



IMPACT Preparing Leaders for the Church in Russia RUSSIA

RUSSIAN LEADERSHIP MINISTRIES • WINTER 2008

A Piece of Heaven

MTS Superintendents Masters Program nourishes and equips church leaders.

I felt like I was in heaven. When Christ takes us to his kingdom we will spend time—like this—knowing and praising God together”: so states Alexander Birukov, a superintendent from Orenburg, about his time at the second session of Moscow

Theological Seminary’s Superintendents Masters Program that occurred October 13-25, 2008.

The pursuit of knowledge and a desire for fellowship—a piece of heaven for many pastors isolated in their ministries—brought 50 superintendents to the Moscow Theological Seminary. The core curriculum, which includes church history, leadership, pastoral counseling, Baptists and society, as well as church and parachurch ministry, was enhanced by heart-felt conversations, prayer, and encouragement. According to Mikhail Chekalin, a superintendent from Moscow, “There was time not just for listening to lectures of our professors but also for open dialogue about our faith.”

For many pastors, the education revitalized their calling.

Vladimir Drok, superintendent from Rostov-on-Don, states, “To get knowledge from just personal experience is the same as being a doctor who tries to cure himself. Often we simply miss some very important points that are apparent in conversations with professors.”

Spiritually nourished, the superintendents returned ready to feed their flocks. Equipped with electronically reproducible leadership training materials, provided by EQUIP, the superintendents have hosted training sessions within their churches. As a result of this training in Rostov, three new churches have been planted in the region.

Paul once wrote, “Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.” And this, according to Vasilii Kozorezov, superintendent from Nizhniy Novgorod, is exactly our occupation at the seminary: “To watch ourselves and keep focused on the teaching in order to conquer the world for Jesus.”



RUSSIAN BAPTIST UNION SUPERINTENDENTS GATHER FOR THE MTS MASTER IN MINISTRY SESSION.

New MTS Learning Center at Rostov-on-Don

More than three years in the works, the learning center in Rostov-on-Don opened with celebration and anticipation.

The newest MTS learning center will be a spiritual hub in the region surrounding the Don River, which holds great evangelistic opportunity. Answering the call to spread the Gospel, 18 brothers in Christ were accepted into the program; all currently serve in area Russian Baptist Union churches as pastors, deacons, or missionaries. The learning center is a longing fulfilled for these church leaders, whose first session began on November 24, 2008.

As is all theological training, it was a challenge—and blessing—welcomed by all students. According to Vladimir Drok, director of the new learning center, “It isn’t easy to study in seminary, but learning God’s Word brings satisfaction, joy, and quells the students’ doubts about the absolute necessity of education.”

To meet the needs of the growing church, plans are underway to add degree programs in Christian education and youth ministry. In May 2009, the second session will include classes on both the Old and New Testament, apologetics, preaching, and evangelism.

With the opening of the Rostov-on-Don learning center, there are now six centers outside of Moscow—yet another sign of the far-reaching impact of the Moscow Seminary and God’s redemptive plan in Russia.



The Light at the Top of the Mountain

God uses an MTS student's gifts for his Kingdom.

A beacon in "the town on top of the mountain," Yelnya's evangelical church is illuminating Christ's love to its community --so they can know Christ's love.

The church community, led by MTS graduate Alexander Vychnov, refuses to hide its lamp—despite resistance to the Baptist church by the Orthodox community. Unified by the Holy Spirit and committed in brotherly love, the church ministers to its community through humble service: playground clean-up initiatives, home visits inviting community members to evangelical concerts, and a summer children's camp—an event that takes months of preparation.

At the Summer 2008 Children's Camp, children latched on to the Gospel, as they experienced it through songs with movements, captivating stories, and fellowship with believers (a group of Moscow youth came to support the event) during games and crafts. According to Pastor Vychnov, "Kids in the camp were not just passively entertained, but also took a

very active part in the services, lending much-appreciated young hands to our church, which consists mostly of seniors."

As the children of Yelnya come to Christ, so do its adults. In September 2008, around the celebration of Russia's Thanksgiving, three people were baptized. "My heart brims with joy," states Pastor Vychnov, "when I see that my work is not useless, that I am not wasting my strength and time; sometimes God works even through me to reach people's hearts and change their lives."

Changed lives: that's what the Gospel's about—and what the church in Yelnya is prayerfully committed to. To this end, the church will host the Harvest Day

evangelical event, prepare for Christmas services, and continue its counseling services to the community.

New people are drawn from the dark to Christ's life-altering light—all because of a little church on top of a mountain that refuses to hide its lamp.



OUR YOUTH INSPIRE WITH SONGS OF PRAISE.

Partnership Opportunities

Ministry Projects

- Maintenance truck, Moscow campus \$15,000
- Regional Learning Center (per session) \$10,000
- Scholarships \$2,800
- Computers for students and faculty (9 needed) \$1,200
- Classroom projectors (7 needed) \$900
- Library resources - Learning centers \$500

CONTACT US

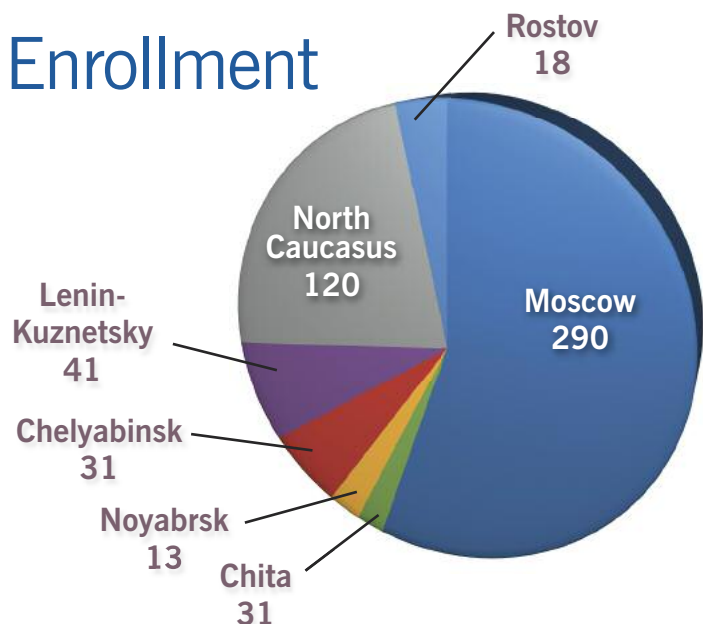
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MTS Enrollment



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