



2023

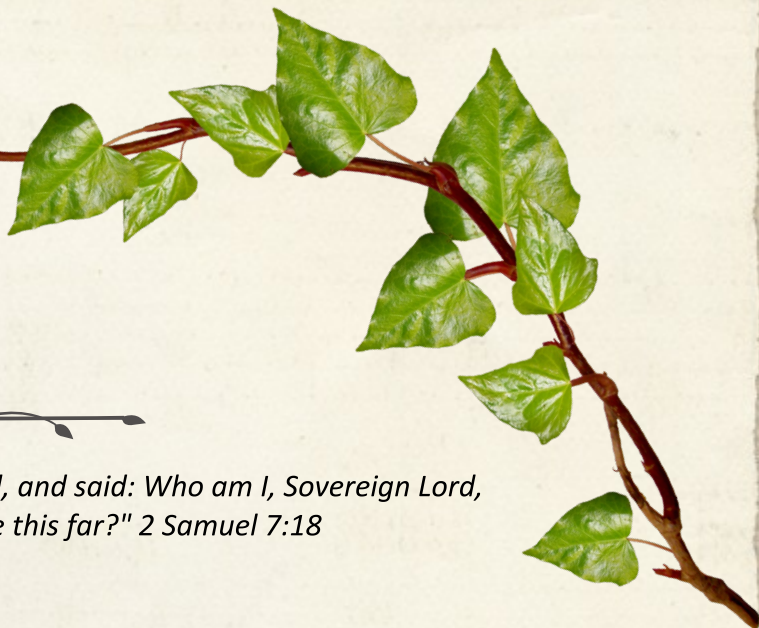
ANNUAL REPORT



FOR GOD'S WORK AMONG STUDENTS IN
BULGARIA THROUGH BCSU



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



"Then King David went in and sat before the Lord, and said: Who am I, Sovereign Lord, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far?" 2 Samuel 7:18

We send off another year with a deep sense of God's mercy. At the beginning of 2024, our team was blessed with the opportunity to participate in IFES' European Staff Consultation. When we shared with the other movements about the things that are happening in Bulgaria, we heard the same question repeatedly: "What did you do to achieve these results?". Perhaps while reading this annual report, you will ask yourself the same question, so I have decided to tell you what we also told our European colleagues. The truth is that we have done nothing more than serve faithfully, pray, and not give up even when we don't see results. We looked for new ways to live out our calling. The fruit of our ministry is due entirely to God's work among us.

This year BCSU celebrated its 30th birthday at our national forum "City on a Hill". Leading up to and during the conference, we told the history of BCSU in photos on social networks. It was inspiring to see where God's work began and how far it has reached in the academic world of Bulgaria. A story from the pages of BCSU illustrates well the drastic difference we are witnessing today:

14 years ago our colleagues Craig and Tanya (Craig is now part of BCSU's Board of Directors) moved to Sofia to help revive the student work there. They started English clubs, Bible studies, and all sorts of events with the hope of seeing dedicated students raised up who would actively participate in God's mission in the university. A year later, they invited about 20 students to a Christmas party at the BCSU office, bought them small gifts, wrapped them, prepared homemade food, decorated the office, prepared a

message for the holiday, played music and waited - all in vain. On that December day, not a single student responded to the invitation. Craig and Tanya choked back tears and continued to look for ways to reach these students, minister to them, and invite them to sit at the feet of Jesus. Today, there are 176 students in the group chat for BCSU Sofia, 10 student leaders, 4 groups that meet each week with over 50 students, 2 volunteers, 6 interns in the "Barnabas" Program, countless meetings and events for students, and students who are clearly dedicated to God's mission.

BCSU is in a season of abundant fruit and all the glory for this belongs to our faithful and good Lord. He is the true Director of every ministry, He is the Good Shepherd and King of all kings, He has all power and uses it to serve us and clothe us in His righteousness. We don't know what's coming. Perhaps the fruit will multiply, perhaps our faithfulness will be tested again, but we believe that whatever God has prepared, it will draw us closer to Him and teach us to love Him and trust Him more and more.

With gratitude for your part in the great story of God's mercy,

Desislava Moncheva

2023 YEAR IN NUMBERS:



1. NUMBER OF GROUPS IN BCSU – 12:

- ✘ 9 student groups in 5 cities: 3 in Sofia, 2 in Plovdiv, 1 in Veliko Tarnovo, 1 in Burgas and 2 in Varna.
- ✘ 2 groups for international students in 2 cities: 1 in Sofia and 1 in Varna.
- ✘ 1 group for graduates in Sofia.

2. NUMBER OF STUDENTS:

This fall we had about 128 actively engaged students in these groups, which is **37% MORE** than last year. A total of 187 Bulgarian students and 35 international students came to at least one event organized by BCSU in the fall, where God's Word was shared. 18% of these students are not yet followers of Jesus and **28% ARE NEW** to BCSU.

3. MINISTERS THIS FALL:

Full-time workers – 4
Part-time workers – 2
Interns in the "Barnabas" Program - 9
Volunteers in the "Faithful" Program – 4
Student leaders - 35
Trainees in the "Milagros" Program - 1

4. NATIONAL EVENTS DURING THE YEAR:

- ✘ We held a National Forum "City on a Hill", which was attended by about 150 people from the different generations of students who have been part of BCSU. The event was held in two languages to welcome international students and guests from BCSU's history to celebrate the 30th birthday of the Movement with us.
- ✘ 27 students received leadership training during the "Sent by the King" Leadership Conference.
- ✘ We organized 2 Inductive Manuscript Bible Study Camps "Trilogy" on the book of Revelation. This year, reservations for these camps filled up within hours.
- ✘ We held a National Alumni Meeting this fall in Uzana on the theme Kingdom Relationships.
- ✘ We organized a summer project "Who will you be?" in partnership with the student movements in England and USA, which took place in Tryavna, as well as several evangelistic events in Sofia and Varna.

"It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns." - Matthew 24:46

- ✘ We organized the second annual “Come and See: Festival of Opportunities” in partnership with the Evangelical Alliance, where various ministries in the country had the opportunity to present their goals and activities.
- ✘ We held a "Barnabas" conference, where the three participants from the previous year officially completed their internship with BCSU. Two of them went on to become volunteers and one continued her participation as a second level intern in the “Barnabas” Program.
- ✘ For the first time in Bulgaria, we organized the "Mark Drama" - a 90-minute production in which the audience experiences every event in the Gospel of Mark as eyewitnesses, as the play is acted all around them. About 300 people came to the two events in Sofia.

5. LOCAL INITIATIVES::

- ✘ We have held evangelistic events - studies on the Gospel according to John "Uncover", Alpha groups, Christmas and Easter parties with messages from the Word, Thanksgiving for international students, movie nights, an escape room event on the theme of “The Resurrection of Christ”, Arabic night for international students, DIY day, game nights, hikes and more.
- ✘ In Sofia, we organized an event with prayer stations to celebrate the World Prayer Day for IFES students .
- ✘ We organized a total of 4 regional leadership days during the year in Sofia and Varna on the theme: gospel, worship and prayer.

- ✘ Besides the Barnabas Program, 16 students meet individually with a Team member, volunteer, or other student for discipleship and mentoring for spiritual growth.

6. OTHER SIGNIFICANT EVENTS:

- ✘ We have published a total of 35 new articles and interviews on the BCSU “Missio Dei” blog.
- ✘ We developed new Bible study material on the book of Hosea.
- ✘ We launched new promotional materials for the movement in the form of bottles, key chains, hoodies, t-shirts and socks.
- ✘ Our team participated in the conference for IFES teams in Europe and sent representatives to the IFES World Assembly , where the 75th anniversary of the foundation of the movement was celebrated.
- ✘ The newest member of the BCSU team (Nikoleta Yordanova) went through the training for new workers " Young Staff Network ”.
- ✘ At the beginning of the fall semester, the BCSU team invited an IFES representative for an evaluation of their work and practical steps for growth and development.



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TESTIMONIES

"The topics we discussed at the Forum helped me understand the important lessons that Christ spoke about in the Sermon on the Mount. I should seek God's approval in what I do and not seek the praise of others. I want to be aware of my motivation for all that I do—desiring that it be a response to my gratitude and love for God and a display of His love for others."

- Daniel Grigorov, a student in Sofia, about the **National Forum "City on a Hill."**

"This leadership day helped me understand and realize that God sent me to Veliko Tarnovo so that I could meet BSCU. The training gave me many ideas on how to communicate and share my faith with my non-believing friends."

- Mihaela Rumenova, a student in Veliko Tarnovo, about the **Leadership Day – Spring 2023.**



"I am delighted to have had the opportunity to participate in the "Barnabas" program, as it brought greater awareness into my life. I was challenged to make decisions, ask myself difficult questions, and seek their answers. God worked in various areas of my life, and today I am starting to reap the fruits of His work little by little. The completion of what was started is yet to come, and what matters most is how everything will conclude. But I can say that the principles set during this program were solid!"

- Kalina Karabonova, a student in Sofia, about her experience in the **"Barnabas" Program.**

"I thank God for His mercy and faithfulness in giving us an understanding of the book of Revelation. It is a book that reveals the Good News of Jesus Christ and shows God's love and grace which He lavishes on us. I am grateful also for the way everything was explained and presented."

- Peter Cholakov about **Trilogy "Revelation" September 2023.**

"Fear can be a hindrance to us as servants of God, and consequently, to some extent, to God's work as well. By abiding in Him, we can best stand on a stable foundation and, from that position, face with readiness all the attacks and oppositions coming towards us like dark storm clouds - emerging from it, perhaps a little wet, but firmly holding onto Christ and the Word."

- Iliana Ruseva, about the **Leadership Conference "Sent by the King" Autumn 2023.**

"The Leadership Day was valuable for me as I discovered a completely different and beautiful facet of prayer, one I wasn't even aware existed. It helped me see various perspectives and taught me to be more patient with the diverse ways people express their prayers. After all, God has created us to be unique."
- Gabriela Dimitrova, about the Leadership Day Sofia, Autumn 2023.

"A leader is not someone who seeks to be revered. A true leader is one who promptly confers honour upon others. The biblical leader seeks love only from God, and that suffices. Regarding people, he is ready to give from what he has received as a gift from God."
- Momchil Totev, at the Leadership Conference "Sent by the King" in Autumn 2023.



About the Mark Drama

"The Mark Drama was a humbling and transformational experience for me because I had the opportunity to encounter Jesus in a new way. If it weren't for His assistance throughout the entire process, this event wouldn't have been possible for any of us who participated. In just three days, we managed to stage a production that received exceptionally positive feedback—a feat that wouldn't have been humanly possible but occurred because it is a work of God." - An actor.

"I am grateful for the wonderful experience we had while working together. I feel truly blessed." - An actress.

"For me, this was like a crash course, and the impact it had on my discipline and reliance was definitely felt. Throughout the week, we shared how we reacted in situations, and even when obstacles appeared, God orchestrated circumstances for us to be at rehearsals and support each other. It's amazing how much peace and connection were felt even when we were correcting each other. I deeply realized that when you do something for God, you truly want to do it in the best way, and you can sense when He approves." - An actress.

"If I could read the Bible the way I experienced this performance, I would do it every day." - An audience member.

"When my friend invited me, I decided I should read the Gospel of Mark before attending the Mark Drama, but now I will read it with much deeper understanding." - An audience member.

"I hesitated in attending due to the lengthy journey and not having participated in something like this in many years. However, I'm immensely thankful for the exceptional seminars, delightful games, and invaluable connections made. It turned out to be the best decision, reminding me of the truth that when we entrust our decisions to God, He always guides us towards the best path."

- Maria, about the National Alumni Retreat "Kingdom Relationships" Fall 2023.

"I was convicted several times that I neglect prayer, whether before spending time with the Word or during important moments like sharing the gospel or other similar occasions. I am grateful for this lesson and will keep it in mind from now on!"
- Anastasia Pancheva, about the Leadership Conference "Sent by the King" Autumn 2023.

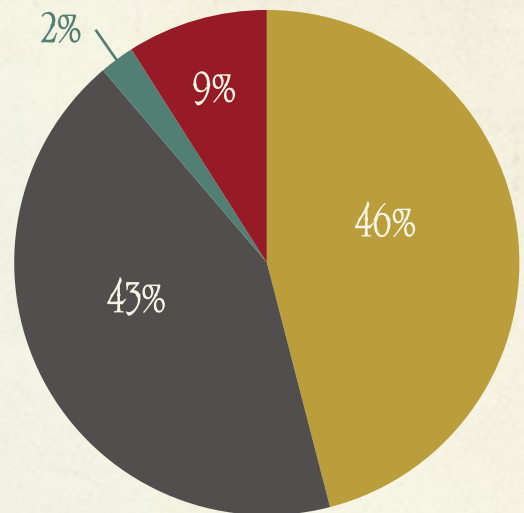


FINANCES AT GLANCE

INCOME:

- Donations from outside of Bulgaria..... 50 595 lv.
- Donations from Bulgarians and BCSU alumni..... 47 090 lv.
- Grants, offerings and investments.....2 459 lv.
- Project "70 for Plovdiv" 9 906 lv.

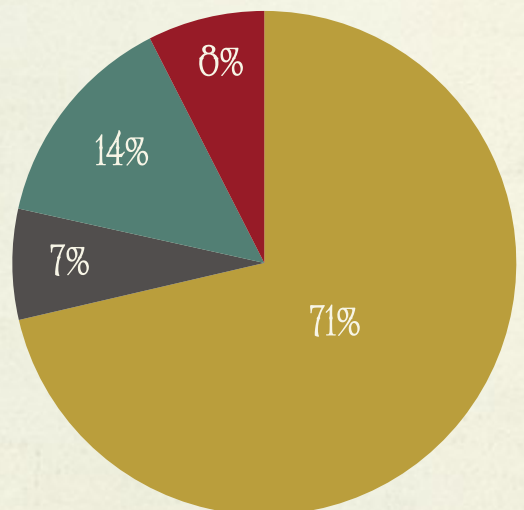
TOTAL: 110 050 LEV



EXPENSES:

- Salaries and taxes..... 77 842 lv.
- Staff ministry expenses..... 7 741 lv.
- Office, taxes and administration..... 15 310 lv.
- Conferences and training events..... 8 180 lv.

TOTAL: 109 073 LEV



BCSU IS A MOVEMENT OF STUDENTS,
BUILT INTO COMMUNITIES OF DISCIPLES,
TRANSFORMED BY THE GOSPEL
AND IMPACTING THE UNIVERSITY,
THE CHURCH AND SOCIETY FOR THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

Giving & Prayer

You can give and subscribe to our prayer letters through our site:
<https://en.bhss-org.com/darete>

We are extremely grateful to the organization Bulgaria Appeal, which has financially and prayerfully supported the student ministry in Bulgaria for decades. At the end of 2023, their board announced the termination of their activities, leading to the discontinuation of their official sponsorship for BCSU. We would like to address all our friends who have supported BCSU through Bulgaria Appeal that they can continue to contribute to the student ministry directly. If you wish to do so, you can make donations through bank transfers using the following bank account details:

Bulgarian Christian Student Union,
UniCredit Bulbank Ltd., Kaloyan Branch, Sofia,
BIC: UNCRBGSF IBAN: BG43UNCR76301039222255 (leva)
IBAN: BG39UNCR76301139276954 (USD)

There are four easy ways you can give online:

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