



STUDENTS FOR CHRIST - RUSSIA

Report submitted by Eric and Jan Muzart, February 2008

Students for Christ-Russia includes not only native Russians, but also many international students from all over the world. SFC-Russia currently has student-led, active chapters on secular university campuses in at least 8 Russian cities, including Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kursk, Voronezh, Krasnodar, Kazan, Rostov on the Don, and Nizhny Novgorod. SFC-Saratov is being planted this year. SFC-Russia helped start SFC-Armenia, and hopes to assist students in other former Soviet Union countries to develop their own campus ministries, too.



SFC-Russia maintains unity and vision through common literature and training materials, a website (www.sfcrossia.org), an e-group, and products such as T-shirts and pens. The SFCRussia office runs two national events per year: “Run the Race!”, a summer camp for intense student ministry leadership training, and a winter retreat for general attendance. About 75 students attended “Run the Race! ‘07”. Approximately 120 attended last year’s winter retreat. The recent winter retreat “Destined to Win”, held Feb. 3-6, 2008 near Moscow, drew 171 students from 10 Russian cities.



Students for Christ – Russia began in 1993 in Kemerovo, Siberia. Newsletters containing history and testimonies are available at www.muzarts.org. (See Dec. 2007 newsletter “15 years of Student Ministry in Russia”.) The Muzarts are currently on furlough. During their absence, Missionary Associate Jamey Daniel has been living in St. Petersburg and assisting with the national office of SFC-Russia. She gathered information for the first four of the following city reports. The last two reports were written by student leaders.



SFC-St. Petersburg began in 2000. Currently, there is one main leader, Chuks, over the city and a leader for each of the six fellowships at the six universities where students meet weekly. Regularly scheduled citywide activities include a monthly all-night prayer meeting and a recently begun monthly girls' fellowship, from which they hope to develop new small groups.

Small groups in two hostels (dorms) did outreaches around Christmas time, and are working on ideas for future evangelism projects. There are two hostels where SFC-St. Petersburg would like to start new fellowships. Chuks is talking with students in those hostels. There are five students being trained as leaders. Chuks refers to the SFC leadership manual by John Koeshall for leadership training. Discipleship by Design by Harvey Herman is also available, in Russian and English.

SFC-St. Petersburg sent about 16 students to the 2007 winter retreat, 25 to "Run the Race! '07" and 21 to the 2008 winter retreat. The fellowship praises God for Dina, a Russian Buddhist girl who was saved at the last summer camp.

SFC-Nizhny Novgorod started two years ago. As yet, there is no clear leadership structure. There are "12-15 leaders, 5-10 active leaders". SFCNizhny Novgorod is under the guidance of a Vineyard church with a pastor from the US, although many students from a Catholic church attend as well.

Fellowship groups meet in three different hostels from one medical university. All three groups meet weekly on Saturday evenings at 5 and then have prayer from 9-11 for any who want to stay. Usually between 10 and 15 come for the early meeting with 6 or 7 staying for prayer. They started last semester to invite pastors from other churches to preach. When they invite a special speaker, more students come (20-25).

They did a concert last year, inviting teachers and friends. It went well. They would like to do this again soon. The Vineyard church organized a camp for the student group. The Catholic church does a soup kitchen and many of the students take part in that.

Three students from SFC-Nizhny Novgorod attended "Run the Race! '07". Six attended the SFC winter retreat this year.

SFC-Voronezh has one main leader, Samuel, and three leaders under him who lead groups in three hostels from same university. They meet together weekly as a city, and have prayer meetings often. 14 students from SFC-Voronezh attended "Run the Race! '07", and 9 went to the winter retreat this year.

SFC-Saratov has not officially started yet, but one guy and one girl who both came to the recent winter camp are very dedicated to starting it. Peter Zulu (see photo, right) from SFC-Moscow is making plans to visit them in the spring to get Students for Christ established there.





The following report is from David Chima, former Regional Leader of SFC-Kursk .

SFC-Kursk started with an overnight prayer and worship service on May 30, 2004 when the leaders were officially appointed and ordained. Many times we Christians sit back and do nothing while precious lives waste away. That was partly the case in Kursk campuses 'till a few people of God who wanted to sharpen each other and see their fellow students saved, remain saved and stand up for Jesus, came together. Against the odds, some students took it upon themselves to face the school authorities, to give some of their time, finances, comfort etc. and make a difference for God. "... with such sacrifices, God is pleased".

We thank God for the workers He sends to Kursk that have been keeping the group alive. After all the struggles SFC-Kursk has been through to get physically established, our population is rising. We steadily have halls and other things that we need for our meetings; testimonies are so many. "SFC is a blessing to me ..."; "God blessed my mother and she got the ... after SFC prayed."; " Since I joined SFC, my phone is always loaded with heart-restoring SMS", etc. Praise God!



In 2007, the SFC-Kursk leadership positions were: Prayer Coordinator, Praise and Worship Leader, Evangelism Coordinator, Treasurer, General Secretary, Projects Organizer/ Socials Coordinator, Communication Leader, Library and Talents Leader, Editorials Leader, Logistics and Supply (foods), Assistant Regional Director and Regional Director.

We have members from 3 university campuses and maintain contacts with 4 churches. The mother church of most of the SFC members is having cell groups in all major hostels and so SFC does not have cell groups. Because many people in SFC-Kursk are seriously involved in their churches, we limited our meetings to only once a week. The one meeting however, used to be and still is, an all-encompassing, seriously organized and very refreshing meeting. Our average regular attendance was 18. When we organized picnics, we used to get up to 33 students. Because of lack/high cost of a place of meeting, regular overnights were not organized. However, we organized a number of in-door picnics, games, worship, prayer and testimony services which attracted visitors.

No other official training was given to the leaders except what they learned in the SFC camps leadership trainings. However, the leader from time to time helped each of them by writing out in detail the obligations of the leaders in their various positions. He also personally visited them and learned their visions to help them

actualize them. He also became an assistant to all the leaders in places and times that they seemed not to know what to do.



In 2007, about 25 students went to SFC winter camp from Kursk. And it was all blessings, cheers and cheers. In our testimony service the week immediately after the camp, those that weren't in the camp felt their absence as those that went recounted their unforgettable moments.

Activities in 2007 included: special services (worship, prayer, testimony etc.); fasting and prayer for the city, schools and country; SMS from SFC phone to remind and invite people to the meetings (6 am every day of the meeting); visits to other churches; joining other churches in their picnics, overnights etc.; picnics; evangelism in the hostels – 2 Russians gave their lives to Jesus and many believers were restored to fellowship; Christmas, New Year, Easter and birthday celebrations; fund-raising (free-will offerings, pledges and vows) for instruments; SFC Kursk T-shirts for fund-raising and advertisement; visits or phone calls to absent and new members. A website for SFC-Kursk was half done.



In 2008, the leadership structure remains the same except that there are two assistants (a guy and a lady) to the regional director. The leadership also saw a full reshuffle of the persons holding the various leadership positions. We have more members from the third university now. We will work on starting a cell group there as no church has a cell group there yet. We organize more games, overnights, worship nights and services, one reason being the availability of a hall even in the night. Praise God! We have more regular leadership meetings (every week) in which leaders are told/given what to do. In 2008, 20 students went to SFC winter camp from Kursk.

Projects for 2008 already in progress include: prayer nights including overnights and prayers with fasting, worship nights; projects to raise funds for SFC (laundry, hair-fixing); New Year and birthday celebrations, SMS from SFC phone to remind and invite people to the meetings and to encourage the members randomly during the week with loving messages; fund-raising (free-will offerings, pledges and vows) for instruments; production of DVDs and VCDs of events (2 completed). Other projects we hope to include this year are: concerts, visitation days, a newsletter, and girls' nights– for ladies to worship God, pray, sharpen, teach, carry each others' burdens, etc. We hope to extend SFC to a nearby city in the future.

We thank God greatly for the successes SFC-Kursk has recorded. We will maintain our successes and press on to higher things as God leads us. Hallelujah!

The following comes from Chikondi Zulu, President of SFC-Moscow, who succeeded Ronald Katenaire. After spending 4 years in a Bible college in Cuba, Ronald started SFC while earning his doctorate in chemical engineering in Moscow. Upon returning to his home country of Zimbabwe shortly after his graduation, Dr. Katenaire was murdered. SFC-Moscow is his legacy.

SFC-Moscow was founded in the year 2000 by Brother Ronald Katenaire.

The year 2007 was opened by an all-night prayer meeting (31/12/2006) attended by over 80 students. That night we saw many people rededicating their lives to Christ. So mighty was the presence of God in the place that most of the time we were on our knees. Testimonies about the meeting were spoken by many people after the meeting and even during the winter camp.



Our city-wide leadership team consists of the: President, Vice President, Secretary, Financial Director, Vice Financial Director, Intercessory Leader, Vice Intercessory, Evangelism & Follow-up Ministry, Publicity, Vice Publicity, Worship Ministry, and Logistics Director. We have a total number of 8 fellowships that are working effectively right now. That is 8 leaders and their vices with individual committees on their campuses. The attendance in these fellowships varies from 5 to 33.

Every month we have leadership meetings at which the vision of SFC is shared. Sometimes we use extracts from the Discipleship by Design manual to train our leaders. Many of our leaders will be graduating this year and it is our goal to continue training upcoming and potential leaders using other materials too. We are trying to make it a must for every leader who is not traveling home for summer holidays to attend summer camps. This has helped us so much to keep the vision of SFC in difficult times, because people knew what they were doing.

In 2007 we had only a few city-wide activities, especially in summer, picnics and general prayer meetings. Nonetheless, these types proved to be effective evangelistic-wise. Many people have been added to the fellowship. We have not had big events as property is not that cheap to rent. Most schools, too, don't allow religious activities to take place in their school halls. Most of the meetings we have are student led.

Most of the outreaches we have done on the campuses have been during public holidays, when we would cook and invite people to come join us. During these meetings we preach the gospel and, thereafter some people continue to attend the fellowships, getting saved. This method has proved its effectiveness. Another way is making friends with people, later on inviting them for any Christian function.

In 2007, 58 students attended the winter camp, and 25 attended "Run the Race! '07" in summer. This year 65 students from SFC-Moscow attended the winter camp "Destined to Win." There were 171 students in all in attendance at that event. During these meetings and the ones we have at the universities, we had many conversions but many people would prefer to make their confession in a church setting. We experienced many more Holy Spirit baptisms during normal fellowships than we had during the camps. We had 4 people receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the spot at "Destined to Win". The things that God did in this camp were AWESOME!



Catherine's parents had been separated for over a year, but she had not shared this with anyone in the fellowship for fear of rejection or resentment. During the camp as the worship was going on the Word of the Lord came through the worship leader from Kursk, "Someone's parents are reconciling." After the camp she called home (Kenya) and her dad picked up the phone with flourish, saying, "Your mother is coming home."

This year we are planning to continue what we have been doing and look for better ways of doing ministry among the students. We are looking at attracting people through drama, dances, songs and outdoor activities like sports, and many other ways.