

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

* LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR *

What an exciting time to be involved in BCSU! As I look back over the past year, I am incredibly grateful for the ways that God has led and cared for the students and staff of BCSU throughout Bulgaria! By His grace we have seen students grow as disciples of Christ, student groups grow in boldness in sharing their faith, and volunteers and staff grow in serving and leading.

Something I am truly thrilled about this year is the growth of our staff team. We received great support from you, our partners in ministry, to our appeal to give generously for a new BCSU staff worker. As a result, in September we were able to welcome Ivan Ivanov to our team; he is working to support and pioneer new student groups in central Bulgaria. I am proud of Ivan and our entire staff team who serve students tirelessly and with excellence each and every day! Their hard work, alongside of God's gracious leading and your prayers, is producing a harvest among students.

As you will see in the report below, we have a great deal to be grateful for in 2018! Looking back over the year, we see that though we have the same number of students involved in BCSU that we did last year at this time, over 40% of these students are new to our groups this fall. This means that we are seeing great growth in reaching new students. I am confident that this will only increase as we create witnessing groups in cities like Gabrovo and Shumen, where there is currently no active student groups. What is more a large percentage of these students are new to the faith. BCSU is playing an instrumental role in the lives of these young Christians as they are learning to take their first steps in following Jesus. I should also mention that we have seen a remarkable increase in our ministry to international students this year with two new groups in V. Turnovo and Varna. Most of these students are not yet followers of Jesus but God continues to give us many open doors to share our faith with them. What a great time to be a part of BCSU!

But it is even more special to be a part of BCSU at this moment because we are celebrating our 25th birthday this year. What a great testimony to God's love, mercy and faithfulness to students in Bulgaria that there has been a constant witness over these 25 years! As we look back, we can see God's faithful hand in providing for us and leading us; most joyfully we have seen the fruit of this ministry in lives of students and alumni who are impacted by Scripture, trained in leadership, and faithful in outreach!

Obviously, we are taking time to celebrate God's goodness and faithfulness to us over these years. And because you have certainly played a role in what God is doing in BCSU we want to invite you to celebrate with us. At the end of this report we invite you to find out how you can get involved in our #BCSUis25 celebration!

As we move into this new year, we give thanks to God for his faithfulness and we give thanks to you for your partnership in this ministry among students. It is our hope and prayer that 25 years from now we will continue to celebrate God's saving work among new generations of students in Bulgaria.

With gratitude and joy,

Craig Weyrens
BCSU National Director



FACTS AT A GLANCE

6 student groups, with opportunities to start in 2 cities - Shumen and Gabrovo - and to re-pioneer a group in Blagoevgrad.



60 active students. **25** of these are new to our student groups this year. **9** are new to the faith.



22 active international students, which is an increase of **200%** this year.



3 international student groups, of which **2** are new - in Turnovo and Varna.

103 students reached in at least one event
54 international students.

15 active student leaders.

Student Leadership Days:

6 in Sofia, Turnovo, and Varna about servant and strategic leadership.



15 active alumni in **3** groups.

7 full time staff

Volunteers -

7 interns in Barnabas program.

2

National events: 2 Leadership Conferences / Bible Competition / Graduates Meeting / Trilogy / Summer Project.

NEW:

website with new blog,

logo,

Bible study material on the Gospel of John,

Student Leadership Handbook.



TESTIMONIES

APPROVED

Bible Competition:

I believe the Bible competition encourages its participants to look deeply into the Bible. In 2018, I studied the minor prophets for the competition. These were texts I had read before, but I certainly did not know or understand them well. The competition encouraged me to dig in deep, and I read the texts and used commentators to help me understand and learn them better. These prophets now speak loudly! I can surely confirm that this competition encouraged me and taught me to study God's word deeply and know it thoroughly!

- Krasi Dimitrov

BCSU Alumni Gathering:

The gathering was wonderful! We had a great time of fellowship together as graduates. We rested and had fun together and it was great to get to meet new people. I give this event two thumbs up and whole heartedly support it. I look forward to participating again in the future in this gathering and I want to give special thanks to all the organizers.

- Christian Shivarov

Barnabas Retreat:

The last Barnabas meeting was a very valuable experience for me. I was pleasantly surprised when we got letters from people who had been praying for us individually all year long. Each of us received a letter from a person we did not know personally but who has been dedicated to praying for us during the program. At the conference, we had the opportunity to study the book of Hebrews together, to spend time together, and to share and evaluate our participation in the Barnabas internship program.

- Iva Docheva

Trilogy:

From the Trilogy Bible Camp, I was able to examine the book of Revelation and clearly understand its message. The camp helped me to understand how to study similar texts from the Bible and encouraged me to continue to seek more clarity by looking at all of God's word.

- Sami Timnev





TESTIMONIES

Summer Project

The BCSU summer project in Burgas was one of the most wonderful experiences for me this year. The time spent with God's Word in the morning, the meaningful discussions, and the exploration of foreign cultures was extremely enriching! I believe that the friendships we built, the experiences we shared and the lessons we learned will bring fruit in our lives for God's glory!

- Desi Momcheva

Leaders Conference:

Thank God for the blessing of this year's Leadership Conference, where I learned more about what it means to be a leader and how to lead Bible studies. I am also thankful for the Student Leader's Handbook, which I really needed. It was encouraging to be reminded of and learn from Peter's life, both his fears and his courage to follow Christ. I was encouraged to get out of the boat and walk on the water. And I thought deeply about Jesus' question to Peter - do you love me? – and whether I am willing to follow and serve Jesus with humility and obedience.

- Melania Kocheva

Student leadership days

For me the two student leadership days were an extraordinary blessing because I learned how to study God's Word more deeply, how to ask good questions, how to seek answers, and how to grow in my personal time with God and the Word. These days made me think more about the needs of others in the student group and taught me how to approach my unbelieving friends. However, the most important thing I learned was about the character of a leader. As a young person who wants to change the world around me, I need to know where I'm going and what God desires. Knowing my identity as a leader is not just a nice thing, but rather it is essential for me, so that I might be able to know where God is leading me.

- Victoria Georgieva

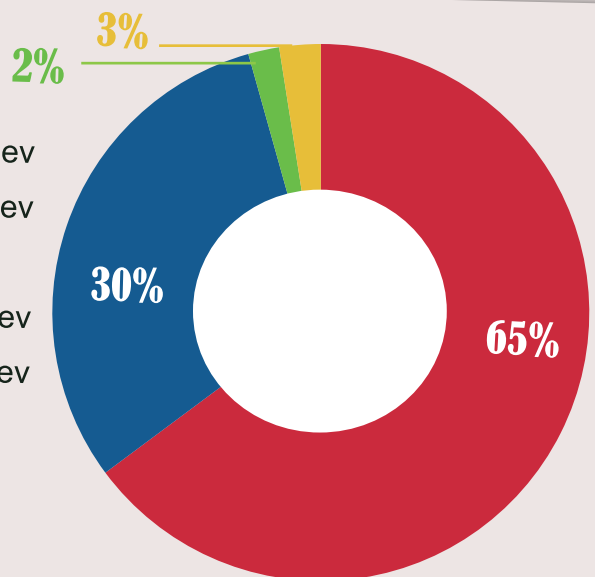


FINANCES AT A GLANCE

INCOME

■ Giving from outside Bulgaria:	48,575 lev
■ Giving from Bulgaria and alumni:	23,100 lev
■ Grants: Healthy Foundations and Breaking New Ground:	1,400 lev
■ Investments and Other gifts:	1,860 lev

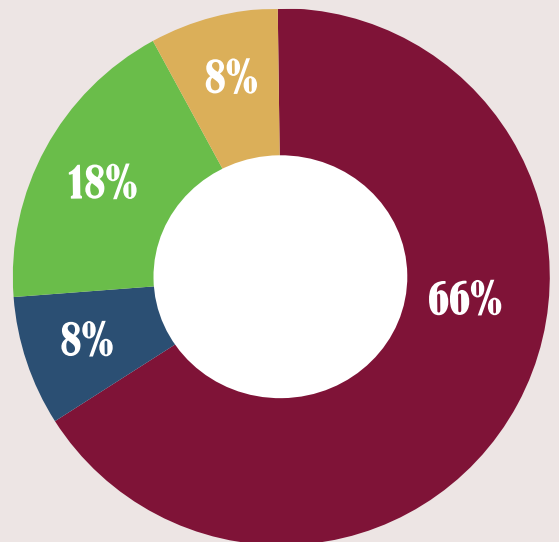
Total: 74,935 lev



EXPENSES

■ Salary and insurance:	48,535 lev
■ Ministry expenses:	5,745 lev
■ Office, taxes and administration:	13,400 lev
■ Conferences:	5,665 lev

Total: 73,345 lev



APPEAL

As you can see throughout this report, we have much to give thanks for. Students have been reached with the good news of Jesus throughout the country. We would ask that you would continue to pray for BCSU as we enter this new year. Pray that the staff and student leaders would be sensitive to God's leading so that we could continue to faithfully and boldly share the good news and develop life-long disciples. Pray also that God would open up doors for witnessing communities among students in cities, like Gabrovo and Shumen, where there is currently no ministry among students.

Similarly, we ask that you would pray that God would provide for all of our financial needs. For this to happen we need to raise about 700 lev (\$400) per month in new support this year. We are completely confident that God is more than able to abundantly provide for these needs. If you are not giving already, might you consider partnering with us regularly in this ministry. If we were to find

- 2 people to give 100 lev (\$60) per month
- 5 people to give 50 lev (\$30) per month
- 10 people to give 25 lev (\$15) per month

we would reach our goals. Would you consider helping us see the student ministry grow and thrive in 2019! Every gift helps us reach our goals. You can learn more about giving on our website or by e-mailing us.



//BCSUIS25

*Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his love endures forever.
(Psalm 107:1)*

BCSU is turning 25 years old and we want to celebrate all that God has done. Throughout these 25 years we have seen many students come to faith, grow as committed disciples of Jesus, and choose to serve God in their churches and workplaces. We are grateful that God has used BCSU to bless many throughout Bulgaria and we want to celebrate all He has done!

For this reason we have created a #BCSUIS25 campaign that you can get involved in. There are three ways that we are inviting everyone to get involved:

- If you have a picture or short testimony connected to BCSU you could post it on our Facebook page for all to see with the hash tag #BCSUIS25 (or if you do not have Facebook you could e-mail us). We will be compiling all these memories and create a testimony wall at our conference.
- You could give a one-time gift of 25 (dollars, pounds, euros...) to help BCSU continue to minister to students and start new groups throughout the country.
- You could come and join us for our celebration in February. Our national forum will be from February 22-24 in Tryavna. The theme of the conference is "Cloud of Witnesses" and we will be studying Hebrews 11 together. For more information or to register, please e-mail us.

Thanks for getting involved in this great celebration!



FOR GIVING AND PRAYER

You can give to the ministry or subscribe to our prayer bulletins on our website:
www.bhss-org.com/give

CONTACT INFORMATION

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The Bulgarian Christian Student Union 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.

