



ICDF Networks

November 2021

ICDF Networks for Children and Youth



The ICDF Network for Dance for Children is for all who are or would like to be involved with teaching and leading children in Christian dance. To become part of the Network contact the Network Leaders at ... danceforchildren.icdf@gmail.com.

The ICDF Network for Youth Dance is for teenagers and young adults who dance. Being a member provides an opportunity to connect across the globe. To connect please contact Steven Turner at ... youth.icdf@gmail.com

To see more from each Network please go to ...
<https://icdf.com/en/dance-children>
<https://icdf.com/en/youth-dance-0>

“Children are NOT a distraction from more important work. They are THE MOST important work.” – Dr. John Trainer

ICDF Network for Dance for Children

The ICDF Networks held an online conference on 16th October 2021 and one of the workshops was facilitated by the Dance for Children Network. We are delighted to share with you some of what was covered in the theme of “Responding to the Holy Spirit”

Responding to the Holy Spirit – Conference round up

What an amazing time we had at the “Worship through Words and Dance” conference. A very special time filled with sharing, laughter, stories and encouragements as we shared our heart behind the need to give space to respond to the Holy Spirit.

It was lovely to see those that were able to join us. For those that couldn't we thought we would provide some highlights. Read on to hear about our ten essentials for Workshop Delivery, Creative Prayers, Children and Prayer.

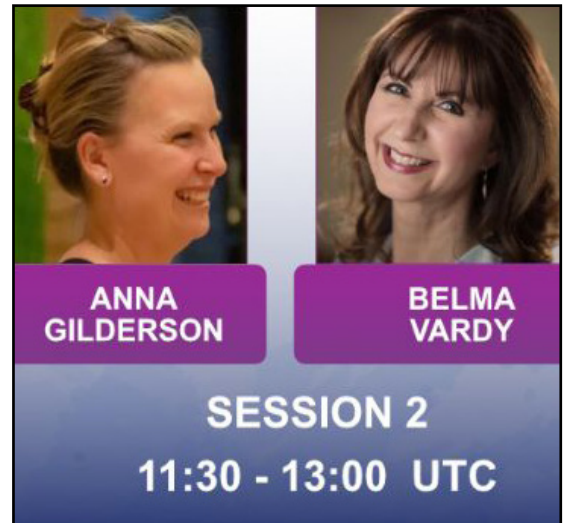
Essentials in workshop delivery

We loved sharing with those that attended the online conference our key things that we include in a workshop.

One thing we stressed was that God made us all unique - this means how we teach and deliver will be unique to us. There is no one size fits all, this is what works for Anna and Belma, it might not be what works for you, and that's okay! Here are our top ten must haves!

1. Children are asked to bring their Bible and a scripture verse to dance on if they're able to
2. Introduction with an ice breaker
3. Opening and closing prayers with children involved
4. Time of sharing – what God has said during the workshop, through the scripture children may have brought and through the theme of the session
5. Teaching on the scripture and then this being explored
6. Creative response for prayers to allow cementing of growing closer to God
7. Learn specific choreography relating to the scripture
8. Time of exploration and discovery into movement themselves
9. Free worship – this is usually a time where children can improvise, use flags and ribbons and just worship in their own time and space
10. Cool down that allows cementing of the session's theme and reflection on how God has moved

- Belma Vardy and Anna Gilderson



'Dance for Children' Email list

Both of us recognise that not everyone has Facebook, but we still want to offer the chance to communicate and keep in touch with those that are not on social media as well as with those who are.

With this in mind we are launching a 'Dance For Children' network email list. We want to encourage everyone to join if they can. Our plan is to send out an email every few months and hope to organise some kind of online gathering.

You can sign up here <https://mailchi.mp/434507c2ab52/newsletter-sign-up>

Creative Prayers

It's really important for me to have children experience prayer in my workshops. Often that means adding a layer of creativity into the sessions and this is done in many different ways. I'll share with you a few of the things that I do

Floating Prayers

Get a clipart shape of a flower that's not big, it needs to have some petals round the outside. You can see an example of a suitable flower at the end of the newsletter.



I then spend time talking to the children about what it is that they want to give to God today. What would they like to float up to heaven? Either they will write it or we will write in the centre of the flower. Each of the petals can then be folded into each petal into the middle.

You'll need a big bowl of water or something that allows the children to see what happens next. Placing the flower on the surface of the water explain to the children saying, 'We're going to give it to God now, let's watch these prayers float up.'

What happens next is that, as it sits on the water the petals begin to unfurl and open out. For children (and for adults) it's a visual demonstration of saying, 'I'm giving this away and I'm letting it float up to God.' I have also done this in a church setting when we have had the baptism pool open. We had families fill the petals in together and then they took them and placed them in the pool. There were about 100 flowers that opened up and allowed people to see that these were their prayers going up.

When we're talking to children about putting their experience of God to movement sometimes they need to see what that might look like. If we've done these floating prayers opening up to God, we might then explore how we can stretch out and grow, how can we get taller, thinking about what might be inside and then go on to unpick that and explore in more detail.

Fishing net Prayers

This creative prayer example was developed alongside the story of Jonah. I put a fishing net up on the wall and give out either different coloured pieces of ribbon or string. Then encourage the children to go to the net and tie the ribbon onto the net. Not only is it a symbol that they're saying, 'This is my prayer', but what they are seeing is that everyone else's prayers are also being attached to the net. We can see how everyone's prayers come together as one to create a picture of how God's presence is woven into all of our lives.

Other ways

As I've shared I'm just really passionate about offering a visual demonstration for children to engage in. Other ways that I've explored this has been by writing down on a piece of paper, or drawing, or something similar. Children then put that down on the floor to dance on.

For example, if I've asked them to write down things that they're struggling with at school or at home we'll say, 'We're going to stamp on these now', then stamp and say that they've gone away because we're going to give them up to God. Then as kids do, we would have this amazing time of stamping on the piece of paper. They really believe that by stamping on the piece of paper they are saying they don't believe those things anymore and are going to trust God with where it's going to go.

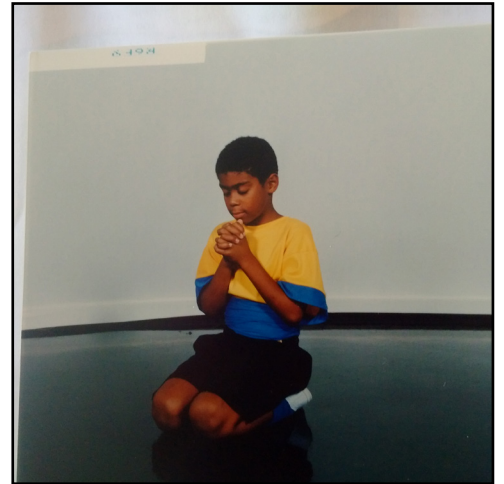
We would love to hear how you might use creative prayers in your workshops with children.

Children in Prayer

Prayer with children can be so much more powerful than we ever imagined! One example of this ...

I recall when I went to teach for the first time at this particular church and I said to the children, "Let's get down on our knees and pray to open the class and let's lay what we have in our hearts at Jesus' feet." And so I said a simple prayer.

All of a sudden during my prayer this little 5 year old boy started raising his voice, "OH ! OH ! OH!". "What is it?" I asked. He said, "Oh I'm in a brown paper bag and it's all dirty in here but I feel clean because Jesus is in the bag with me." The little boy kept repeating, "I'm so clean, I'm so clean" and he started crying as he continued to experience a deep intimacy with Jesus.



God met that child on a personal level and ministered to Him. It was not only a precious moment for that boy but it opened the door for the other children to also share what they were experiencing with Jesus. The presence of God felt thick in that room as the Holy Spirit took over and had His way during our opening prayer time. It's truly all about the children getting in touch with their spirit and connecting with the spirit of the living God!

We never know what God will do when we lead children in prayer!

- Belma Vardy

Facebook Group

We are excited to be relaunching the 'Dance for Children' Facebook group in December. It's a place to build a community for those that encounter teaching and leading. We want you to feel comfortable to share where on your journey you are and to support each other in the process.

Our heart is not only to generate conversations through regular posts that focus on children but also to generate conversations about our wider journey of faith. Investing in ourselves is really important as we can't give out to others if we are empty!

Each month there will prayer threads, teaching tips, songs to dance with kids, Q & As, and the chance to share your business/ workshops/ ministry. To access the group you need to head to the Facebook group here - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/danceforchildrenicdf>

There are questions that need to be answered as you click to join. This includes some guidelines we have in place to keep the group safe and fun, where you are based and what you are already doing in children's ministry. We also ask for an email address so we can communicate about future events and information within the 'Dance for Children' network.

Come along and join as we would love to have you there!

ICDF Network for Youth Dance

ICDF Refresh

This has been an exciting year for our Youth Network with the highlight being the launch of ICDF Refresh in July. At that time we explained the vision of ICDF Refresh, launching not only in the Newsflash but on Social Media through flyers and video links.



Photo of Steven Turner and partner from the ICDF archives

Vision:

ICDF Refresh has been founded specifically with the vision to build connections between Christian dancers in their teens and 20s all over the world. We are all part of ICDF (International Christian Dance Fellowship) and part of their vision but have a specific focus on developing the next generation of leaders.

This vision of ICDF Refresh is in line with the overall vision of ICDF of being ...

- international, non-denominational and multicultural
- embracing all ages, open to all styles of dance and cutting across all training and abilities
- to make new connections and create spaces for the diversity among the members and friends of the organisation.

An interview with Steven Turner

Before the launch, Steven gave an interview to Medina Potter of the ICDF Social Media Team. In this interview, Medina chats with Steven about his ministry, being the Under 30's Network leader and about ICDF Refresh. Many of you know Steven we know but, in this interview, you will find out more about him, his vision, some background as to why ICDF Refresh, how he works out time zones, his approach to developing prayer and worship with young dancers by passing on tools to the next generation, coming alongside, mentoring ... and more!

This interview can be viewed on the ICDF YouTube Channel at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BlFAaD8Xz-s&list=PL3HHuLEvxGCtRcoKuanlqP4xdUSikHZoP&index=12>

Also to View

ICDF Refresh Launch Promo video capturing footage from last year's ICDF Youth Conference (2020)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HaK0F_1TU80&list=PL3HHuLEvxGCtRcoKuanlqP4xdUSikHZoP&index=10

Footage from the 2021 Launch can be viewed here www.icdfrefresh.com/launch.com

Looking to 2022

We have connecting with young dancers at the ICDF Conference in Sweden next year in our sights. Watch out for details in ICDF News Mailings, on ICDF Social Media, and on the ICDF Conference website

- Steven Turner

Floating Flower

