



INTERNATIONAL
RUSSIAN RADIO/TV

Christian Media Missions

Russia & Asia Report

February 2009



- *A Profoundly Fruitful Year for IRR/TV in 2008*
- *IRR/TV Targets More Russian Mega-Cities in 2009*
- *Church Ministry in Russia Curtailed Amidst New Restrictions*



We Launch Out in 2009 With Thanksgiving and Praise

The new year has begun. You are holding the first issue of Russia & Asia Report in 2009.

We want to take you back to the events of the past year reflecting on the marvelous things that God has done at IRR/TV. And you have been a big part of it.

By way of photos we will visit five unforgettable city campaigns in Israel: in the Hebrew language in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and all of northern Israel, in Russian all of Israel and in Arabic throughout all Israel, the Westbank and the hotspot of unrest, in Gaza.

We had the privilege of being part of God's kingdom work in five mega-city campaigns in Russia and three in Central Asia. All together 10 million people

were reached with the Gospel.

Who could've foreseen that we were able to hold city campaigns in the city of King David and in the Galilee region!

Challenging evangelistic outreach campaigns were held in politically sensitive Islamic countries—neighboring Taliban controlled areas.

Millions more were reached by satellite broadcasts in Arabic, Turkish, Persian and Chinese languages.

We were involved with training hundreds of Church leaders partnering with Bill Hybels in Global Leadership Summits.

During 2008 we saw "storm clouds" gathering over the harvest fields of Central Asia and Russia. We heeded their

call to "come!" from the Far East and Asia. There is so much to be thankful for to God and to our partners in missions.

The purpose of these mega-city campaigns is to reach as many people as possible with the message of Jesus and what good He has done in the lives of people who have turned to faith in Him, and that He wants to do the same for each and every person.

And so it is in 2009. We ask for your prayers. Please join us this year to take the Gospel to those who have not heard.

Thank you ever so much for your partnership in missions in 2008.

By the way, that New Year's resolution...

Multitudes of polls have been taken of the ten most popular New Year's resolutions. Their popularity breaks down in the following order:

- 1) Spend more time with family and friends*
- 2) Workout/get into shape*
- 3) Lose weight*
- 4) Quit smoking*
- 5) Enjoy life more*
- 6) Quit drinking*
- 7) Be free of debt*
- 8) Learn something new*
- 9) Help others*
- 10) Put my life in order*

Each one of us will no doubt find similar goals and promises in our own list of resolutions. It's a shame though that

many good intentions are soon forgotten and unfulfilled.

Do doubt some promises acted upon do bring about small improvements to some areas of our life. But many times small adjustments will not produce the result we are looking for. Something more radical needs to happen.

The prayer of the Psalmist in Psalm 51:12 is: "Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me."

He desired more than just a small adjustment for his life. He wanted to be totally restored, not just a superficially patched up old self, but restored totally anew, so he can be one with God.

He wanted that everything in his life would be renewed.

Here are three steps for a new start:

1) Make an appointment for a heavenly heart transplant. Ask God to: "Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me."

2) Make time for a "blood transfusion" every day. The "blood" of Jesus is present in everything you do. Your life needs a "blood transfusion" each day. It is a daily refreshing touch from Him.

3) Meet with other "heart transplant patients". We cannot face problems and the stress of life by ourselves. We are not strong enough to make it through life completely on our own.

New Year's resolutions cannot give results that a clean new heart will.

God bless you in the new year,

Hannu Haukka



Intensive Media Training for Russian Churches

Russian congregations have been involved in media ministry for the past 10 years. IRR/TV hosted the first Christian media training conference in Moscow back in 1997. Many courses for radio and TV program producers have been offered since. IRR/TV has been responsible for setting up and financing these training conferences and media schools. Three thousand workers have been trained at these courses. This past November, IRR/TV hosted a special week-long continuing education course for training media missions workers.

Twenty-two students from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus participated in the training course. Some participants were beginners while others had up to eight years of experience.

The head teacher, Truett, feels it is his calling to bring Christian media workers level of competence up to that of professionals.

Truett speaks highly of his stu-

dents, saying that they understand the basics quite well. "They are creative and gifted, and it was easy working with them."

Truett believes that congregations have no choice but to produce the highest possible quality of media programming: "Competition is tough; media savvy people have high expectations. God is the Father

of all creativity, and it's our responsibility is to develop our creativity and to be an example to the world around us in how to use the media."

Special emphasis was put on multi-camera production techniques, performing in front of the camera, interview techniques, the art of directing and production of talk shows.

New Restrictions Bog Down Ministry in Russia

"Methods used today are not the same as in the Soviet era, when Christians were dragged off to prison camps. Now the preferred method of persecution is bureaucratic bullying. This really renders congregations into government submission. We are powerless to defend ourselves," says Baptist Pastor Vladimir Bojev.

Just 500 kilometers (300 miles) southeast of Moscow in the city of Lipetsk, two Baptist churches have had their license to operate revoked. A third Baptist church has lost the facility they had rented as their church building.

"This sort of thing hasn't happened in Lipetsk in 20 years," Pastor Vladimir Bojev.

Kazakhstan's New Law of Religion

Kazakhstan's lower parliament passed a new law of Religion in November 2008. This law severely restricts activities of religious groups in the country. One major problem with the new law is that it can be interpreted for dubious intentions.

The law demands the arrest of any church leader where an under-aged minor has atten-

ded their service without the consent of both parents.

"This means that if a young person happens to walk by a mosque and enters the building during prayer time, the Imam could be arrested", according to Father Vsevolod, Chaplain of the Department of External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church. This applies to Christian churches and pastors as well. Vsevolod added that he was a believer in Jesus at the age of 13, against the will of his parents.

Vsevolod thinks that the new law is the result of fear on the part of government officials, that radical religious groups will form and threaten state security.

source: assistnews.net



Old times—During the era of the Soviet Union, congregations were overtly persecuted. The KGB kept an eye on religious activity; often disrupting services, throwing church leaders into prison and confiscating Christian literature. This photo is not from the Soviet times, but rather from Voronezh in 2003.

IRR/TV Targets More Mega-Cities in Russia



Saratov is a city of a million people in southern Russia. They are prayerfully waiting for a city evangelism campaign.



Five Mega-City Media Evangelism Campaigns took place in Russia in the Autumn of 2008. IRR/TV worked closely with evangelical churches in all cities involved. More campaigns are planned for 2009. Pastors of cities involved in the upcoming campaigns visited the city of Astrakhan on the shores of the Caspian Sea, where they saw first hand how the campaign was orchestrated. The pastors shared what they saw during their visit.

Pastor Juri from Volgograd:

“Astrakhan is the most southerly city in the Russian Federation home to approximately 100 different nationalities. The city is considered the southern gateway to Russia.

Some of the Pastors attending the Global Leadership Summit in Volgograd made a special trip to Astrakhan in order to better understand the concept of a mega-city evangelism campaign. As soon as we drove into the city, we were immediately met by a giant campaign billboard with an evangelistic message, right next to a police check-point. We saw many campaign ads all over the city.”

Mihail Midianik from Rjazan:

“I am so glad to see this evangelism campaign in action with my own eyes. God willing, we will hold a similar campaign in Rjazan.

I walked into the call center. It was amazing to hear the conversations between the callers and the counselors. As people called in and requested literature, volunteers delivered the material and visited people eagerly waiting for them. Since I’ve returned home I heard that the call

center has been receiving calls even after the media presence of the campaign ended because their phone number is printed in tens of thousands of books distributed citywide.

It was quite an experience to stand just below the giant billboards of the campaign ad. All kinds of sinful ads are constantly on display that promote immorality and everything else. Why don’t we do more advertising of Christian values? I love to see happy, joyous, faces with messages like: “God gave me real purpose in my life!” My spirit soars when Biblical values are advertised so boldly.

People are looking for change when their spirit is broken. This is so timely. Praise God; this city campaign concept is a revolutionary way of reaching out to people, well planned and tested in practice.”

Pastor Dmitri from Lipetsk:

“I came here because I heard that churches working together can maximize their involvement and influence in society. I wanted to see this in action. Now we have seen just how truly fruitful their partnership has been. We’ve seen how the call center works and how effective the

evangelistic ads are. Everything worked like it should.

Churches in many places are not so involved in social services. We should not ignore the social problems that people face. For the past year now, I have been involved with abandoned children; not those who are living on the street, but those that live in orphanages. We have a real problem in Russia, with parents abandoning their children because they do not care or love them.”

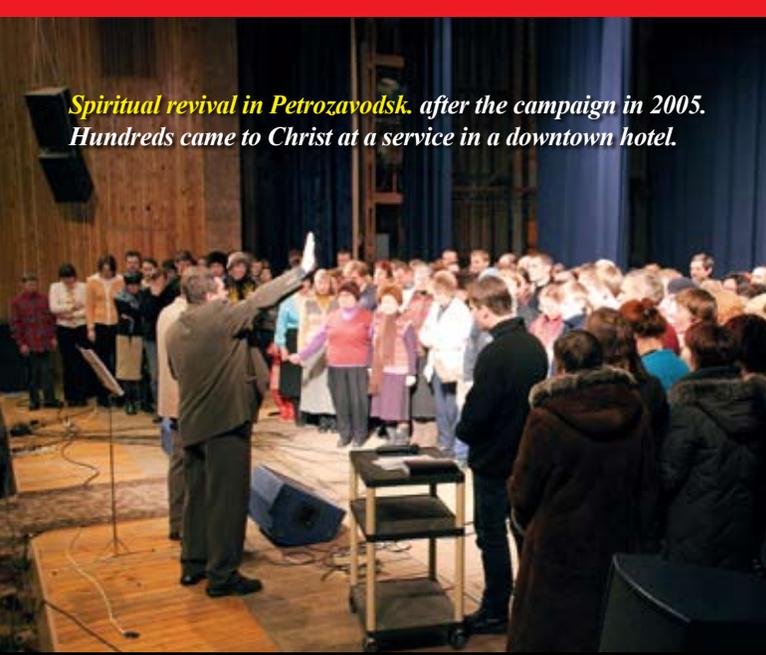
Astrakhan coordinator/Pastor Aleksei Kruglov explains how the campaign is going:

“The response from the people has been excellent. This campaign has brought all the pastors together and we are so happy that this evangelism project has happened in our city. Most of the churches rallied behind this great outreach. It is a great blessing for us.

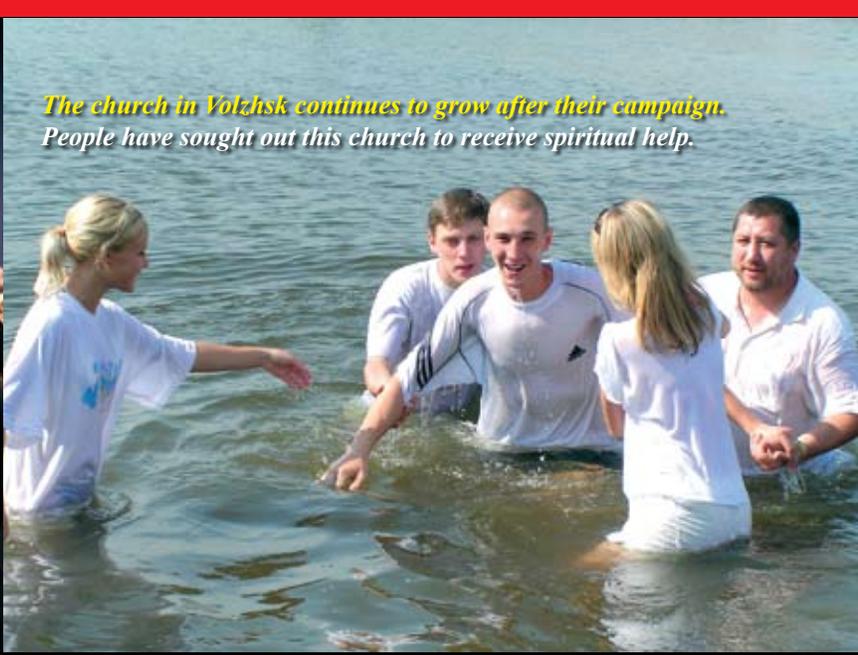
When people get tired from working so hard, others fill in for them. We have 4 to 5 people answering the calls around the clock. The call center and the campaign books are delivered continuously to the homes of people waiting for them.

Interviewer: Andrei Motinga

Spiritual revival in Petrozavodsk, after the campaign in 2005. Hundreds came to Christ at a service in a downtown hotel.



The church in Volzhsk continues to grow after their campaign. People have sought out this church to receive spiritual help.



Harvest Continues Long After Media Campaigns End

Mega-City Evangelism Campaigns are currently the most effective tool for any congregation's outreach program. The campaigns are held for 30 days at a time. Over the past five years, IRR/TV has been coordinating these kinds of campaigns all across the former Soviet Union. Over a million evangelistic campaign books have been printed and distributed to people who requested them. Over 100 thousand phone calls have been logged. These campaigns do not really end after 30 days, but continue to help churches to reach out to people in a variety of ways.

The advertised phone number used during the 2006 Samara evangelism campaign is still in use to this day. The Samara campaign coordinator Dmitri Gerasimov gives us some examples of response since the campaign ended.

Igor, 26 years.

Igor is married with one child. He had been plagued by drug addiction for five years. Despite his efforts to quit drugs, he was unable to do it on his own and his marriage was on the rocks. Igor called the help line and was guided to a rehab house. He was finally able to kick this demon. Peace and joy have returned to his family. As a free man with a new life, Igor is attending church on a regular basis.

Tatjana, 49 years.

Tatjana is a single parent and physically challenged. She called our help line, confessing that she cannot control her abusive drinking habit. She was worried about her 13 year-old son's future if she continues to succumb to alcohol. Our phone counselor found help for her. Today she is free from the grip of alcoholism and stays in touch regularly. Her son attends our youth group meetings at church.

Olga, 26 years.

Olga was in a disastrous second marriage. She began attending our ladies' night services. She attended several times and began learning about the role of spouses in marriage and how to build a relationship. Her family was healed. Olga continues to attend the ladies functions at our church.

Rustem, 33 years.

Rustem was an alcoholic Muslim who continually experimented with all kinds of intoxicating substances; trying to find a purpose in life. In the end he gave into his habits and decided that he will never live a normal life. Doctors tried to help him with no results.

His mother, also a Muslim, called our help line and was able to arrange a meeting between one of our counselors and Rustem. After a promising response to counseling, he relapsed and ended up in a street fight,

receiving injuries to his face.

Finally, one day he came to one of our meetings and literally ran to the front when the altar call was made. He is currently in a rehabilitation home. His mother also came to Christ and actively attends church services.

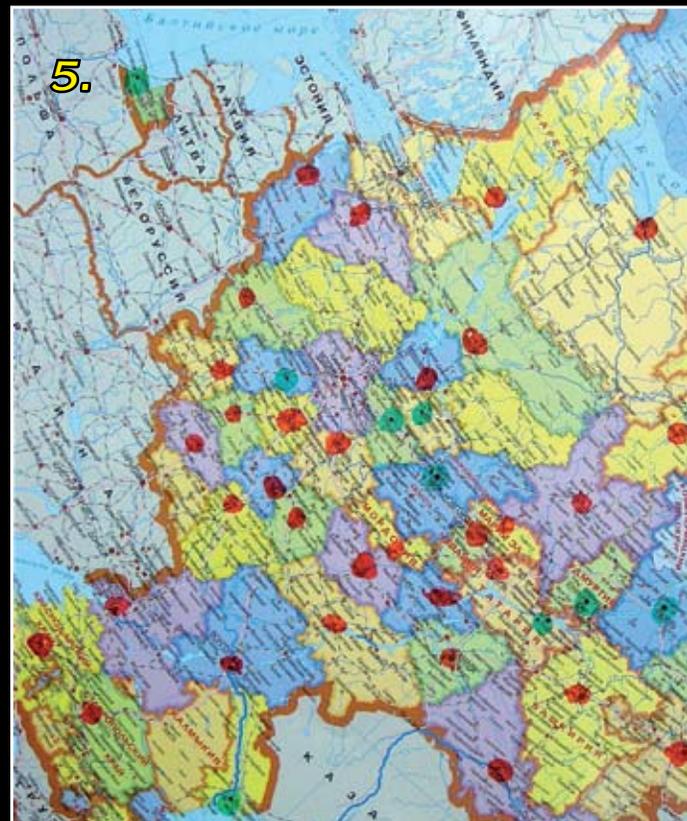
Marsel, 25 years.

Marsel is married and has two children. His mother called our counseling center, worried about him because he was drinking beer during work and more at home in the evenings. Although he denied his alcoholic condition, he agreed to meet with one of our pastors. His mother, stepfather and wife accompanied him. They turned out to be Muslims and made it clear that they did not want to talk about religious matters. Still, the pastor expressed his desire to help Marsel; if he truly wanted to be helped.

Their meeting resulted in a warm relationship. He admitted that he had made many mistakes. As they talked, Marsel asked for prayer. He said that he had felt something extraordinary happen during prayer with the Pastor. In the end, his mother accepted a New Testament as well as a specially produced evangelistic DVD. Later, the mother called our counseling center to tell us that her son has changed and quit drinking beer completely. We continue to stay in touch with the family.

Hannu Haukka

Highlights in Ministry in



2008



1. OSH Campaign

A city campaign was held in Osh, the second largest city of Kyrgyzstan. Thousands of Muslims called the help line and received an evangelistic book and life-changing testimonies on DVD.

2. DZHALAL-ABAD CAMPAIGN

The evangelistic campaign message appeared simultaneously all over Dzhahal-Abad; using billboards, television and radio programs, as well as daily newspapers. A campaign was also held in the Islamic town of Kyzyl-Kija in October.

3. UZBEKISTAN CAMPAIGN

Eight million Uzbeks in the Fergana Valley of Uzbekistan saw and heard the Gospel message via the only TV station there, located on the Kyrgyzstan side of the border at the crest of a mountain. Uzbekistan is a country closed to the Gospel.

4. TATARSTAN CAMPAIGN

In May, a very successful mega-city campaign was held in the Central Asian Republic of Tatarstan. More young people were reached by this campaign than any of the other campaigns we have done so far. We were pleasantly surprised by the volume of calls from the Islamic Tatars.

5. PLANNING NEW CAMPAIGNS

Leaders of Russia's largest evangelical unions met with IRR/TV missions directors, planning up to 30 city campaigns in 2009 if the political climate in Russia allows it. See map.

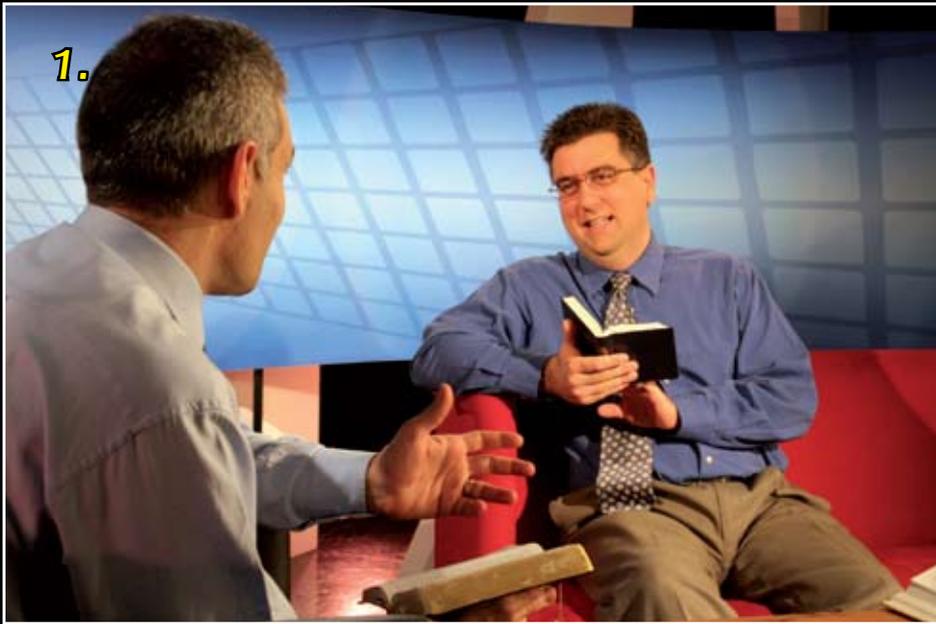
6. FOUR AUTUMN CAMPAIGNS

Campaigns held in Novosibirsk, Astrakhan, Kaluga and Kaliningrad reached over a million Russians. 12,000 families responded and contacted our counseling centers by phone.

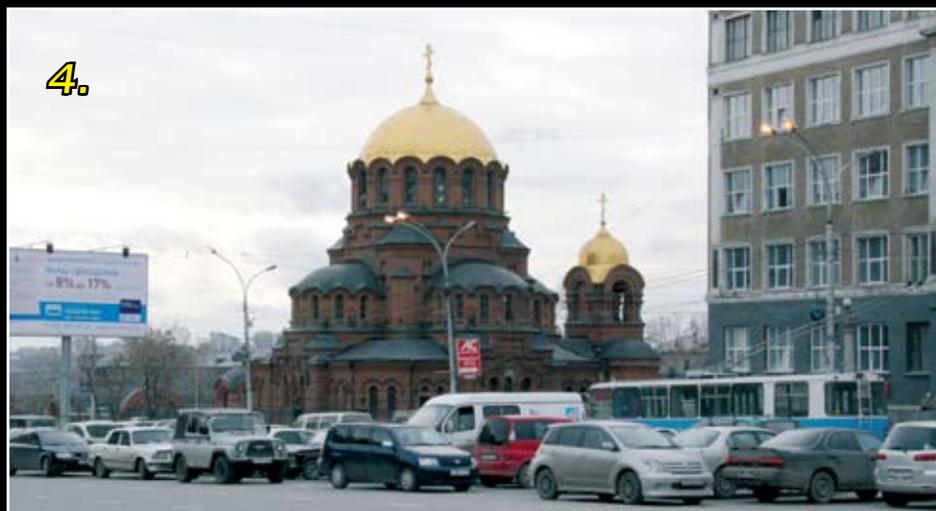
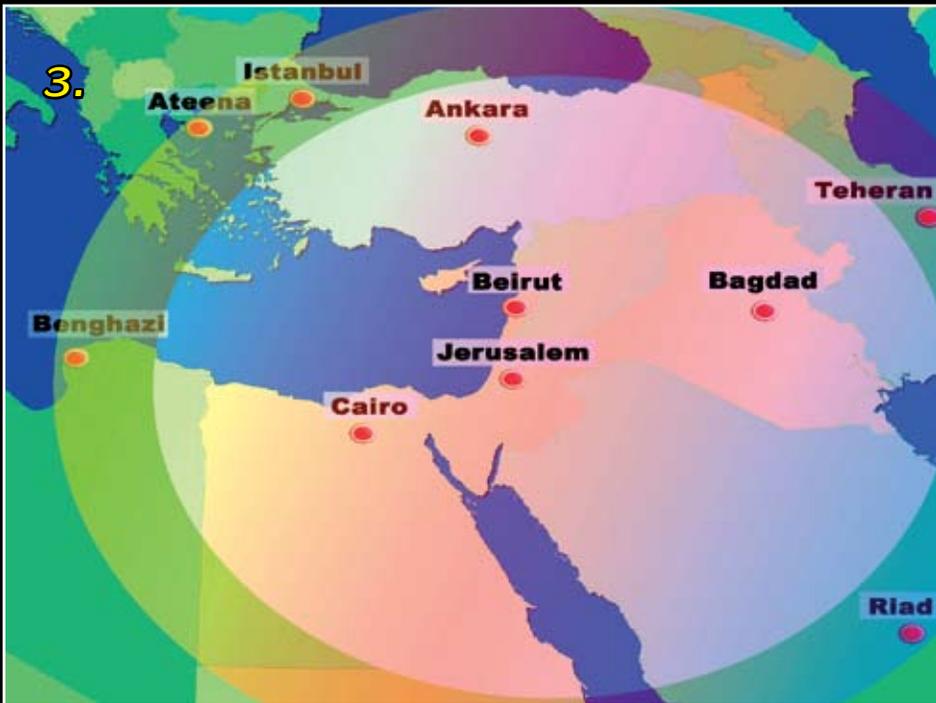
ONE MILLION CAMPAIGN BOOKS

21 city campaigns have been held from 2003–2008 in Russia, Ukraine, and Central Asia. One million campaign books have been printed and distributed. An estimated 40 million people have been reached by special TV programs produced for the campaigns.

IRR/TV's media ministry in 2008—a blessed year



Over 50 Farsi language TV programs and more than 200 Arabic language TV programs were produced at the IRR/TV ministry center in Finland.





1. TV PROGRAMS TO IRAN

In 2008 IRR/TV continued to broadcast Persian language TV programming into Iran. According to an Iranian judge at the sentencing of a Christian: 8 million people have turned to faith in Christ in that country. TV programs have been a big influence in this spiritual revival in Iran.

2. TV PROGRAMS TO ARAB COUNTRIES

IRR/TV produced over 200 TV programs in Arabic and broadcast them to a potential audience of 100 million people throughout the Middle East. Over 1.5 million visits were recorded on our Arabic outreach web pages.

3. CHALLENGE OF ISLAM

The increase in Islamic extremism has the world's attention. IRR/TV's satellite broadcasts can be seen in the Middle East from Turkey to Sudan and from Morocco to Iran.

4. RUSSIA IS CLOSING

The Evangelical churches of Russia felt increased persecution in 2008. Russia's Minister of Justice posted a list of 56 religious organizations that are now black-listed and threatened to be closed down. Building permits and rental facilities for churches are no longer allowed. The Orthodox Church is trying to stigmatize Evangelical church organizations as heretics spreading false doctrine. In the photo the "anti-heretic center" in Novosibirsk.



5. CENTRAL ASIA IS CLOSING

80 million people live in Central Asia. IRR/TV worked with local churches in 5 city campaigns: Almaty, Kazakhstan in 2006, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan in 2007, and in other Kyrgyz cities of Osh, Dzhahal-Abad and Kyzyl-Kija in 2008.

We were able to reach a potential audience of 20 million through TV broadcasts. We received almost 10 thousand phone calls, mainly from Muslims. Both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have passed laws threatening to close down those countries to evangelistic activity at the beginning of 2009.



IRR/TV's media ministry in 2008—a blessed year

1. SUPPORT FOR RUSSIAN PASTORS

In November, the Global Leadership Summit held for Russian pastors in Volgograd, Russia was jeopardized by state security officers who forced the churches out of their rented facilities. Fast acting organizers were able to re-locate the summit near-by. Many conferences have been held since.



2. TRAINING MISSIONS WORKERS IN CENTRAL ASIA

IRR/TV hosted a leadership conference in Almaty. Attendees came from cities in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan as well as Kazakhstan. Kazakhstani officials tried, but failed, to block the conference from taking place.



3. AID TO CHILDREN IN CENTRAL ASIA

IRR/TV feeds 30 children every day at the "Good Family" Christian children's home in Kyrgyzstan. It is the only Christian children's home on the beautiful shores of Lake Issyk Kul.



4. EMERGENCY AID TO VICTIMS OF EARTHQUAKES

IRR/TV sent emergency aid to residents of earthquake shaken Nurin, Kyrgyzstan in October. 75 deaths and 90 injuries were blamed on the earthquake. 31 children were among the dead. About 700 people were in need of aid before the winter snows began.



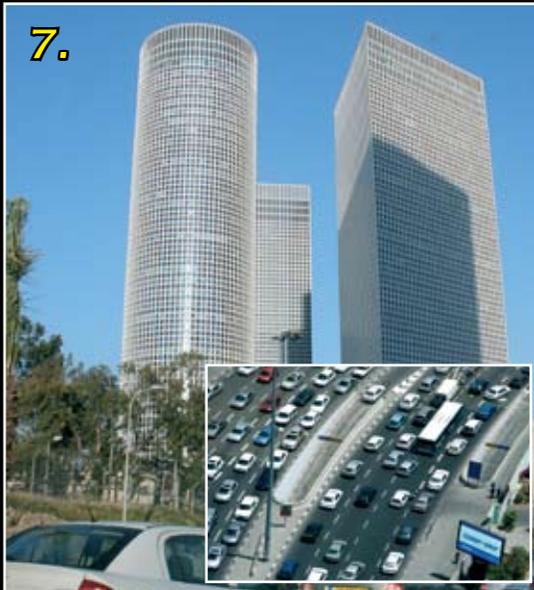
5. MIRACLE OF LOVE FOR CHILDREN IN PRISON CAMPS

IRR/TV's annual Christmas drive to help 18 thousand Russian children that are incarcerated in 62 prison camps. Another (estimated) 3 million children living on the streets often end up in prison. Our city campaigns direct the Gospel message at homes and families, which are falling apart at a record pace in Russia. Saratov leads the country in divorce rate. Divorce rates exceeded marriages by 10% in 2008.





7.



6. CITY CAMPAIGN IN JERUSALEM
 In May, IRR/TV partnered with local Messianic Jews to hold a Hebrew language evangelism campaign in Jerusalem. 180 city buses as well as giant billboards carried the campaign ads. 1600 Jews called the call center, and 1000 evangelistic books were distributed. It was phenomenal response considering they were staunch Orthodox Jews living in Jerusalem.

7. CITY CAMPAIGN IN TEL AVIV
 Working together with the Jews for Jesus organization on the evangelistic campaign in Tel Aviv, our call center received 10 thousand calls. Many were from angry Jews agitated by the clear message of the ads in which Jesus was proclaimed as the Messiah publicly for the first time. There has never been such a campaign held in Israel.

Another campaign was held this Fall in northern Israel. The missions team called 21 thousand homes to make contact with people. 5,800 Hebrew speaking Jews are registered for follow-up ministry.



8.

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9.



8. CAMPAIGN TO REACH ISRAEL'S RUSSIAN JEWS

A campaign reaching Israel's 1.5 million Russian Jews was held in April. Ads were placed in national newspapers that generated 4000 orders for a special evangelistic DVD. All ordered DVD's have been distributed.

9. YAD L'ACHIM

Saul of Tarsus' "spirit of persecuti-on" lives on in Israel. Yad L'Achim (Big Brother), is a Jewish extremist organization bent on driving out all missionaries from Israel and closing down Messianic churches. Several of our campaign ads on city buses in Tel Aviv were vandalized by members of such groups.



10. CAMPAIGN IN GAZA AND WEST BANK

IRR/TV's Arabic campaign covered Gaza and the West Bank, where 3.5 million Palestinians live. Calls and requests came from places like the Jenin refugee camp and from Tulka-rem, a Hamas stronghold.





ISRAEL'S ARAB CAMPAIGN

The Arabic campaign held in July reached every corner of the Holy Land. 4,000 people called the two call centers in Haifa and Bethlehem. 70 to 80% were Muslim and 8% Druse, a very tightly knit and closed group of people. The message was seen and heard on 8 local TV channels and 8 radio stations as well as on hundreds of ads on huge billboards, bus ads and newspapers all over Israel.

At least 150 Arabs gave their life to Christ at two concerts, held in Bethlehem and Haifa.

HOLY LAND CAMPAIGNS IN A NUTSHELL

Altogether the call centers logged over 20 thousand contacts with Jews, Arabs and Druse in response to the proclamation of the Gospel during the Israel campaigns in 2008. Over 15 thousand campaign books and DVDs were requested and delivered. Local congregations recorded over 9 thousand names of people who requested follow-up. The churches continue to minister to these people.

TV PROGRAMS TO CHINA

IRR/TV partnered in producing a 26-episode TV series in the Chinese (Mandarin) language. This talk show format series deals with moral values in modern China. The series aired over satellite channels covering all of China, with a potential viewing audience of 1.3 billion people! The Chinese language website for the series received 1.5 million visits during a 6-month period in 2008.

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