



ICDF
International Christian
Dance Fellowship

August 2016

Ghana Conference



Dearest ICDF Family!

What an indescribable blessing it was to see those of you who attended the ICDF Conference in Ghana last month. Words could not fully describe what we all received personally and collectively in the beautiful Land of Ghana - a Vision fulfilled or a divine Dream come true? We have "seen the unseen" - true talents bottled up had been released and their sound will go to the ends of the Earth! We have experienced the unknown - and we have been stretched and transformed by divine Purpose! Something that will not be forgotten but will live on and grow until His Will is done and His plans are completed!

The Lord bless you all with growing faith in this wonderful season of challenges and rewards!

Linda Ivanka
Ireland Conference Committee

Hosting the ICDF Conference in Ghana was a vision come true .. a vision God impressed on me at the ICDF Conference in Puerto Rico for the next conference. When I shared this with the Ghana committee, even though none had participated in an ICDF international meeting before, everybody was convinced it was the Lord leading us. With CDF Ireland who God had also called to host, we immediately set to work and can say today we are very grateful to God for what was accomplished.

We did not have money for anything when we started but God provided us with the money just when we needed it. We did not know how to attract many Ghanaians to be part of the conference but, thank God, close to fifty joined us - many of them young giving us a future for the ministry. We learnt much from international participants and praise God for His many seeds sown.

Seth Newman
Ghana Conference Committee

to set the Stage

Academics & Stations

Monday 11 July was Registration Day for delegates, but at the same time there was a full programme of Academic Papers and Stations of the Cross

Academic Papers

Between the content of each of the presentations, there were many amazing and unexpected connections (God's doing, rather than ours!). There was a lot about redeeming the dance of our individual cultures and our views on creativity, so that dance can take its rightful place in worship, outreach, etc. The first two papers were: An Examination of the Role of Traditional Music and Dance in Apostles Revelation Society (ARS) Churches from the Past to the Present (Prof. Modesto Mawulolo Amegago, University of Ghana) and Dance as a Tool for Cultural Reunion in the Church: Asare Newman Technique (Dr. Sylvanus Kwashie Kuwor and Jennies Deide Darko, University of Ghana). These presenters focused particularly on the dance of Ghana, and how this dance has been brought into the churches in worship, and used in outreach/evangelism. Over the years, this work has led to full acceptance of dance within some of the Ghanaian churches, where there had previously been no acceptance. Through dance, many people have been drawn to Christ, many others have learned about their own regional cultures, and Ghanaian dance has been redeemed.

Lisa Wilson (University of Capetown, South Africa), in her paper Dancing the Goodness of God: A rainbow of movement aesthetics or a universal representation?, referred back to the previous two papers and presented a similar argument, particularly in terms of the dance of her own Jamaican culture.

During the day, we were inspired by descriptions and video of worship and evangelistic dance. Before the final paper we were also treated to a poem written and performed by Lucy Jarasius (Australia): Called to Create. Finally, Debbie Bright (University of Waikato, New Zealand), in her paper Dancing in the Creator's footsteps: Linking creativity theory and our life as Christian Artists, presented a bridge between the Western ideas about creativity and those of non-western, indigenous and non-dominant cultures, illustrating our Creator God's richness and variety. Brushing only briefly on the literature supporting The Bright Creative Life, she turned the session into a workshop in which she introduced each element of her approach and invited the participants to reflect, share and pray in small groups about their own experiences of creativity.

Complete changes of pace and added enrichment, between speakers, came through Lucy's poem and also through short active sessions: stretching and scripture (from Praise Moves) led out on the grass by Sharon Ereaux (Australia) and group praise dance led by Barbara Bain (South Africa). And the food... the 'snacks' of Seth Asare Newman's team were huge, and served as lunch and dinner, not just morning and afternoon tea!

Debbie Bright

Stations of the Cross

How wonderful it was to be a part of the ICDF pre conference experience of 'Stations Of The Cross' led by Andy Raine.

As we walked and prayed our way around the huge Legon campus we stopped at 16 strategic places to present in word, dance and song the story of Christ and the cross. The most poignant moment for me was witnessing a young student who was part of the Ghanaian welcome party taking the part of Christ for the first time. Less than half an hour earlier he and I had been discussing dance as we walked the 'stations' together. "I don't dance," he had said to me. "Yet," I'd replied, "you don't dance yet." Towards the end of the day with encouragement from me and Andy and considerable trepidation on his part, this young man took off his shirt and sat in the chair to take the role of Christ. As he started to move, with his eyes closed and his heart clearly turned to Jesus, we witnessed in his expression and movement not only Christ's pain on the cross given freely in love but also the love of the Father for this young man as He birthed in him the power of dance.

Anna Arnold



First Night

**COLOURS MIXING, MOVING,
SEATING AND UNSEATED
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Diane Habelaid

from Workshop spaces..... into the Community

Ability not Disability

Wheelfever believes that all young people, regardless of their ability or background, can be inspired to realise their potential, define their own future and be part of building kind and compassionate communities.

This was the description printed in the programme of the morning elective workshop that I chose. Paula Hocking ran the workshop sessions with the help of Ed, disabled with cerebral palsy, his able-bodied dance partner, Leroy, and Paula's son, Frankie, who is also disabled and, as a filmmaker, is responsible for videoing much of what takes place in workshops and presentations. They are a dynamic team. The guys are so enthusiastic and inspiring in their exuberance and positive approach to face new challenges. Wheelfever is a Community Dance Project devising and delivering creative dance experiences relevant to the requirements of individuals and groups. It is built on their conviction that dance is an activity that benefits the health and well-being of those who participate. They think creatively and inclusively to provide opportunities for people who may otherwise struggle with traditional dance forms and mainstream methods of teaching.

In the workshop we were privileged to learn from Paula how they approach the start of new workshops to break the ice and incorporate all those participating, mainly disabled in wheelchairs, in a gentle, non-threatening way. Then gradually a theme is introduced with relevant movements by asking each participant to suggest or demonstrate a particular move. Eventually these movements are coordinated into a sequence which is set to music. This is exactly what we did in the workshop sessions. It was truly inspiring.

On the Outreach day, the team was given the opportunity to visit a Christian vocational training centre where all the residents are disabled, either physically or mentally. They were exposed to Paula's introductory methods and it was such a joy to see shyness and self-doubt turn to broad smiles as the young people played "follow the leader" and then took the initiative to find their own momentum. Tears of joy and happiness broke out as new horizons were opened, and possibly a little hope, that their limitations could be expanded. May the Lord continue to bless all those who work and participate with Wheelfever.

Di Unger

Evangelism

My morning elective was Dance in Evangelism - a word I admit to viewing with some trepidation. However I had the joy of working with a team of talented young Ghanaian men whose enthusiasm, zest and passion for God, was invigorating and rejuvenating for me and I hope for Andy Raine, our teacher. In all the International conferences I don't think I've learnt and remembered so much choreography. We were privileged to dance some of these at Friday's outreach at the Achimota Bus Station and the shopping mall. I pray we sowed seeds that day.

Barbara Wood



The Morning Streams workshops were used to prepare the delegates for various outreaches that took place in different sections of the community



African Dance

I chose the African Dance Stream partly because I had never done any African dance, and partly because we got to work with the wonderful Seth Newman. Expert in his field, respected and loved by many people and a great man to learn from.

The classes were held each day Monday to Thursday in the dance hall. A large room with a stage and a big dance floor that we took full advantage of, using practically every floor board. One thing I hadn't expected was to be in the company of a mother and child group who meet every day in the top corner of the room. At first it felt strange to have people watching us but as the days went on it wasn't a problem. I don't know how we seemed to the little kids ... this group of strange people from different parts of the world dancing ... they had probably never seen anything like it.

Another thing I hadn't expected was to start each morning with a dance exercise class. This is however what happened. Every week Seth holds an African dance exercise class for locals and it is this that was our warm up and I mean warm up. By the time we got three quarters of the way through I was almost too tired to dance. Seth however carried on as if he was just taking a stroll. (I want to be like Seth when I am his age). The idea of using the exercise class was not only to warm us up, it was also to teach us steps. The routines consisted of local African movements, some of which formed part of the dance we learned in the second half of the class. After a much needed rest we moved on to learning the actual dance for the outreach on Friday. Each day we built up a section of the routine and were encouraged to sing along. The whole piece was performed in a circle, traditional in African dance and consisted of steps from across the different regions of Ghana. When we performed a local would recognise a step from their area and stay and watch. At first the routine appeared easy, and whilst it wasn't too complicated it was certainly harder than it looked.

I - and I think the other members of the class - really enjoyed our mornings in the dance hall and all the hard work involved. Dancing African dance for African people was a bit daunting but I loved it, and to learn from a master was a privilege.

Peter Hathersall

Dance for Children

What an awesome experience it was being at the ICDF Conference in Ghana. Fun, Friends, Fellowship, Learning and, of course, dancing like kids in the Children's Stream with workshop leader Tove Liljedahl. Attending this workshop stream left me with so many creative ways on how we can lead children of all ages in dance.

Whilst covering the Laban movement notation system in prime movements and by using the elements of Body, Effort, Time and Space we were able to bring out the creativity that God has placed inside us. This helped us to understand that dance is an art and not just movement whilst exploring, improvising, sensing and creating our dance. Working in pairs like magnets and mirroring each other left us rolling on the floor with lessons of leading and following and much laughter. Whether it was a jump, skip, gallop or a walk to the rhythm of a song, we had fun whilst learning and understanding that Jesus gave each of us a gift and we do not have to be afraid to use it



All of this culminated in an outreach on the Friday to the Presbyterian School in Madina, Accra, where we were received with open arms by the Principal, Samuel Nketa-Dardom. We blessed the school in dance and song. The school choir joined us in singing and all the children danced with us. What joy it was to see the smiles and share the love of Jesus, and pray with the kids. The team also had a chance to bless the people of Accra at the bus station and be a part of the flash mob. Our presentation to "Every move I make" (David Ruis) on the last night of the conference was done with a new level of passion and team spirit!

Let the creativity in you come out!

Serena Reddy Melo

Contemporary Dance



The Contemporary Workshop Stream was all about togetherness and creating a Contemporary styled message to glorify Jesus. Lisa Wilson was great at getting us into the Contemporary style of movements and teaching us her choreography. For many of the group it was new to curve their arms, round their spine and move slowly and smoothly. We all loved the challenge of fast, smooth floor work and embraced the close trust work of partnering and lifts. For me it was most meaningful to link in with the energy of the group and the message of the song: 'Your Great Name' by Natalie Grant. Performing on the last day was the perfect end to the week and I really hope that we blessed all who watched our dance. It was a highlight for me, naturally, with Keni's strong frame holding me up in the air and spinning me around but I also hope that those watching felt what it's like to run and jump into our loving Heavenly Father's arms and surrender to His goodness in the embrace that is life with Him. I know I'm inspired to dance more and perform more for my Lord.

Sharon Ereaux

Jane Grimshaw

Dance Movement Therapy

This elective was co-facilitated by two amazing women of God. Eileen McDonald, who shared her wealth of experience and wisdom in using movement in a variety of settings to bring restoration and healing to those who have experienced trauma, and Wangu Kanja who shared her deep passion for restoring dignity to survivors of sexual/ gender based violence and their families in Kenya.

The time we shared allowed us to explore how movement can touch places where words cannot. One thing that struck me was that if you ask someone how they are, they are likely to say "fine". Ask them to move how they are and you may get a far deeper/ truer answer! Listening to our own bodies in many respects is the first step to hearing ourselves in a deeper way. This then opens opportunities to many different depths. We explored the use of movement to support the process of building strength, resilience and healing. The group were also able to discuss the difference between dance being therapeutic and dance therapy.

This elective was deeply moving, thought provoking, awe inspiring and a great privilege and honour to share time and experiences with a wonderful group of women.

On the Friday we went to the Foster Home School and shared the love and goodness of God to pupils and workers by sharing dances with each other and having fun in the outside classroom. As a wise woman once said "people may forget what you said but they will not forget how you made them feel".

Dance Movement Therapy...from Accra to Nairobi

On Sunday evening after the conference ended, a group of dance therapists departed for Nairobi, Kenya to meet up with Wangu Kanja in order to get a first-hand experience of her work at the Wangu Kanja Foundation. The group consisted of Eileen McDonald, Diane Hobelaid and Terrie-Anne Bolger who worked at the Foundation for the full week meeting with councillors and survivors. Relationships were strengthened as they laid the foundations for the next step on the journey forward in the working relationship between ICDF and the Wangu Kanja Foundation.



The first day of this workshop elective was held in an outdoor quadrangle of the University of Ghana campus Performing Arts School where David Stanfield demonstrated different techniques. We worked with our partners practicing patterns of movement and finally the whole group worked together within a worship song. Excellent fun but rather hot in the Ghana sun!

The next day we moved into a covered open air studio in the 'drum village' part of the Performing Arts School. David discussed that banners are more for outside the church walls rather than in – as evangelism and intercession for the Kingdom. We then used our banners to pray and prophesy over each other without using words – very challenging but we found it was very powerful, accurate and impacting!

On day 3 we progressed to pulling the banners off the poles and trying some truly Ghana gospel dance movement while holding the banner in our hands. Sooo much fun and really colourful! One could name it West African Gospel Banner Fusion. So, this became our performance piece for the outreach the following day.

On Outreach Day we all piled onto the waiting buses for the journey into Accra for the Flash Mob and dance outreach. First stop was the bus station and the flash mob people got off and started mingling near the performance space. We held back subtly putting banners on poles then hiding between 2 parked buses waiting for our moment during the flash mob when we would run in. This was my first ever flash mob and I was leading group 2. My heart was pounding as the moment in the song neared and then 'GO' we ran out into the centre of the flash mob dance, around the outside then formed a guard of honour at the edge in a semi-circle, banners flying in unison – WOW what a spectacle in honour of our Lord! Later on we performed our West African Banner Fusion dance, super fun and joyful (and so much so for me I got blisters on my feet!). Next it was off to the Accra shopping mall where we performed once again in the central courtyard. This time we drew in several bystanders, gave them a banner to dance with and let them learn some moves. Fun and laughter for all – this is what ministry in dance is!

INSPIRED to behold and be a part of – thanks be to God, Amen

Belinda Andrews



An array of beautiful worship is offered up to God and a timely sermon (for many) is shared before heading to our weekly elective. The persistent heat and friendly yet pervasive humidity waits patiently outside the air conditioned room, where eight of us gather with hearts hungry to pray.

Our first session was around tabernacle prayer: Mary Jones shared with us some useful and insightful teaching on tabernacle prayer before setting up the 'tabernacle' and giving us the opportunity to explore this type of prayer. The following days included interceding for the nations, with two or three people leading the rest of the group in prayer which involved declarations, dance, movement and song. We also walked around the unfinished Performing Arts building praying for completion. We prayed through walking, talking, holding up a banner, holding hands, sounds of the violin and tambourine, prophetic actions and dance. This type of prayer followed through to Friday with local intercessors of a church, and Saturday at Elmina Castle (where slavery took place hundreds of years ago).

Our prayers and petition to God was rich and diverse, creative, and a true expression of our hearts.

Anna Omokaro



A place of no discrimination but total acceptance of all. One body jointly knitted together to "PROCLAIM THE GOODNESS OF GOD". That's ICDF 2016. - Samuel, Ghana

Thank You

As with any international event this conference could not have happened without the collaboration and support of various individuals and entities.

- To begin with we want to thank the Ghana Conference Committee for all the work on the ground and seeing to all the practical arrangements. To the Irish Conference Committee thank you for taking care of the international delegates and for your patience in answering all the dozens of questions that came your way.
- Then we have a huge thank you to the School of Performing Arts and to the Dance Department of the University of Ghana for making their facilities available to us.
- To all the participants, local and international, thank you for being there and bringing your special flavour to the conference. These include the teachers, worship leaders, musicians, speakers, delegates, technical assistants and Conference partners.
- And finally a special thank you to all our sponsors and angels who gave so selflessly to make it possible for some of our delegates to attend the conference; and to those praying as part of the Outer Prayer Shield. May God bless you for 'standing with us'. We know that something extraordinary has taken place in Ghana and we are grateful for your part in it.