



BCSU

ANNUAL REPORT

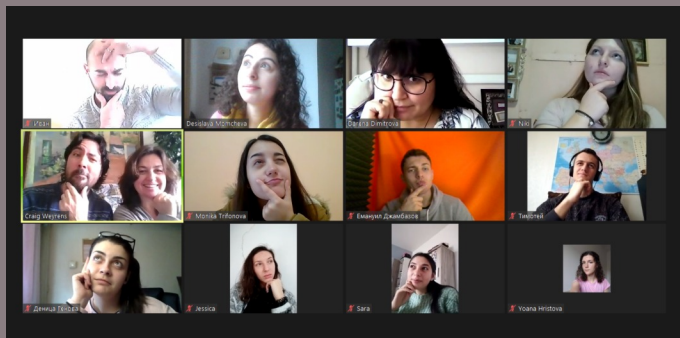
2020

Bulgarian Christian Student Union

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

What a year it has been! I do not think any of us will soon forget 2020 with all of its struggles and disappointments, its health scares and growing division among people, and especially its absurd number of virtual meetings. It has also been a year that has forced us to grow in innovation and flexibility as well as in perseverance and trust in God. Though 2020 is a year I would never wish to repeat, I am able to look back upon it with gratitude for God's faithfulness to us and to our ministry.

When the pandemic struck Bulgaria, we, like many other organizations and ministries, were forced to scrap many of our plans for the year and move most of our events online. Simultaneously, our students experienced the stress of living in uncertain times and fatigue from intensive online learning. In BCSU we did our best to balance our social responsibility of following the restrictions placed upon us with the longing of our students to meet in person. In the end, we could not please everyone and inevitably there were those who were disappointed for one reason or another. You will certainly see the effects of 2020 reflected in our numbers (on page 4). There is no escaping the fact that it was a difficult year and that we have a lot of work and rebuilding to do as we look to the future.



More than anything 2020 has confirmed for me my belief in the necessity of this ministry among students.

But numbers do not tell the whole story of 2020. That is why in this year's annual report we have chosen to concentrate on students' testimonies. We want you to "hear" how the students, who God has entrusted to us, have grown in faith despite the challenges of the year and how the work of BCSU continues to have an impact in the lives of these young men and women. We hope that as you read their testimonies and their experiences, in their own words, that you will be encouraged by the work of God among them.

In a redeeming way, 2020 will be a year marked by innovation for BCSU. As we were forced to change the ways we normally do ministry, our staff and volunteers tried many new ways of serving and reaching students. We have learned a lot from this experience and some of what was started this year will continue with us into the future – like a monthly national prayer initiative begun by one of our volunteers.

2020 also reminded me what great staff we have in BCSU. As I have gotten the joy of meeting regularly with each of them throughout this year, I have seen them work tirelessly and with great zeal in order to love students and share the good news of Jesus. I have been impressed again by their servant hearts, their commitment to the gospel, their flexibility and creativity, and their hard work. By God's grace these staff are influencing students in ways that will have lasting effects. You should be confident that your partnership in this ministry is being used to support excellent staff.

Despite all that happened and will happen, the good news is that God is on the throne. He rules and reigns and there is nothing that happens outside of His watchful eye and wonderful care. More than anything 2020 has confirmed for me my belief in the necessity of this ministry among students. Today's youth are desperately in need of hearing this good news of hope and of receiving help in living out the truth of this message. In a "2020 world" they need to hear the story of a God who loves them, desires to be reconciled with them, and who longs to give them life. What a privilege it is for us to be sent out by you to share this message at this time.

It is my hope that this report gives glory to God for the great work He is doing among students in Bulgaria. It is also my hope that it encourages you to continue to support the work of BCSU through prayers and finances in the years ahead.

For His glory,

Craig Weyrens



2020
IN NUMBERS
BLESSINGS
CHALLENGES



We have student groups in **5** cities (Plovdiv, Varna, Ruse, V. Turnovo, and Sofia) with a total of **30** committed students. **70** students have come to at least one event organized by BCSU this year where the gospel was shared and **30** of these students are first year students or new to the ministry.

We have **2** student groups for international students (Varna and Sofia) with a total of **22** committed students. **80** international students have come to at least one event and **30** of these are not yet followers of Jesus.

We have **3** groups for recent graduates (Varna, Veliko Turnovo and Sofia) with **15** committed members.

10 students have taken a leadership role this year and are learning about serving others in our regular training events. **6** leaders graduated from our internship program in 2020 and we currently have **6** students or recent graduates in our volunteer program.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS & NEWS

- ✓ **25** staff and students attended the European Evangelism Conference, REVIVE.
- ✓ We held our second iConnect Winter Retreat for international students this year.
- ✓ We were able to have our National Forum in Tryavna before the lockdown with **50** participants.
- ✓ For the first time we organized Bible study camps online. We had **50** participants in the Sermon on the Mount study and **20** participants in our Story of the Temple study
- ✓ We held **10** online national prayer meetings, **4** online national student meetings, and **3** online national alumni meetings with an average attendance of **20** participants.
- ✓ We held **3** national online Leadership training events this fall for student leaders in training.
- ✓ We organized evangelistic activities like: Alpha groups in Varna, Explore groups in Sofia, Day trips and conversations in Veliko Turnovo, and street evangelism in partnership with a local church in Ruse.
- ✓ We welcomed a new board for BCSU.



For more information about these events, see: <https://en.bhss-org.com/en-2020>

2020
IN TESTIMONIES
BLESSINGS
CHALLENGES

HRISTINA SEMERDZHIEVA - STUDENT GROUP IN VARNA

In the Varna student group, we study God's word together and help people who do not know Christ to understand more about Him and what it means to have faith in Him. I am so glad to be part of this group because it helps both me and others to grow in God and to learn how to serve Him!



YOANA - STUDENT GROUP IN VELIKO TURNOVO

BCSU turned my spiritual life upside down. I often felt lonely before and I had no contact with young Christians. During the student group meetings, I met other young people who understand and share my problems and through them I learned a lot about God's love and patience. I believe that BCSU is a necessary environment for every young Christian to grow.

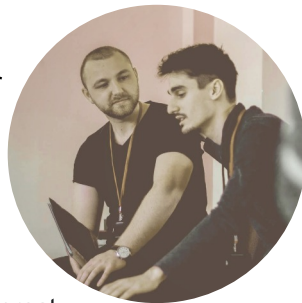


TIMOTHY - STUDENT GROUP IN RUSE

BCSU has been an opportunity to meet new people with whom I can share together and understand more about our Lord Jesus Christ. It has challenged me through engaging discussions and opportunities to prepare discussions over Biblical texts. Through these discussions I have learned and reflected even more deeply on God's word. BCSU is a great blessing for me in my student years and I believe it will have a lasting effect in my future as well. I am thankful to God that I have met people who are hungry and thirsty to know Him more and to help students like me to know Him more deeply!

RALI - NATIONAL FORUM

I was encouraged at the Forum to see people from all over Bulgaria who participate in BCSU and to get acquainted with them. The games were fun and the theme was encouraging.



CHRISTIAN & DESSY - NATIONAL ONLINE ALUMNI MEETINGS

As people living abroad, the online alumni meetings are a great way for us to see the faces and hear the voices of those that we could not meet otherwise. The time spent together helps us for a few moments to go back to the good old days with old friends and to end the evening with instructive and enriching moments!

DIDI - TRILOGY "THE STORY OF THE TEMPLE"

Trilogy is one of my favorite BCSU events. This time it was different not only because it was online, but also because of what we were studying - the story of the temple. It was interesting and exciting for me to follow God's plan for us from the very beginning (in Genesis) to the present day and to understand the purpose and function of the temple. It is beautiful to see how God is the initiator from the beginning and remains faithful to the end. This Trilogy brought me a new perspective and understanding of things we have learned as Christians and helped me to understand more about the character and heart of God.


DANIELLE - ICONNECT (GROUP FOR INTERNATIONALS) IN SOFIA

iConnect has been a really great thing for me because it is all about fellowship and fun. I've gotten to know a lot of new people and to get to know others better. I've loved the Bible studies because everyone has an opportunity to share their thoughts and opinions and we can all learn from each other. I love everyone that is involved and everyone that gives their time to organize them. It means a lot to me and has really been a blessing to me.



RIYA - ICONNECT (GROUP FOR INTERNATIONALS) IN VARNA





This semester I was able to learn a lot through our study of Genesis. I was able to see the promises that God has given to us and how humanity constantly goes against them. It also reminded me how I have to be thankful for God's promises and provision in my life. I was able to learn about various characters in Genesis such as Adam and Eve and how they shifted the blame instead of taking responsibility.


2020
IN FINANCES

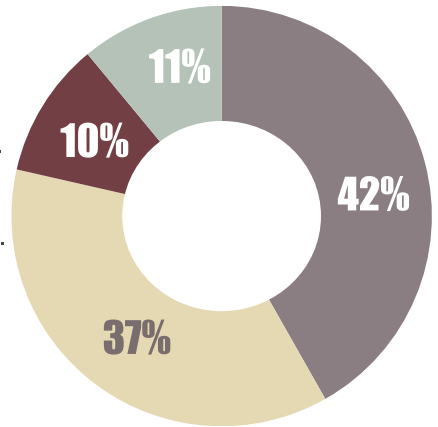
 BLESSINGS

 CHALLENGES





INCOME:

-  Donations from outside of Bulgaria.....35,995 lv.
-  Donations from Bulgarians and BCSU alumni.....31,670 lv.
-  Grants and investments.....8,985 lv.
-  Project 72 & offerings.....9,475 lv.

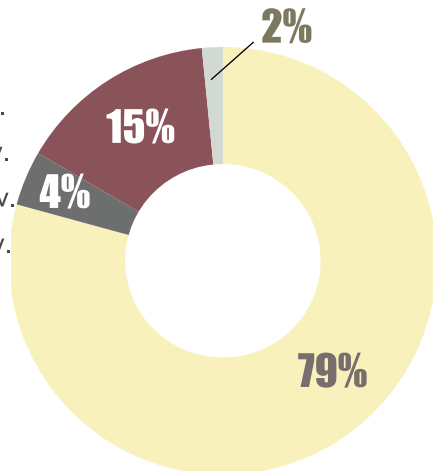
Total: 86,125 lv.



EXPENSES:

-  Salaries and benefits.....59,745 lv.
-  Staff ministry expenses.....3,125 lv.
-  Office, taxes and administration:11,330 lv.
-  Conferences and training events:1,185 lv.

Total: 75,385 lv.



In a year filled with many trials and uncertainties, we give thanks to God for His faithfulness to this ministry and the good news that we finished the year with a positive budget. We will be able to use the reserve money from this year to further our mission in 2021!

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021

I hope that as you have seen some of the glimpses of this ministry in 2020 and read the student testimonies that you will give praise and thanks to God along with us for His goodness and faithfulness. Our mission however does not end here. We believe God still has much work for us to do in the universities throughout the country.

We ask that you would partner with us in prayers for the year ahead. Here are a few ways specific ways that you can be praying for our mission:

- Please pray that many of the student groups that have gone through a period of instability in 2020 would once again find stability and unity in mission in 2021.
- Please pray for the cities where there are currently no student groups. Pray that God would help us to raise witnessing communities of students in those places. Pray especially that God would give us the opportunity and finances to hire a staff in southern Bulgaria in the near future.
- Please pray that God would raise up more students throughout the country who would be excited and motivated by our mission to the university, who would hunger to grow as disciples and witnesses, and who would be willing to serve and lead.
- Please pray that BCSU would continue to grow as a missional organization. Pray that God would give us creativity, boldness, faith and fruitfulness in witness.

We also continue to rely on your financial gifts to make this mission possible in the year ahead. We ask that you would consider giving a one-time gift or give regularly towards this mission. In the year ahead we calculate that we need 83,500 lev to finance all that we have planned. Taking into consideration our current partners in ministry and grants, we believe that we still need to raise 15% of our budget for next year (about 12,500 lev annually or 1050 lev per month). Would you help us to reach our goals? We could do this if we found:



4 people to give or increase their giving by 100 lev per month



7 new people to give or increase their giving by 50 lev per month



15 new people to give or increase their giving by 20 lev per month

We are confident that God will continue to care for this ministry and will use generous people like you to do it. Not only this but we pray that as you partner in this ministry God will fill you with His joy as He fills us again with thankfulness for each of you. May your 2021 be filled with God's peace, hope and blessing!

Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

– 2 Corinthians 9:10 – 15



FOR GIVING AND PRAYER

You can give and subscribe to our prayer letters through our site:

<https://en.bhss-org.com/darete>

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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.