



# ICDF Newsletter

February 2021

## Missions and Social Concern



Photo: From the article "Becoming" on page 6

Googling *Social Concern* one finds the following definitions: "A social concern is any issue, problem, or conflict that is a high priority for a society to solve or prevent." "These could be poverty, unemployment, unequal opportunity, racism, and malnutrition. Others are substandard housing, employment discrimination, and child abuse and neglect. Crime and substance abuse are also examples of social problems."

Casting the net wider one could include man's impact on nature and the ecosystem. When dealing with social themes through the arts though one can also highlight the positive and the success stories. Specially in challenging times there is a need for hope and inspiration.

For us as Christians our testimonies of God's redemptive grace is of the upmost importance as along with the radical transformation that goes with salvation comes the responsibility of dealing with our fellow man and nature in a way that speaks of His way, truth and light. Essentially *Missions* and *Social Concern* are two sides of the same coin.

May the stories highlighted in this newsletter inspire us to boldly dance out our testimonies as we engage in our communities to make it a better place and to bring beauty and upliftment in the place of despair.

# Missions

## The Breakthrough

I took a dance team to France in 2013. We were on a tour following a circular route a few hours outside of Paris. When we arrived, the reception from the pastors in leadership was far from warm. I was baffled as we had been invited by the president of their ministry, who happened to be out of town for a day or two.

The lovely dancers (with much lovelier hearts than mine when things were cool relationally) danced beautifully.



*Photo by Jacquelyn Kay Photography provided by Linda Wells*

We performed a few contemporary ballet pieces and a hip-hop piece. The sound guy told me the hip-hop music was the worst he had ever heard. I explained the lyrics were all Christian, but he and the pastors forbade its use again. They told us we could only dance hip-hop if we used 'Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee.' (Sigh.)

The choir from Canada with whom we ministered were wonderful, and it was only the pastors who frowned at me for days. I offered to share my story in a room full of male pastors, sitting around a square formation of tables. It felt a bit like an inquisition. Fortunately, the OM outreach leader was with me. They agreed to let me share my story with everyone on the outreach, and it went well, but the frowns did not disappear from said pastors. I took a walk with Jesus, begging HIM to please, 'Do SOMETHING!'

After five days or so of concerts, we were invited to a small town to perform in a beautiful theatre. We were told we must be extremely careful as they would be left with a mess if we did or said anything offensive. I thought, 'No pressure, then!' I am always offending people, just by being a dancer!

The church had twenty members, and we were asked to believe for 100 people to come to the concert. We agreed wholeheartedly, but I also asked if we could walk around the town and dance in public places, inviting people to the theatre in the evening. Oh, and 'Could I use the original music?' They consented, and off we went in temperatures in the 90's Fahrenheit (30's Celsius). Though hot and tired, the dancers were fabulous—and exhausted. This was BEFORE the concert even started.

When we returned to cool off, eat, and change, the outreach leader came running into the dance room saying, 'Linda! There are 500 people trying to get in the building. We have to turn 150 away as there are only 350 seats!' 'Oh, no, we don't send people away!' I exclaimed, followed by a prayer of 'Lord what do we do?' I looked outside and there was the disappointed audience who could not find a seat. Instantly, I heard 'There's your audience—dance inside and then dance outside!' (Gulp!) So, we did for a few hours—inside, outside, inside, outside.

Hearts were wide open as people saw how hard we tried to include everyone. The choir followed our lead and started singing inside and outside, too. At the end of the evening, they opened up the front folding doors and windows of the theatre and held a spontaneous street party. People were laughing, singing, playing guitars, eating, drinking, and even praying. I was floppy tired with a beetroot red complexion and filming a video of the event, while NONE of the pastors were frowning! Instead, they were nearly shaking my hand off saying, 'Merci, ma soeur' ('Thank you, my sister') over and over again!

FINALLY, we had a breakthrough along with invitations from pastors to please 'Return to my town!'

*Linda Wells*

*This article by Linda Wells was first published in the VIVID magazine (Fall 2020 issue).*

# Creative Arts and Social Concern

## Meet Free2Dance

*Warren is from Port Elizabeth, South Africa and he is the Founder of “Free 2 Dance Africa”. He has a passion for young people and sharing the love of God with kids in need. His dance team has ministered throughout South Africa as well as in other African countries. Warren has been married to Natalie for 13 years, also a dancer.*

Free2Dance is a Christian based community, creative arts network and has been registered as an NPO. It was established in 2001 in Nelson Mandela Bay (Port Elizabeth, South Africa) and is currently working with kids and youth in 9 cities and towns. We are currently nationally reaching and impacting over 600 kids and youth in these areas through the creative arts with dance and life-skills workshops that positively influenced people’s lives on a mental, spiritually, emotional and physical level. We had our 1st missions trip in April 2019 to Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania where F2D were able to donate sanitary towels and toiletries collected through fundraising.



Free2Dance main objectives are to:

- Introduce the arts to rural communities providing a platform for integration and unity in diversity, through classes, workshops, productions and creative arts conferences
  - The primary focus will be on the Creative Arts (Song, Dance, Music, Drama, Poetry), by exposing the arts to groups in an effort to mentor and introduce skills training and development
  - Create an environment, where the youth can learn, grow and achieve manageable goals. Learn to break away from negative influences that youth are faced with on a day-to-day basis
- To get youth off the streets and into a safe environment that will take them out of stressful situations and peer pressure. Working in collaboration with several other NPOs and organizations in the Creative Arts to create a sustainable platform to expose arts and culture to the youth and encourage participation at all levels.
- Create funding and stage opportunities for those who have

talent in the arts

- Through creative arts workshops include life-coaching and mentoring that address poverty, substance abuse, communications skills, recycling, nutrition, early maturity, materialism, obesity, education disparity and other issues relevant to the youth

Our 2020 activities included:

- Various lockdown initiatives took place to keep in contact with the network and spread the word of God through creative Arts. Free2Dance reached out to Children’s Homes and an Old Aged Home to be a blessing
- We hosted an online creative conference with over 300 delegates with various dance classes and vocals
- We hosted an online production that included dancers and singers from across South Africa
- “Raise Your Hallelujah” took place in East London and in Johannesburg where dancers took to the streets in a time of prayer and warfare by raising our banners in the Name of Jesus Christ

*Warren Stuart*

# Free2Dance Photo Gallery



# Why do we dance during times of pain and stress?

*When the phenomenon of the Jerusalema dance challenge hit the world in 2020 we all took notice. Social media was flooded with different variations from schools, hospitals, businesses, neighbours and more. There were even tutorials to be seen teaching the steps. We believe that this song would not have had the same impact in “normal” times but somehow it brought hope and focus during the months of lockdown. We therefore approached Sue Hodson with the request to do some research and write an article on this subject. Here is an extract from the article with a link to the publication on the ICDF website.*

*‘It is good to dance when you are happy, but it is better to Dance when you are sad.’*

(Richard Wurmbrand, Romanian Pastor and author)

I sat listening to this venerable father of the faith as he shared a little of his experiences in jail. He had been imprisoned in Romania for 12 years for his faith. We were at a dance conference in Maryland, USA and he had been recognized at the hotel and asked to address us. As he spoke, tears streamed down my face. He had used his chains to make music, had danced on mangled feet, had prayed for those of us living in the West and had ministered to me through his books. He had learnt the secret of the sacrifice of praise. ‘Dance in the Rain’ was not just a quote for him. It was a life principle.

2020 saw the world change as we know it and all over the world, people reacted. A little-known song, “Jerusalema,” was composed by South African DJ Master KG and singer, Nomcebo from his Johannesburg recording studio in 2019 and became a popular song in South Africa during that summer. You will be forgiven if you did not know it then, as its popularity only began to spread when an Angolan team of dancers videoed themselves dancing to it while they ate lunch. To their surprise, it went viral and for the rest of 2020, it became the inspirational Lockdown dance challenge all over the world. Sung in Zulu, the song’s lyrics are gospel-esque.

Many churches and denominations have taken to the dance, but it has not been limited to Christians. Zimbabwe’s most renowned human rights lawyer recorded a version of the dance; so did a team of Romanian firefighters, and many dozen socially distanced flash mobs around the world.

To date, “Jerusalema” has been streamed more than 96 million times on Spotify and is one of the top searches globally on the music identification application, Shazam. It hit the top five charts in Belgium, France, Hungary, Netherlands, and Switzerland and was No. 1 on Billboard’s world digital song sales chart in mid-September. Our South African President, Cyril Ramaphosa, urged South Africans to celebrate their South African-ness and take up the challenge to do the Jerusalema Challenge on Heritage Day in September 2020. And we did!

From Angola to Zermatt, everyone’s dancing to the addictive beat. But there is more to it than meets the ear.

*To continue reading the rest of the article please go to ...*

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*Sue Hodson*



Photo: Sue Hodson

## Jerusalem

My place is not here,

x 2

Jerusalem, my home.

Rescue me,

Join me,

Don't leave me here!

x 2

My place is not here,

My kingdom is not here,

Rescue me!

Come with me!

Save me, save me, save me,

Don't leave me here,

Save me, save me, save me,

Don't leave me here!

## "Becoming" - a dance film

*Supporters of ICDF may remember the name of Lucinda Coleman whose work we have featured previously in our newsletters. Here we would like to introduce you to her latest venture - a dance film that sweeps you up into a world that not many of us experience and in the end leaves you breathless with emotion.*



**Becoming** – a contemporary dance film, celebrates the experience of becoming a Nurse or Midwife through danced duos and in recorded spoken reflections. The narrative is shaped by the stories of experienced Nurses and Midwives, including being with a patient in a crisis, caring for a new mother and baby, and experiencing the death of patient. The genre of screendance provides an innovative space to creatively engage with the voice of the nurse and midwife from within her own profession.

Release date: 8 December, 2020

Producer/ Director/ Choreographer: Lucinda Coleman

Cinematographer/ Editor: Rakib Erick

Composer/ Musician: Alix Hamilton

Cellist/ Musical Collaborator: Laura McFadden

Nurse Voiceovers: Tania Beament, Di Blossome, Patricia Cook, Martina Costello, Annemarie De Leo, Beverley Ewens, Mandie Jane Foster, Chris McCafferty, Emma Ritchie, Deborah Sundin

Student Nurses: Larissa Collard, Jigme Gyeltshen, Fareeha Hasan, Emily James, Chloe Sutton

Dancers: Sarah Chaffey, Katie Chown, Samantha Coleman, Stephanie Khoo, Charity Ng, Esther Scott

Father: Brian Khoo

Baby: Nathan William Khoo

Commissioned: School of Nursing and Midwifery and the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, Edith Cowan University, Western Australia

Funded: Edith Cowan Commissions for the '2020 International Year of the Nurse and Midwife'

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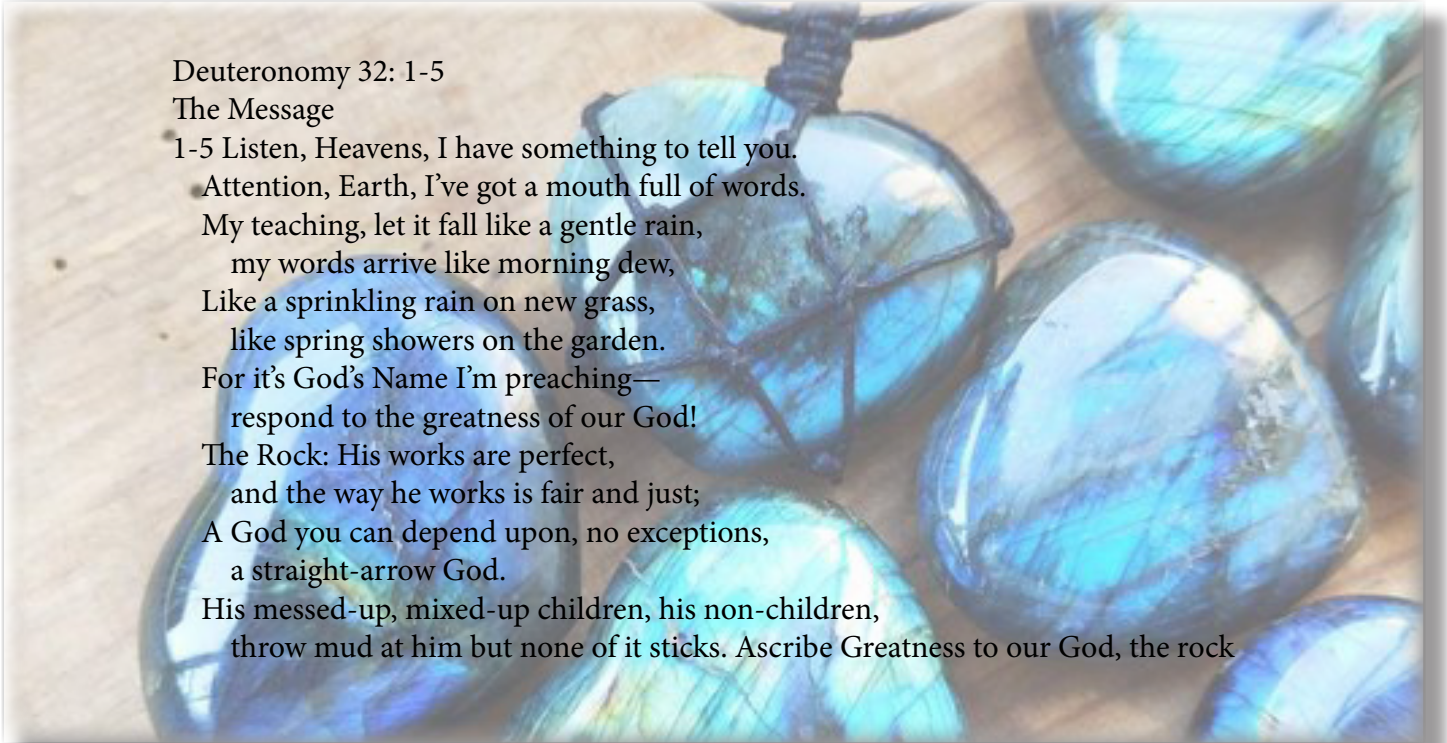
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ROCK my world!  
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When Life is going great  
or  
When life simply grates,  
Grace embraces our expectations

By "Grace"  
I mean something I didn't ingratiate myself to obtain,  
I mean a gain not ingrained in any flake-y fabrications of my fabric  
I mean a solid thing, something true  
A thing that  
ROCKS my world!  
I stand in awe that I'm standing  
Despite the shaking shifting sands  
the litany of flaws howling down the avenues of my aspirations

A solid sieve? A great big GRACE grate through which gate flows  
Greatly Graced expectations... of new things



Deuteronomy 32: 1-5  
The Message

1-5 Listen, Heavens, I have something to tell you.  
Attention, Earth, I've got a mouth full of words.  
My teaching, let it fall like a gentle rain,  
my words arrive like morning dew,  
Like a sprinkling rain on new grass,  
like spring showers on the garden.  
For it's God's Name I'm preaching—  
respond to the greatness of our God!  
The Rock: His works are perfect,  
and the way he works is fair and just;  
A God you can depend upon, no exceptions,  
a straight-arrow God.  
His messed-up, mixed-up children, his non-children,  
throw mud at him but none of it sticks. Ascribe Greatness to our God, the rock

.....  
*We are searching for a person who has a passion for the arts and the difference that it can make in areas of social concern to take on the position of Network Leader. If you feel drawn to it please contact us at [icdfworld@gmail.com](mailto:icdfworld@gmail.com).*