



ICDF Newsletter

February 2022

Missions and Social Concern



Photo: One of the many sent to us by Melissa Rumbley. See article and photos on pages 3 & 4

1 Cor 1:17

“For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel - not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.” (New International Version)

As I read this sentence it struck me as relevant to the dance ministry too ... where Paul speaks of “wisdom and eloquence” we could easily insert “creativity and skill”. Once a friend of mine told me the story of a new dance their group was choreographing, but when the minister saw it he discerned that they got so carried away by their own creativity that the message got lost. Let us strive to be honest in our ministry, true to the leading of the Holy Spirit and always reflecting the glory to God and His Son, the Christ.

- Saartjie de Wet

Missions

In 2006 I had a staggering revelation while dancing on a trip to South Africa ...

We were offering a concert in a church called “The Lighthouse” and I was just about to take my cue to a worship piece. As I prepared my body in the “wings” of the stage, God seemed to whisper, “When you dance, you clear the birds!” NO CLUE what that meant but wrote it down. Back to my warm up prep.... Again He whispered, “And... stop telling me you are too old, as you get older I will be glorified in your weakness!” Wrote THAT down.

After the concert, as usual we joined the audience to pray with anyone requesting it. A man walked right up to me with his finger in my face (rude?!) saying abruptly, “Do you know what you do when you dance?” I blurted something out like, “Well, I hope to bless the audience, and God and myself I always feel so blessed.”

He replied, “You clear the heavenly realms and you are anointed to do so because of all you have been through in your life!”

He turned to leave, then..... turned back with said finger still in my face said, “And stop telling God you are too old!”

Alrighty then...that conversation REALLY got my attention.

I immediately thought of the Parable of the Sower and how Jesus said, “The birds are demons ready to swoop down and steal the seed just planted to stop it sinking deep into the soil of the heart so fruit cannot spring up and grow strong.”

Wow!!! Dancers are the spiritual airforce!!
I had no idea.

I went straight to Psalms and re-read any psalm mentioning dance. 150 is the main one, but I had never realised how powerful 149 is:

“Praise His name with dancing (v3)
“To bind their kings with shackles
and their nobles with fetters, to execute
the judgement written against them.
This is the glory of His faithful ones.” (V8-9)



We know flesh and blood are not our enemies and so, whenever I read Psalms, I remember we are talking about principalities and powers (invisible) when David refers to “enemies.”

I told this story while on a Mission Dance trip to Portugal. We enjoyed a fabulous trip believing we had indeed “cleared some birds” and went home.

A YEAR LATER I met an OM leader from Portugal who joyfully exclaimed!

“We saw it Linda! We cleared the birds!!”

“Tell me all about it!” I excitedly replied.

“Well, there’s a town way up in the mountains in the north where nothing has been effective over the years. No one wants a tract, a Bible or even a conversation. Then we sent a Dancelink team up there one summer. Nothing dramatic happened but we had a good outreach dancing. Six months after that outreach we sent another team with Bibles and tracts and peoples hearts were wide open! They took Bibles, tracts and we had great conversations and conversions! It was a total turn around!! We really felt the dancers had cleared some birds and the environment was totally open and changed!”

Needless to say, I was totally over the moon. God did not have to give me that confirmation, but He did, and my heart was so thrilled and encouraged that I had heard Him correctly!

Be aware now, YOU too can change the spiritual environment in YOUR town as you dance for God’s Kingdom
Principalities and powers will be bound and fettered and you will clear demonic birds from interfering with the furtherance of the Gospel! (smile)

- Linda Wells

Taking the Gospel of Jesus out of the four walls

On this page and the next we introduce you to the *First Fruits Ministry International* (firstfruitsmin.com). We start off with a testimony of where and how they work followed by the photos they shared with us.

Blessings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

My name is Melissa Rumbley from Belize, Central America where both my husband and I are missionaries. I am a mother of two of 20 and 12 years. I love worshipping God; it is my response to the One who died for me so I could live, rescued me from myself, made me new, gave me a new identity, healed me, forgave me and showed me how to forgive, and loves me unconditionally!



My life is a testimony of the love, power and faithfulness of an amazing Father. When I gave my life in all its entirety to God in 2014 and started coming to church, I knew somehow that there was something more beyond the four walls of the church. As much as I love worshipping God at the church building along with my brothers and sisters, going out of the four walls to reach the lost brings so much satisfaction to my life.

As a single mother, my kids and I started visiting a nursing home and an orphanage on weekends just to spend time with the senior citizens and the kids reading Bible stories, worshipping and doing some crafts. God spoke to me years ago through a dream in which He needed volunteers to walk on a road less traveled and I responded, 'Hineni'! After that dream God placed the desire in my heart to be a missionary and I cried out to God to make it possible. In the natural, I could not see it because I was a single mother and needed to keep a job to take care of my kids, but my God made it possible and a man of God, a missionary from the USA living in Belize, reached into my life and we got married. We are both blessed to be ministry partners and carry out Mathew 28:20 "... go and make disciples..." We remain committed to share the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in the mission field.

In Belize we do a lot of evangelistic outreaches including market ministry, hospital ministry, street ministry, and house to house ministry. Visiting orphans and widows is still one of my passions and we minister also at orphanages, a nursing home and even at a youth facility for troubled teens taking the message of love, hope and salvation through the worship arts. God has blessed me with the opportunity to take several worship dance courses and I am currently part of an online worship dance school called *Transformed by His Spirit Dance School and Ministry*. I've been teaching a Bible Study course and worship dance at two orphanages in Belize to kids from ages 5-15. We minister to the kids and youths and I use dance as a tool to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to encourage them to develop an intimate relationship with our Heavenly Father. During street or market ministry, I raise my banners and worship our Father, do evangelistic dances to tell my testimony, to share the message of forgiveness, love, hope and salvation.

I use the worship arts to take the Gospel of Jesus especially out of the four walls. As a worship dance minister I remain committed to give out of the fullness I have received (John 1:16) so as to continue multiplying myself. Often times when my husband and I are invited to minister at churches, he preaches the Word and I minister with dance. We love what we do and are grateful to God for bringing us together to share His Gospel until we are called home or until Jesus Christ comes. My husband and I appreciate your prayers for our ministry.

- Melissa Rumbley

Photo Gallery: First Fruits Ministry International



Creative Arts and Social Concern

Dungala Dancers

The following two articles go hand-in-hand. In this article “Dungala Dancers” we introduce you to a dance group in Australia where the writer tells us about a specific dance that spoke to their social and generational circumstances. This is then followed by a more in-depth article, “Trauma to Transformation”, written by Lucy Jarasius that explores these themes.)

Dungala Dancers was formed in 2020 by Alice Young, a Yorta Yorta, Gunai, Gundtjijmara woman who currently lives on Wurundjeri Country. The dance group members are her daughter Nora and two nieces Lyn-Al and Tanise.

Alice writes ... Dungala means Murray River in Yorta Yorta language and is sacred to Yorta Yorta Dreaming. I chose this name for my dance group because of the first dance I choreographed during a time when God reminded me to get my dance back when I was listening to a message titled *Dancing in the Desert* by Bishop T.D Jakes.

The Bible verse for this message was from Exodus 15. Throughout the message God was revealing to me my connection to my grandmother, a dancer whom I have a photograph of in my living room holding a tambourine just like Miriam. “Then Miriam the prophet, Aaron’s sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women followed her, with timbrels and dancing” Exodus 15:20.

As I began to get my dance back during a very difficult time working through depression and coming out of a domestic violence relationship, God was using dancing to help bring healing to my soul.



Photo: The Dungala Dancers also showing the photo that inspired the dance

I kept on seeking God and praying for guidance and help and another connection God had given me was through a song I had known about but didn’t know the history of until I did some research. The song was “Turn back Pharaoh’s Army” and was translated into Yorta Yorta language Ngarra Burra Ferra by my great-great grandfather, Thomas Shadrach James and Aunty Theresa Clements. The Jubilee Fisk Singers from Nashville visited Maloga mission in 1886 and sang this song. The connection was with my great-great grandfather, Yorta Yorta Country, and again to Exodus 15.

When I discovered this, I knew this was the song I needed to create a dance to, which would be the very first time I choreographed a traditional cultural dance and wanted to honour God, my connection to country, my grandmother and great-great grandfather.

The reason this song was translated into Yorta Yorta language by my people was because it spoke to them and gave them hope of God delivering them from oppression and to live a life of freedom from all that has impacted us from colonisation.

I shared Ngarra Burra Ferra dance with my daughter on her 28th Birthday and the dance ends in the same dance posture as my grandmother in the photo in my lounge room. We performed our dances at a festival on January 26th, 2021 which also holds a significant date for my people.

This dance represents freedom from oppression for my people, freedom from depression for all women and a war dance to break generational curses of domestic violence, not only for the women in my family but for all women around the world!

- Alice Young

The New Thing scripture Isaiah 43:18-19 has been key in the transition of ICDF Australia ministry from how it operated during its foundational and flourishing years as CDFA Inc to a much more “fluid” expression in current times which pose great challenges.

Photo: Bharma National Park



18 “Stop dwelling on the past.
Don’t even remember these former things.
19 I am doing something brand new,
something unheard of.
Even now it sprouts and grows and matures.
Don’t you perceive it?[a]
I will make a way in the wilderness
and open up flowing streams[b] in the
desert.” TPT

The world and the Christian scape of things have changed in so many ways, and we must keep in step with the Spirit to recognise what the Lord is requiring of us as dancers now for this season and these times! Alice’s story connects past generations with current generations... a flow of dance into a more just and healthy future... A fresh flow of life... rivers in the desert and streams in the wastelands of our lives and communities. I am sure you, dear readers, will be encouraged and inspired to apply similar into your respective contexts. I know so many of you already are!

We think of Trauma as something we need to “get over”, not “get into”.
We think Trauma and its effects are something that we need to deal with so we can get on with our lives as scarred but determined survivors. We applaud the scarred but determined.

We think of Trauma as a defect or as a deficit, a thing causing mal-adaption, mal-doxis and mal-praxis.
There is some truth to this limp-through-life view, but it’s not the whole truth.

We think that we should focus on the future and not on the past.
But we do not see the connections.
More often than not, we think of trauma-affected life as “lesser” and do not appreciate traumatic experiences as connection points into a “fuller” experience of life.

Arts and Artists are connector people. We connect the disparate, the fragmented, the disassociated. We, in faith, metaphorically and sometimes in actuality, bring to life the numb, the paralysed, the comatosed.

This is the true work of Reconciliation.
Our individual being’s layers/components/members reconciled.
Our collective being’s layers/components/members reconciled.

Reconciliation between the individual and the collective opens the pathway to holism, wholeness and the opportunity to flourish.

There is an interdependence, albeit that God doesn’t depend on us in the same way that we depend on God. We are the created. God is the Creator. We are designed and potentialled to flourish in harmony with other human beings and the natural environment.
It’s not hard to see how far we have strayed from the original Shalom design!
There is a pathway back to the future and the Name of that pathway is the True Human, Jesus Christ.

We do not walk this pathway, nor follow The Way, on our own. We, infused with the Spirit of God, cooperate with “the re-creative”, walk the Way of AbunDANCED life, participate in the restorative AND the innovative work of God, through the incarnational example, life and teachings of Jesus.

He moved into the human neighbourhood as one of us, an embodied person!

To deny, avoid engagement with, and eschew the integration of the fragmented parts, as individuals, and as a collective, perpetuates the numbness, disintegration, the disassociation effects of Trauma. It's like a symptom of something, a sign and a pointer to something that needs reconciliation/integration.

This cycles us back to the somewhat misleading perception of Trauma as something of deficiency, as something defective, as something "lesser" in our experience of life.

Yes, we can be trained or train ourselves to apply more healthy response mechanisms, but it is more holistic to think of Trauma as potential to be a "wonder" rather than a "wander" as we journey through life! Often, we think of ourselves as "human beings having a spiritual experience". But what about recognising that we are "spiritual beings having a human experience"?

The Body "knows" it all!

Our respective individual bodies KNOW our ancestral past and are our bridge into our individual future, our collective future, and that of our descendants.

Australian indigenous peoples have a profound view of life. Decision making is done from a viewpoint embracing past, present and future. As individuals-in-community,

7 generations are considered:

3 generations past (respect the ancestral wisdom)

+ 1 the present

+ 3 generations into the future

Alice's story gives us a glimpse of how connection with our past can lead to good in our lives now and into the future. She felt connection with past people in her family tree. It feels even more special that dance as an expression, features in it as a pathway to a more abundanced life for herself, family and far beyond. Her ancestors had faith which flowed through to her and in God's will and ways, will flow well beyond, as Alice declares, "This dance represents freedom from oppression for my people, freedom from depression for all women and a war dance to break generational curses of domestic violence, not only for the women in my family but for all women around the world!"

I've been recently reading about Individual and Collective Trauma Integration Practice pioneered by psychologist, Thomas Hübl. My comments about Trauma are inspired by his advocacy that Trauma deserves respect and recognition as a liminal threshold to integration and wholeness. I see it as a holy, holistic walk which at times may require a "faith of leap"!

Dancers in the Lord's love and service should be good at that, right?!

I think Alice's story about Dungala Dancers illustrates transformational aspirations that all dancers who follow Jesus can appreciate and embody... dance flowing with creativity, healing and justice into abundANCE of life for ourselves, our families, communities, and for the entire creation.



Photo: Lucy Jarasius

God so loved the cosmos (entire creation) that "He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life." John 3:16 (The Message) That's what our world needs right now... Let's do JUST that... plunge right into AbunDANCE!

- Lucy Jarasius

Dance: The Catalyst for Change

It started with prayer. An urgent need to hear what our Heavenly Father wanted from our Dance Ministry. Armour of Praise – Swallowfield Chapel’s Dance Ministry (AOP) at the time was studying the Hebrew word “Shema”, meaning “To Hear” or “To Listen”. Out of these times of sharing, came the understanding that if we truly listened to GOD, we will surely hear and GOD’s purpose for AOP – what action(s) we needed to take will be revealed. Looking back, I can see that GOD was preparing our hearts, leading us over many weeks in studying Tim Keller’s “Reaching a City” and the Asuza Street Revival.

In October 2021, two (2) of us went on a three (3) days prayer retreat, with the sole intention to “Listen” and “Hear” from GOD. We wanted, no needed to know what GOD’s action plan for individual lives, as well as a ministry. In these COVID-19 times, our Dance Ministry was seemingly on pause, or worse stuck.

On day two (2) at the retreat, after a beautiful time in the presence of the LORD, it was like GOD downloaded into our spirit His action plan! It was big, scary, but exhilarating and required our total trust, total obedience and total surrender to GOD. We were emboldened and reminded that with GOD all things are possible and that in Jesus, dance can be the catalyst for change – in our lives, our church, our communities and our nations!

A call to action of every dancer, dance minister, dance enthusiast or dance advocate, was the first step! All of us needed to be at the table, to be encouraged through shared testimonies and to hear of how through the power of GOD, dance has and will continue to positively impact our churches, communities and countries around the world.

AOP in partnership with International Christian Dance Fellowship (ICDF), Jamaica and Abigail, The Freedom Movement hosted a forum entitled “DANCE: A Catalyst for Change”. This forum was held on Friday November 19, 2021, where a stellar group of panelist shared their experience, knowledge and insight on how dancing for Jesus is transformative.

The banner features logos for AOP (Armour of Praise Swallowfield Chapel Dance Ministry), Abigail (The Freedom Movement), and ICDF (International Christian Dance Fellowship Jamaica). The event title is "DANCE: A Catalyst for Change" on a purple background. Below the title, it says "November 19, 2021 | 6:00 p.m (Jamaican Time)" and "ZOOM: 356-445-3253 | Abigail123". A line of text reads: "Calling All Christian Dancers, Dance Ministers, Dance Enthusiasts or Dance Advocates to a special forum. Come hear the inspiring stories of dance stalwarts and their testimonies of God's awesome works in the past, present and His call to us to impact the future!". At the bottom, there are four portrait photos of the speakers: Mr. Daron Mitchell, Ms. Kerri Ann Prescod, Ms. Takeese Foga, and Mrs. Saartjie de Wet, each with their name and title below.

The speakers included Mr. Daron Mitchell, who shared his story, helping us to recognize that there is a need to engage and inspire other Christian male dancers to answer the call to minister. Ms. Kerri Ann Prescod, encouraged us that through dance and movement, the church (locally and globally) has and will experience freedom and blessings. Ms. Takeese Foga spoke about the need for social intervention programmes at the community level, and how the creative arts can bring positive change in the lives of young people. Mrs. Saartjie de Wet, highlighted that the impact of dance at the national level, came first and foremost through the renewal of the mind – one person’s insight can influence a group, community and nation.

Throughout the event, GOD’s message through each speaker was clear – WE are the catalyst for change! This was the perfect stage from which the Social Intervention Community Programme – Dance Catalyst was launched.

In a November 28, 2021 online article by Member of Parliament, Lisa Hanna, entitled “Jamaica’s real pandemic – part 1”, it was cited that Jamaica was ranked second in the world for the killing of women (UN2019 report). The article further stated that “nearly 30 per cent of Jamaican women experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime...” Even more heart rendering is the statistics that “over 70 per cent of Jamaican girls under 18 years, who have been victims of a crime, reported they have been raped...” During January 2021 – January 2022, there has been a newspaper article almost every week highlighting the increase in violence against Jamaican girls and women. The need for social intervention is stark and the call for change is loud and urgent!

Dance Catalyst is a neighbourhood transformational programme designed to engage girls using the ministry of dance. The programme’s ultimate objective is to provide a safe space for our young girls and ladies, ages 8 - 20 years old, within the Swallowfield and its surrounding communities to receive homework assistance, mentorship and for them to explore dance/movement as a healing, expressive means of communication.

Our prayer is that many will be introduced to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ and find a way of escape from negative influences, which will result in a reduction in teen pregnancies, drug use, gang membership, school dropout and other deviant behaviour. By redirecting their focus, girls and teens at risk will spend their spare time on activities that take advantage of their inherent strengths and talents.

We know from research that children in low socioeconomic status neighbourhoods show more positive outcomes when engaged in creative art-based programmes. Currently, we are in discussions with various stakeholders, as there is a great need for volunteer Counselors, Dance Therapists, Homework or Resource persons to assist with mentoring and tutoring from the primary to tertiary level.

Led by the Holy Spirit, AOP, in collaboration with Abigail, TFM (a parachurch ministry that focuses on equipping mentors to mentor girls and young ladies) and International Christian Dance Fellowship (ICDF), Jamaica will be piloting Dance Catalyst by April 2022, in these neighbouring communities. It is our prayer that this initiative will spread across Jamaica - transforming lives, congregations and communities, one dancer at a time.

- Tendi Henry

Photo: Provided by Tendi Henry



ICDF Networks

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

Missions

God has clearly shown that dancers, in fact, clear the heavenly realm as they dance, thus enabling other giftings in missions to see breakthrough physically and spiritually in their land of service. Psalm 149 also says: "Let them praise Him with dancing" (v3) and "May the praise of God be in their mouths and a double edged sword in their hands" (v6). There is GREAT power in praise that can defeat the kingdom of darkness.

To connect with other dancers who have a passion for missions, or to learn about this kind of ministry, please connect with Linda Wells at linda.wells@om.org

Creative Arts and Social Concern

This network aims to connect Christian creative artists reflecting on and engaging with the concept of being and doing church in new ways:

...individuals and groups involved with diverse urban or ex-urban creative mission, being discipled by Jesus, discipling others, and demonstrating God's love that overflows every human barrier;
...being friends of Jesus, being his loving works and workers of art, being and seeing the Good News proclaimed imaginatively to ALL, including the marginalised, disenfranchised, and otherwise privilege-denied!

We are currently looking for a person who could serve as a Network Leader in this sphere of ministry. If this is something that you feel called to do, we invite you to contact us at icdfworld@gmail.com



Christ of the Breadlines (1950) - Wood engraving by Fritz Eichenberg, German-American, 1901-1990