



ICDF Networks

March 2021

Messianic Dance



Photo: Shima Kingdom Dancers (also see Page 7)

If you know the meanings of the words hora, mayim, yemenite, debka and tcherkessia you have already been introduced to Messianic Dance. These dances that are linked to the Jewish culture have value for dancers and dance groups who do not specialise in Messianic Dance as well. Most of them are done in circles and have no complicated steps, as the intention is for everyone to join in. Liesl Townsend, who has collaborated with Mary Jones to develop *The Basic Introductory Course to Christian Dance* for ICDF states: “ I have found that trained, beginners and non-dancers, young and not so young, experience a sense of joy and excitement as they learn about the biblical roots and foundations of dance which they can then apply in their choreography as well as in their private and congregational times of praise and worship.” It also gives the dancer a sense of what dance was like for Jews during the festivals, temple worship and celebrations such as weddings.

<http://www.icdf.com>

Dancing in the time of Covid

We pray this message finds you well and being about the Father's business. We are sure that everyone can agree it has been an intense year dealing with the pandemic disaster. Like many others, our world was turned upside down. Plans were disrupted and terrible heartbreak of people lost.

Our ministry, Messianic Dance Camps International, had just finished a brand-new instructional DVD and was scheduled to go on a tour beginning March 2020 to the Pacific Northwest of the United States. However, just before we knew what was going on, one of our venues canceled. Not knowing the extent of what was going to happen we called a dear friend in the state of Washington who always joins us for a dance workshop. She was completely beside herself and said that she was not going outside, anywhere, and of course would not be attending the workshop. At that point we felt it was best to cancel the tour. Within a week and as the world began to close Mindy's older sister, who we care for, took a fall and was rushed away in an ambulance. For five weeks we were unable to visit, only being able to wave through a window.

Participating in Messianic dance has always been for the past twenty-eight years a vehicle for worshipping Yeshua, but also a place of restoration when things are hard living everyday life in the world. Thankfully, we felt compelled to continue worshipping the Lord at our home via Facebook Live and for the next few months did a daily workshop. It was such a healing experience. Even though we were alone, knowing that others were also dancing with us in the Spirit was life-giving. As we ministered, we felt the need to also conduct a live Passover Seder for people who were by themselves in their homes. Though it was quite unlike any Passover we have ever celebrated, it was a tremendous blessing to be able to truly understand what a plague is and share His appointed time with others.

In May, our family felt an unction that we needed to go out and minister wherever was open and would have us come. It proved to be a very powerful time coming together with others; we worshiped Yeshua with our whole heart, mind, and strength. Amazingly, two of the dances that were shared from the created DVD were quite prophetic. They were both from 2 Chronicles 7:14 asking the Lord to heal our land. We also had the need to go to Minnesota and dance on the State Capital there as this was where one of the riots developed.

In the latter part of summer, we did go back to the Pacific Northwest and ministered where we were originally supposed to go. As well, we felt a burden to be a part of The Return event in Washington D.C. between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. The theme again was 2 Chronicles 7:14 and the goal was to pray in humble repentance. Our ministry would do this by praying through dance.

Amazingly, we have just finished two brand new DVDs. The Arise DVD is about the book of Obadiah and the need to stand-up to the spirit of Esau that is in this world today. The other is a compilation of our favorite all-time Israeli dances. We even had a dear friend in from Israel participate and whose ministry we give to. As well, most of the people who participated in the making of the DVD traveled from out of state to Nevada to be a part. We recognize that the Lord meets His people while we dance together. It was quite the joyous time!

Two weeks ago, we were impressed to go to the state of Texas during the Feast of Purim. It was so powerful and all agreed it was "For a time such as this!" Not only were attendees dealing with the realities of the pandemic for the past year, but they had just lived through a weather disaster. It was amazing not only to dance but to hear the testimonies of the attendees at the workshops. We have learned from this past year to continue to use the gifts that He has given and not be afraid because He is with us.

In Yeshua's name may you continue to dance to Him in worship.
Blessings to you,

Ralph and Mindy Seta



Photo: Ralph & Mindy Seta

Messianic Dance - my Testimony

My introduction to Messianic dance began 12 years ago when Nina, a friend, invited 6 of us to a Passover Supper in Witney, Oxfordshire. This had been advertised on the Revelation TV channel and was being led by a Messianic Jew (a Jewish believer in Jesus (Yeshua)). Along we went not knowing quite what to expect and during the evening (after the third cup) we were invited to “get rid of our great British reserve, and dance”. To our delight we joined in. The experience touched me in such a way that I wanted to continue dancing in this way. A monthly dance workshop was being held in Witney and although 50 miles away, four of us went each month until the class ceased after four months.

We had learnt two Israeli dances and then went on to a third entitled, ‘Blessed are You O Lord our God, Eternity’s only King’. I thought it was another Israeli dance, but during this dance a strange thing happened to me ... I literally felt my heart touch God’s heart and I resolved that as long as my body could move and had breath in it, I would continue to worship God in dance. The teaching DVDs that were used were called, ‘Teach Your Feet to Dance’ by Mindy Seta from the States. When the workshops ceased I invested in some of Mindy’s DVDs and also an Israeli dance DVD from Israel. I sat in front of the screen for weeks and months learning the steps and discovered online the many Messianic believers involved in worship.

As others learned about what I was doing they asked if I could start a workshop. I had always been lacking in confidence and was unsure of what to do, but then I remembered when we moved from the London area to Gloucestershire some 30 years previously I was given the verse from Exodus 15:20, ‘Then Miriam, the prophetess, Aaron’s sister, took a tambourine and led all the women as they played their tambourines and danced’. I puzzled about this at the time as I hadn’t danced since being a teenager - when it was frowned upon. Shortly afterwards a total stranger asked me if I loved to worship the Lord in dance, to which I replied, “Yes, but it is just a personal whim”. He told me he had seen a vision of me dancing and it was not a personal whim, but that the Holy Spirit was leading me and to go with it. I subsequently had a dream of giving birth to twins, who were different, but had the same Father. I did not fully understand it except that without a doubt I knew it was about Jew and Gentile and One New Man in Christ, and that others were to be involved in ‘nurturing’ this vision. It was exactly nine months later that the dance group began in January 2010. I had then reached the age of 70! But Miriam was older!!

Since Biblical times, the Jewish people have expressed joy through dance and also danced through times of affliction and sorrow. Israeli dancing takes place around the world and as the Jewish people return to the Land, they are bringing with it the influences from different ethnic groups. Messianic/Davidic/Hebraic dancing as it is also called is using the Israeli dance steps but using wonderful worship music by Jewish believers. Most of the time, this is pure scripture. We found over the years, that the Lord has opened our eyes to the Jewish roots of Christianity simply as a result of him speaking to us through scripture. We pray for the “peace of Jerusalem” (Ps 122) and the Jewish people, the Family of God into whom we are grafted. Read Romans 11. We also pray specifically for a street in Old Jerusalem. We have connections with Jewish believers living in Jerusalem.

This form of dancing is a wonderful community experience and as we holds hands in a circle, we worship together. There are no prima donnas. The dances can be lively and vibrant, or worshipful and meditative.



Photos from left: Carol McDonald; Dancing at the Grand Village Fete, Thrupp, Stroud; Passover Supper at Victory Church, Cwmbran, community dancing followed; Our beautiful Sharron who went to be with the Lord in September

Messianic Dance - my Testimony ... continued

The simpler they are, the more worshipful they can be as we are not concentrating on steps but on worshipping our amazing God. In the tchekkesia step, we step forwards and raise our hands. This gesture, I am told, represents us receiving from God His love and forgiveness, then as we step and rock backwards we bring our hands down and get rid of sin and negatives. Most will know the sign for peace, bringing thumb and forefingers together then parting to either side. We use that when we dance to 'Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem' by Chuck King. A dance learnt from Vera Chierico. We have been led to choreograph our own dances also.

Shortly after we started to gather together I found out about the CDFB and invited Marie and Andrew Bensley to Stroud who led a day's workshop and who have been a tremendous encouragement to me through the years. I also heard about Vera Chierico and we went all the way to Plymouth to one of her workshops. Vera has been here to take workshops on more than one occasion and I have learned much from her.

In 2015 I had the privilege of joining Mindy Seta in Israel plus 40 dancers from America. Four of us came from the UK and it was an experience of a lifetime as we danced on the streets, in parks, on Lake Galilee (in a boat!) and at the Biblical sites in Israel and worshipped with Messianic musicians, including Joshua Aaron.

Messianic dance cannot be separated from our Hebraic roots and the ancient Family of God into whom we are grafted, and I believe that the Lord wants us to observe the various Feasts of the Lord, in particular Passover and Tabernacles. We have been so blessed as the doors have opened to us and there are many wonderful memories such as dancing to the music of Paul Wilbur, linking with 'Bridges for Peace', hosting Barry and Batya Segal, leading a Passover Supper and a Hanukka evening. We have also taught amongst Christian and Hindu communities in the Himalayas where we have visited many times. You could hear them singing 'Shalom' as they went about their daily work!

Our dancers are from 11 different churches and in all the years, we have only ever had one lady, Sue Wheeler (CDFB Cornwall) who was actually a dancer. The others have all become dancers! Many have had a sad year and this has not escaped our Kingdom Family Dancers as our youngest and gifted dancer, Sharron, died in the Pandemic in September. She requested that we 'signed' to the Lord's Prayer by Michael W Smith at her funeral which was held at the Salvation Army in Stroud. These were powerful movements taught to us by Marie. At Sharron's request, she is buried next to Patricia, another dancer who died a few years ago. What a resurrection day that will be!

What of the future? We all hope the day will come when we are able to meet and worship together in dance. The CDFB 30 days of prayer has ended giving renewed hope and vision for the future.

The following is taken from Rabbi Murray Silberling's book 'Dancing for Joy': "Dance is a life-transforming experience. It is not only an expression of praise and worship, but a means by which the transforming power of the presence of God can be received by the believer. Through dance, God gives us access to His presence in order to transform us." This is the work of the Lord and it is marvellous in our eyes. Ps 118:13.

In giving thanks to the Lord I also want to give special thanks to my husband David for supporting me through the years and for joining in the dance. It would have been very difficult to keep going without his faithful encouragement.

Carol McDonald

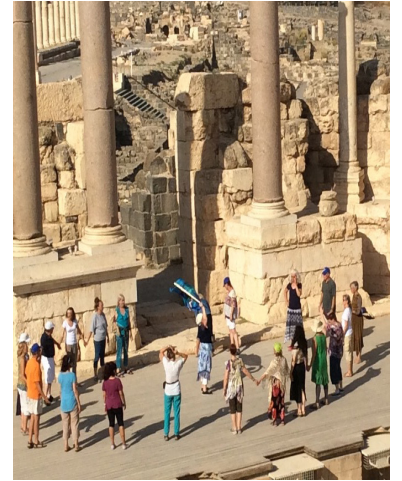
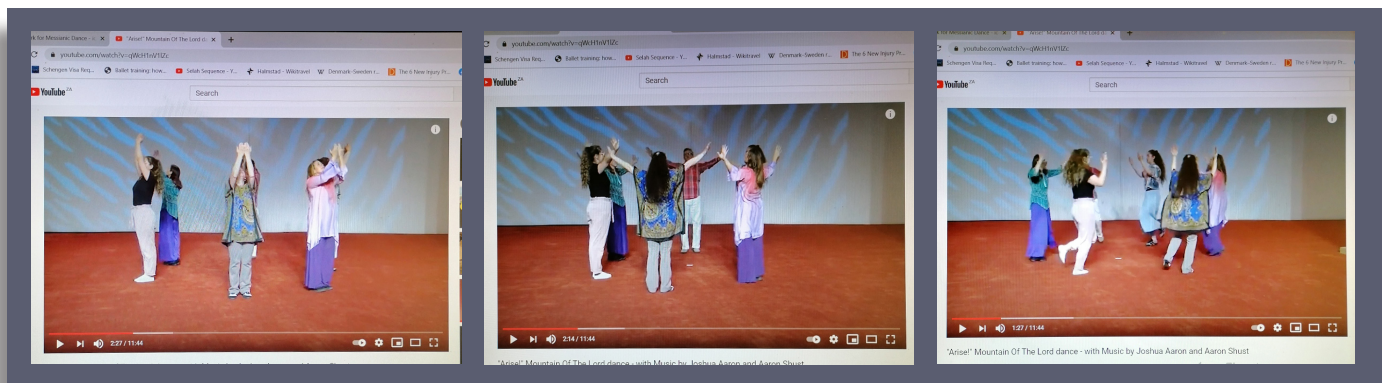


Photo: Dancing at Beit She'an National Park, Northern Israel with Shena Price from Britain in the centre

Invitation to Join Us in the Dance



Our ICDF Joint-Coordinators for the Messianic Dance and Tambourine Network, Ralph and Mindy Seta, have made a Messianic Dance choreography available for all to learn and participate in. Groups and individuals are invited to video themselves doing the choreography and sending it to ICDF to be added into an official Messianic Dance video for the Network.

Join us in this expression of global corporate worship

How? Contact Peter Hothersall to indicate your intention to participate by email at ... Peter.hothersall@yahoo.com

The dance can be seen and learnt at ... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWcH1nV1lZc>

When? Contributions must be received by 10th May 2021

For video related enquiries, please contact Peter by email at ... Peter.hothersall@yahoo.com
For other enquiries, contact the ICDF office at ... icdfworld@gmail.com

An instructional YouTube link for recording dances can be found at ...
<https://youtu.be/99CRUFImvy4>

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

To become part of the Network contact :

Vera Chierico vera@chierico.com

Ralph and Mindy Seta mindyseta@hotmail.com

'Dancing' With Rocks

What is worship? We could spend days together discussing, or, perhaps a sentence will suffice. I would like to suggest a story ... well, it's not a story in the sense of fiction or allegory, this is reality.

I believe it was Vera Chierico who told me the story.

In the 90s, I had the privilege of coordinating, with Vera, the 'Messianic Dance Focus Network' as it was called then. We were two sides of a coin, Vera the Jewish Believer, and I the Gentile. I learnt so much from Vera, I experienced the vibrancy, constancy and stoicism of the family and culture into which our Lord was born.

The story goes like this...

It's about the celebration of Simchat Torah which simply means 'Rejoicing with the Torah'. The holiday marks the end of the annual cycle of weekly Torah readings and the beginning of the new cycle. It is a joyous holiday that celebrates the Jewish love of Torah and study. Simchat Torah is celebrated by taking all the Torah scrolls out of the Ark in the synagogue and spending the evening dancing, singing and rejoicing. The scrolls are carried around the sanctuary in seven circles called 'hakafot'. Though only seven circles are required, the dancing and celebrating usually goes on much longer.

The story is set in Auschwitz.

Immediately the tone dramatically changes. Even as I write this, I have to take a moment to adjust, in respect of the unimaginable trauma that the Jewish community suffered. It was Simchat Torah. With bodies distorted with starvation and torture, with minds wracked with fear and loss, without a glimmer of comfort that we assume as everyday life, the Jewish community decided to celebrate the giving of the Law. It was a risk, if noticed their lives would be forfeit. So, picking up rocks as symbols of the scrolls, they surreptitiously took one step after another making seven circles.

'Keep my commandments and live, and my teaching as the apple of your eye' Proverbs 7:2

It's hard to find words. When I was younger and fit, I was dancing at the back of our church worshipping the Lord. I believed I was a 'worshipper' I had worked hard to serve Him. I suddenly noticed the husband of my friend Angela standing a few feet away. Only in his forties Ken was enduring a rare neurological degenerative disease that eventually robbed him of all motor function. He was then able to stand falteringly, his movements rigid and atypical. As the worship heightened Ken was able to raise his hands just a few inches in adoration. He struggled and struggled to raise them higher, but could not. As I stood rooted to the spot I was overcome with emotion as the Holy Spirit graciously whispered in my ear "that is worship".

Erica Debb

Simchat Torah more reading

For another fascinating story on how the Simchat Torah was celebrated in the camp of Czestochowa go to ...
https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/3463482/jewish/Simchat-Torah-in-the-Nazi-Labor-Camp.htm

To read about how it is still celebrated in our times go to ...

<https://www.israeltoday.co.il/read/israel-celebrates-simchat-torah-the-joy-of-gods-word/>



Color lithographic print of the Simchat Torah celebration, created by Arthur Szyk in New Canaan, Connecticut. The image was originally printed in the book, Six paintings of Jewish holidays, in 1948. The print depicts the male members of a Jewish congregation traditionally celebrating the religious holiday, Simchat Torah (Rejoicing with the Torah) by carrying the Torah scrolls (handwritten copy of the Torah, the five books of Moses) around the bimah (podium where the Torah and Prophets are read) and the synagogue while singing, dancing, and reciting chants.

Sh'ma Kingdom Dancers - Photo Gallery

Based in the United Kingdom, the Sh'ma Kingdom Dancers is a prophetic worship and dance group for the "one new man" - in Yeshua (Jesus). Jews and Gentiles rooted in many nations, a company of worshipping warriors.

"The Bride makes herself ready."

You are welcome to visit and explore their website at ...
www.shma-kingdomdancers.co.uk

Photos from the Sh'ma Kingdom Dancers website used in this newsletter with permission.

