allows us during the dance-making process and performance to not only dance about a topic but to fully experience His transformative presence during the collaboration with Him.

Receive the request of your presence as I invite you to "take a seat" and encounter God as you experience this dance.

Cynthia Newland

**"Be still and know that I am God."**

# MESSIANIC & TAMBOURINE DANCE

“Jew and Gentile, one in Messiah”.



## Messy-anic/Ballroom Fusion Dance

For the teachers' night at the ICDF conference in Sweden 2022, I needed a dance, and Peter Hothersall, (Ballroom Network) needed a partner. Having shared a ballroom/messianic dance fusion twice before, we thought that we would do it a third time to the song, “Jew and Gentile, one in Messiah”. Unfortunately, we had very little time to practise and only a small room to practise in.

After only thirty minutes of bumping into one another, we had no more time to clean up the errors and so had to perform what we had. That and a few other mishaps seemed to promote the ‘one in Messiah’ theme. Neither of us knew if it would work so I wrote a brief introduction wanting to refer to it as a Messy-anic/Ballroom fusion dance but staying in character Peter surprised me by doing the intro himself!

I had asked about 10 people to join in the circle dance on the limited stage and couldn't believe it when about 50/60 got up to join in. It was so appropriate and again supported our ‘one in Messiah’ theme.

It was very well received and I thought it ironic that Peter and I had rehearsed so many times travelling across London to meet for our other two fusion dances and all we needed was thirty minutes on the same day as the presentation! Peter is very talented and I love dancing with him. Our two ICDF networks blend beautifully together.

Although my New Jerusalem dancers and my regular workshops ended due to the pandemic after 32 years. I still get sporadic invitations and I have had two CDF Britain regional workshops in February this year plus a pending invitation with Jews for Jesus in London (with whom I began the messianic dance ministry 37 years ago in New York).

I hope to eventually begin regular workshops in my new area Suffolk, UK but I'll travel anywhere to teach!

Blessings and Shalom  
Vera Chierico



Vera Chierico & Peter Hothersall

“Old is a moving target: always 20 years older than my current age.”



Helen Ward & Jennifer Crowley

## Passing the Torch

God has done great things for us in 2022. After two years of our annual Messianic Jewish Alliance of America (MJAA) conferences being cancelled due to Covid, it was such a blessing to be able to gather together and see so many of our old friends again. We enjoyed all the usual conference stuff: teachings, concerts, afternoon dance classes, and of course evening worship services with lots of joyful dancing. I noticed a common thread in several of the teachings at this year's conference. As we baby boomers age, a number of the rabbis spoke of the importance of raising up the new generation of leaders, and the importance of “passing the torch” of leadership to the next generation.

At 70, I do not consider myself old. (“Old” is a moving target: always 20 years older than my current age). I look to the Biblical example of Miriam, who was probably around 90 years old when she led the Israelite women in dance after the deliverance from Egypt. Yet I can also see the need to ensure that there are younger leaders prepared to carry on our ministries.

My home congregation, Beth Yeshua, is in the midst of major changes. After many years of searching, our congregation purchased a property in Media, PA (a suburb outside of Philadelphia), and made plans to expand the existing building there to meet our congregation's growing needs. We held the dedication service for our new worship centre on 19 November 2022.

Watch our congregational circle dance during the praise and worship portion of our service (35:48 - 46:36) and during the concert by special guest Paul Wilbur (2:25:42). There is also a dance performance by a group of our young people (1:43:11 to 1:46:05).

Along with our new worship centre, we have been blessed with a newly appointed dance leader. Jennifer Crowley, in my view, is the right person to build upon the foundation that I and others in the dance ministry have laid.

Jennifer was 13 years old when her family became involved in Messianic Judaism, and the first dance she learned was the Israeli dance Ma Navu done to Lamb's song “How I Praise You”, taught to her by a friend after services.

She only recently learned, by reading my article in the March issue of this newsletter, that I was the one who introduced the idea of putting that dance to that song.

Jennifer brings with her an extensive repertoire of Israeli dances and is also a gifted teacher. In my experience, many of the best dancers are the worst dance teachers, as they learn intuitively and cannot analyse and explain the steps, but I was very impressed as I watched Jennifer teach dances to a group of young children. (She told me she learned her verbal teaching style from me; I'm flattered). She also runs the children's program at CBY, and with seven young children of her own to raise. I asked Jennifer to write briefly about her vision for the dance ministry. She wrote, “I hope to continue CBY's legacy of excellence in worship dance. I hope to follow as He leads in making connections with other congregational dance leaders to collaborate on dances for the new music being brought into our worship services. I hope to maintain an Israeli “flavour” in the style of worship dance we do in the congregation, and I hope to foster an atmosphere which is welcoming to our young people and older people alike. I love to see the little ones dancing, but it really blesses my heart to see all generations dancing and worshipping together as one. I hope to be used by the Lord to help His people worship together through dance. There is so much that can be said for the benefits to us individually and corporately as we dance together, but my greatest hope is that the Lord would be glorified. I don't know what He has planned for the future, and I'm excited and grateful to be part of it.”

Jennifer has introduced some new interchangeable dances from her Israeli dance repertoire that add some much needed variety to our worship. It has been a blessing to work with her, and I look forward to continuing to do so.

Helen Ward

View the service  
on this link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z88F2YYkucE>

# DANCE FOR CHILDREN

## Hello Everyone,

It's lovely to be with you sharing a few things that have been on our hearts recently. Belma shares about God's compassion for children, while Anna shares about her "go to" resource with floor shapes.

Following this is an encouraging story from Marie Bensley. Make sure you read all the way to the end to find out how you can keep in touch with us.

## Belma reminds us of God's compassion for Children

Children are so dear and precious to the heart of God. We need to pray that His compassionate heart for children will envelop ours! The first step in leading your children into a passion for God is for you to be passionate about Him yourself. Children believe what they're told. Teaching them the truth is their foundation. Love and truth will nourish and feed a child.

One way to give love and nourishment is to praise them; Wow! Super! Outstanding! Excellent! Well done! I knew you could do it! I'm proud of you! Fantastic job! Nice work! Beautiful! You're catching it! Now you're flying! You're incredible! Bravo! You're fantastic! Good job! That's incredible!

You will see your children excel. Children, when released, can be used as dynamic little instruments in the hands of God and you will see scripture come to life...the people which I have created will praise My Name.

Always remember that children are a gift from God! (Genesis 33:5).

Belma Vardy



## Anna's "Go To" Resource – Floor Shapes

My "go to" resource when delivering a children's workshop is a set of floor shapes. I've been using them for over 10 years since I designed them at the start of UC Grace. They have proved invaluable in offering the chance for children to engage with the space around them and provide a simple way to explore a movement and music response.

Instilling an opportunity, in a non-invasive way, for children to develop their creative skills and movement awareness is so important. The shapes allow children to connect to a theme, explore the space around them and interact with other children. There are so many possibilities.

One simple way that I use them is to explore size and shape. I have 4 different shapes – a triangle, square, circle and what the kids love to call a splat. This one looks like a bow tie, a butterfly, or a dog bone – I like to let the children decide what they want to call it!

A simple exercise is to play music and when the music stops, they all find a shape. Depending on what shape, they are on, they do the following movements.

- Circle – make a big circle with their arms like they're hugging a tree.
- Triangle – make their feet as wide as possible, then reach their arms up high and bring their hands together above their head.
- Square – pretend to be a robot and make right angles with the arms.
- Splat – a balance or free choice.

What's your "go to" resource when you are teaching children? How do you help them connect with the theme? Share your thoughts with Belma & Anna by emailing or connecting with them on their Facebook group.

Anna Gilderson



# DANCE FOR CHILDREN

## An Encouraging story from Marie Bensley



Marie Bensley

**Marie shares an encouragement** from February 2022 when the children were given space to move at church.

During lockdown, we had to worship using a CD player, which at first was odd as we always had a good band.

We have just recently had a Nigerian family join with two children of 10 and 8 years of age who love the flags.....so GUESS WHAT.... we moved into the space where the band would have been and led the CD worship with a flag dance. It was amazing! 25 minutes of lovely dance with these two children following my every move, so it looked choreographed!

When moments like this happen in church, not only is it an encouragement to those watching, but also to the dance leaders and the dancers themselves. God releases the space we need when we need it most.

It's no small statement in Isaiah 11:6... "and a little child shall lead them".

We need to recognise the leadership qualities in our children and actively ask God to help us discern the leadership gifts within each child. And then believe that God can and will use our children to draw others closer to God.

We count it a privilege to serve together in this children's focus network ministry.

Love Belma and Anna

### KEEP IN THE LOOP WITH DANCE FOR CHILDREN NETWORK

Some of you are already part of the Facebook group, where Anna and Belma have been sharing some of their journey throughout the year. This is a great place to learn from each other and they would encourage you to join if you haven't already.

Anna and Belma both have been in full-time ministry for many years, and they have some wonderful ideas and teachings they would love to share with you. Some of which they have already been sharing in the Facebook group but would love the opportunity to go deeper with you. Therefore, launching in 2023 will be a twice-yearly email newsletter where they will specifically share teachings from each of their ministries and ways to help you develop yours.

You can join the Facebook group here. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/177657058961017>  
Please make sure you answer the questions to be accepted into the group.

Sign up for the email list here. <https://gmail.us20.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=8cf3499b6142594fa67ea0641&id=3cdf6f9e98>





## MOVEMENT IN PRAYER

### Creativists in Contested Spaces

I'm thinking that, to the "uninitiated", Prayer can sound like it's such an "armchair" or "kneepad" exercise. However, for dance-creatives involved in prayer/intercession, many of us can testify that our involvement in the holistic, bodily expression of communication with God has gotten us to some pretty amazing destinations!

For example, before arriving at Gulbranna in Sweden for the ICDF Conference 2022, hosted by ICDF Scandinavia, my ICDF colleague, Debbie Bright, and I had travelled for ten days from Oceania (Debbie – Aotearoa New Zealand, and me – lands of Australia) to what we think of as exotic locations on a Prayer Pilgrimage. We titled the amazing journey "Creativists in Contested Spaces: an abunDANCE of embodied prayer". It took us through Istanbul (Turkey), Jerusalem (Israel), Bethlehem (Palestinian Territory), Copenhagen (Denmark) and then on to Sweden.



We presented Seminar Papers at the ICDF Conference based on our prayer-soaked preparations and actual adventures involved with the trip. Neither of us had planned to do such a journey in 2022, whilst the world and international travel were still in recovery from the Covid pandemic... not to mention finding the finances involved for such an enterprise!

However, that's prayer for you... taking you to places in the Spirit, and at times, in actual physicality, to places hitherto unexpected. Somehow, we KNEW, we had to go!

Prayer over many years in many places can be preparation for Prayer assignments yet to come, it seems. We were mindful, for example, that having participated on the team in previous ICDF Prayer Watches in 2012 and 2015, initiated by Mary Jones, had a real connection with what eventuated this year... We were in some ways, ready to go when prompted.



Prayerfully, we contacted some brand new leads of people and organisations involved in peace-building and reconciliation ministries in tough contexts, along with a couple of familiar ones, and watched how the Lord brought it all together in ways we couldn't have done in our own strength. In my experience, Prayer stokes faith and fuels adventures. It ignites courage and sparks joy. I encourage you to give it a go!

Seven different accommodation places in the first ten days of travel, through five countries (not including transit locations) does not seem ideal, but there were some places upon which we felt required to put our physical feet, which our spiritual feet had ever so much more quickly visited, it seemed. Somehow, in transit, we also managed to pull together a half-hour presentation of solo/duet/dance/poetry which we titled "Penumbra" (the transformational space between darkness and light) which expressed the essence of what we were "carrying in prayer" as we listened to the stories of those who extended time and hospitality to us and to whose stories we listened, as we prayer-pilgrimaged through their homelands.



# MOVEMENT IN PRAYER

We were also acutely aware of and grateful for the covering prayer of intercessors as we made this epic journey, some of whom, also were brand new contacts that the Lord had “choreographed” into the picture not long before the trip. A couple of them are now key people in fresh developments of ICDF ministry in the Oceania region!

We travelled FURTHER than we were expecting, both physically and spiritually. We are still plumbing the depths and processing the heights of the experience which was far MORE than we could ever have imagined.

But, Prayer does that! I am so glad it does... stretch us further and more... not always comfortable or easy, but ALWAYS deeper into the Lord’s glorious plans and purposes, for sure!

Our seminar papers and workshops are sure to be made available through ICDF avenues. Our prayer is that they would be a blessing and inspire our dear ICDF family to become more liberated, confident and equipped for whatever the Lord has further and more in store for each and every one of us, and furthermore, beyond, to the world around us!

Lucy Jarasius



# MOVEMENT IN PRAYER

## furtherMORE

© Lucy Jarasius 2022

surPRIZE!

Not really...  
You knew it!  
You had to go  
deeper  
higher  
further

into MORE!

more of  
the direction  
the vocation  
the transformation

more of  
The New

It's not a race, a competition, or an  
exhibition

but  
there is a PRIZE

for the faith-filled, grace-fueled,  
for the tenacious, non-pretentious,  
unsensationalist activist

a prized experience of community-  
shared creativity  
the further faith of leap  
across the line  
bridging the gap  
into the not-yet-known

surPRIZE!

Not really...  
You know it!  
You gotta go!



Lucy Jarasius




# DANCE TEACHERS


My thought is to reiterate our 'raison d'etre' as Christian Dance teachers i.e., called by the Lord to represent Him, in all our endeavors as dance teachers in a way that brings honour to Him.


Unfortunately for most of us, while we have been busy serving the Lord in our churches and schools, the rest of our culture has been 'disciplined' by other voices who oppose the Lord. So, I think of the verse in Isaiah 60, that says that deep darkness will cover the earth, but His light will rise upon us. There is simultaneous light and darkness – even more reason to 'shine'.

Here are some topics we as teachers are exercised in:

Our manner of speaking to our dancers. Does it build up?

 Our inventiveness in the explanation of dance concepts and techniques. The challenge is to keep it interesting and demonstrate or speak in a way the age level of the dancers can understand. I believe the Holy Spirit is an expert at giving us innovative ideas about this. I have found myself thinking of a new concept that is exactly right for the situation, and I think to myself 'Wow! That is good Lord!'

 The subject matter, music selection (lyrics) and costuming of choreography. I ask, 'Is there any subliminal messages that are sending a wrong 'message'?' We live in such a sexualised culture that it can creep in. We want to be 'a light set on a hill,' to show the way. Our dancers are made in the image of God, not in the image of the current culture.

 Our liaison with parents and the public. This is shown in how we speak, dress, and write newsletters. Newsletters are a way to share our vision and not just communicate about timetable dates and events. It is also about how we conduct ourselves, and our lifestyle because as teachers we become public figures in the community. We want to honour the Lord in all we do. It seems that our cultures have reached a 'tipping point'. Teachers have found parents of many 'persuasions' are choosing a Christian dance school rather than a secular one with its compromising culture.

## 'Raison d'etre'



Our financial integrity is a way we honour the Lord. One challenge that I have had is that over the Christmas holidays, I lost 8 talented dancers in one class of 9 students! This was when I turned my dance school into a Christian dance school! I was dismayed at first because these were dancers of considerable talent that I had taught and nurtured for many years. It was not so much about the loss of income, even though it would affect my income. But I felt the Lord saying 'I am doing a new thing.' Within one term in the new year, I had many homeschoolers join that particular class (Grade 4). By the end of term 1, I had 9 students in that very class! They loved the Christian mime about being lost and found. The ones who left would roll their eyes when I announced we would do that mime.



Our honest advertising.



Common areas of discouragement.

If any teacher of any dance genre, would like to communicate on these or other topics, Sue Hodson, who jointly co-ordinates the ICDF Network for Dance Teachers, and I, would love to hear from you.

Be blessed and inspired by the Lord Jesus in all your endeavors.

Beth Bluett-Spicer



# ICDF RESOURCES

Visit our ICDF Shop to purchase ICDF Branded items of your choice. We also have e-Book resources, available to purchase on the ICDF e-Book online shop.

## ICDF DANCE MERCHANDISE



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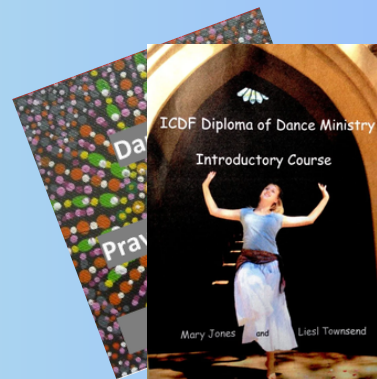
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Drawstring Bag



Stickers



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