

Good News: Successful „Long Night of Science“

Around 7000 scientists, staff and students presented over a thousand projects at the 5th “Long Night of Science” on June 11th. All over Berlin, from Adlershof to Dahlem there were lectures, experiments and more. Above all, the “Long Night” revealed one thing: Berlin is an excellent location for science. High-level training and research are taking place and are contributing to Berlin’s future: They increase the attractiveness of the city and provide jobs. It is our prayer that even more ways to use this pool of knowledge can be found and that this will improve the economic situation in Berlin.

Senator for Science and Culture

The Berliner Zeitung reported recently: „Whoever wants to see something good in Thomas Flierl praises his intellectuality—his interest in debates, round-table discussions, symposia, workshops, and discussions. In Berlin, the Senator for Science and Culture (PDS) is part of the executive branch according to the constitution, but in reality he perceives himself and his office as being in constant discourse—actually a good thing. Unfortunately, occasionally some decisions must be made....”

Mr. Flierl, born in 1957, is responsible for many decisions that are currently affecting Berlin: The concept of a memorial to the Berlin wall, tuition at the universities, the financial reorganization of the university hospitals...

Mr. Flierl has proposed forming about two dozen new committees to work on eliminating the plight of the Charité. He is hesitant about students having to participate in paying for their education. He is working on a concept for a memorial to the Berlin wall for the year 2011 and speaks of “de-emotionalizing and being objective”.

There is no doubt that it is hard to shape cultural and scientific politics to please everyone in a city with a debt of 60 billion Euros. Cuts in spending in these areas are easier to make than in other areas that are more important. Part of the potential of Berlin is to give new impulses. For this reason, these two areas of responsibility of Mr. Flierl have key functions within our city.

Prayer

- **Pray that Senator Flierl will come in contact with Christianity**
- **Pray for clear decisions that encourage the present potential in culture and science**

- **Pray for constructive solutions within the area of politics relating to culture which are financially sound and realizable and also which do not prohibit the spread of the Gospel**

Academy of Arts back on the Pariser Platz

The President of the academy, Adolf Muschg, wrote about the opening: “Art is not luxury, but rather food. Art reminds us of the freedom from necessity of true life....But art compels us—it demands communication, accountability, an open house.” He alluded to the fact that the Academy is a link between the Brandenburger Tor and the Mahnmal (Holocaust memorial).

One of the most distinguished Presidents of the Academy was Max Liebermann (beginning in 1920). He made the Academy into a place for debate about the Modern Arts. The Modern turned away from the ideal of “classical art” in antiquity. In Modern Art, it is important to authentically express the experiences of mankind in a deeply changing world.

The Nazis were against Modern Art and called it “depraved”. Their “art” was idealized and ideological. Max Liebermann, who was Jewish, left the Academy with a bitter heart on May 7th, 1933, to avoid a planned expulsion. Neither the city nor the Academy honoured him upon his death on Feb. 8, 1935.

Prayer

- **Pray that the Academy will address the issues of questions about the meaning of life and God’s reality**
- **Pray that the Academy will never again be molded by and express solidarity with unjust and inhuman authorities (as in 1933)**
- **Pray that staff and artists will experience God**

Exhibition: The new Hebrews

The interesting exhibition “100 Years of Art in Israel” can be seen until September 5th, 2005 in the Martin-Gropius Bau. Different influences on Israeli identity can be viewed in 14 theme rooms. Zionism plays as much a role here as does the remembrance of the Shoah (Holocaust).

The most prominent exhibit is a piece of a temple scroll over 2000 years old, found in 1946 in Qumran near the Dead Sea. The scroll indicates the historical roots of modern Israel. This scroll has never been shown in Europe before.

Prayer:

- **Pray that many people will acquire a new understanding of modern-day Israel through this exhibition**
- **Pray that the exhibition will enhance relations between Germans and Israelis**
- **Pray that people will learn more about the history of Israel and the God of Israel**

Two new well-known artists in Berlin

Donata and Wim Wenders have moved to Berlin. She is a well-known photographer, and he is the director of films such as “Der Himmel über Berlin”. Both use their careers to deal with the subject of faith. It will be interesting to see what impulses they will give the film and media industries in Berlin. Donata currently has an exhibition at the Galerie c/o Berlin (Linienstraße 144) with poetic and profound pictures to the topic of “Born in the sixties” (June 11-July 31, 2005). In response to the question of a journalist whether the love of God hadn’t faded in view of the chaos of our days, Wim Wenders replied: “On the contrary. Nothing else has been able to withstand chaos, and the more chaotic and incomprehensible the world is, the more powerful God and His mission for us seem to be to me.

Prayer

- **Pray for God’s blessing for Wim Wenders and his wife**
- **Pray that they and other artists can give impulses about questions of faith**
- **Pray that they will find connections to Christians in Berlin**

Setting of the Course for the Election

Berlin is the capital city—for this reason we also pray for national politics. Decisions are already being made as to the composition of the new federal government in the case that federal elections are held early. The parties are writing their party tickets and are thus already determining who even has a chance to become a Member of Parliament. Campaign issues and political agendas are already being discussed within the parties.

We pray for a change in politics—specifically for a return to Christian values and a noticeable increase in respect for God’s commandments in all parties. We desire that the politicians will decisively and clearly acknowledge their responsibility “to God and to mankind”, to which they are bound by the constitution.

Prayer:

- **Pray that those who desire God’s values will be placed on the most promising candidate lists**
- **Pray that more Christians will become involved in politics**
- **Pray that Christian values will take precedence on the political agendas**

Crime in Berlin

Even though crime went down a bit in the capital city in the year 2004, there is still a lot that needs to be changed. Berlin continues to have the highest crime rate in Germany. Drug-related crime rose 3% in 2004. Trafficking with LSD rose 33 percent, private cultivation of drugs, for instance cannabis, rose 34%. The police have classified 19 areas as “crime-encumbered locations”, for instance the Breitscheidplatz or the Hasenheide. Police officers there are often confronted with drug-related crime and robbery. Prostitution also plays a major role. Police operations in these areas lead only to temporary change. As a rule, the criminal scene returns after only a short time. There is not enough personnel for long-term surveillance of trouble spots.

Chronic personnel deficits and a high rate of employee illness (15%) also prevail in the prisons. Prison staff can hardly keep up with the challenges of a growing number of inmates, which has grown 21% from 1996 to 2004. Currently Berlin has 5200 inmates, with numbers tending upwards. The prisons are chronically over-crowded; a new prison with places for 650 inmates is planned. The situation is a large burden for the financial budget of the city, but especially also for the inmates and the prison staff. [Source: Berliner Morgenpost from June 12, 2005]

Prayer

- **Pray that more Christians and churches will begin to pray for “crime-ridden areas” in their surroundings**
- **Pray for measures to be taken which will lead to a decline in crime**
- **Pray for the work of prison staff and counselors who work in a very stressful environment**

P.S.: Christians who want to pray regularly for the situation in Berlin’s prisons can contact the editorial staff. We will put you in touch with prison counsellors who desire prayer support.

Tip: www.planet-tegel.de informs about the situation of prison inmates in Berlin prisons.

Next mail in September

Our next prayer mail will be issued in September. We wish you some very blessed and relaxing summer weeks. Thank you for praying with us!

The editors