

## News and Current Events :: Russian Evangelicals Beaten, Jailed

**Russian Evangelicals Beaten, Jailed - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2005/6/12 19:09**

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Dozens of evangelical believers stood stunned on Tverskaya Ploshchad across from City Hall, their protest banners lying in police vans, their pastor being carted off to a holding cell.

"This time it was pretty," Yelena Purshaga said last Thursday. Her husband, Alexander Purshaga, is the pastor of the Emmanuel church. "You should have seen the way it was yesterday," she said on June 2.

The church had sought -- and thought it received -- permission to hold a weeklong demonstration across from City Hall over the loss of land that it had hoped to use to build a house of worship.

But on May 30 and June 1, police and OMON special forces violently broke up the demonstrations, throwing women and children to the ground and swearing at them, parishioners said. One of them, Marina Karandayeva, raised her sleeve to show an ugly ring of bruises around her arm.

For Emmanuel's believers, it was the latest indignity in a decade-long struggle to build a church for their 1,000-member Moscow parish. For some religious liberty organizations, it was further evidence of a mounting, and in some cases violent, trend to persecute Protestant religious minorities.