

## Good News

During the last months, many of our prayers have been answered: The Christopher Street Day declined in popularity in spite of the presence of prominent politicians. The Ministry of Finance is working hard on a new program that is designed to make the social services area more transparent and efficient.

Through evangelistic events such as “On the Move” in June or the activities of “Jews for Jesus” in August people have come to Christ and will now hopefully be integrated into existing Christian groups and churches.

## 700 Children’s Bibles for First Graders

A record number of 41,000 first graders started school in August. This is due in part to the fact that the age for entering the first grade has been moved forward by six months.

700 first graders in Pankow and Prenzlauer Berg received a Children’s Bible as a gift. This distribution was initiated by CDU Parliament member Günther Nooke. An insert pointed out the fact that the CDU considers it important that Biblical values be taught.

### Pray:

- **that the students’ parents will read the Bible to them, and that they will later read it for themselves**
- **that the Holy Spirit will open the hearts of the children and their parents for the Word of God**
- **that God will bless Mr. Nooke and his desire to represent Christians values in politics**

## Reform of the Berlin educational system

At the beginning of this new school year, several new laws concerning the educational system went into effect. For the most part, they concern the primary school system. Children will now enter the first grade at 5 ½ years of age; postponement because of delays in development is no longer possible. Developmentally challenged children and children with behavioral deficits will be placed in regular classes, with no extra help for the teachers. The decision about whether these children should be placed in a special school will not be made until two years later.

Because every school is now required to provide all-day care, many after-school day care programs have been moved to the primary schools. In many areas, extra rooms still need to be made ready for the care and feeding of the children.

The after-school day care workers are in some cases being integrated into the classrooms of grades 1-4. For

the fifth and sixth grades, science has been added to the curriculum. These are just a few of the changes.

The hope is that these changes will result in better academic performance and better individual care of the children. Unfortunately, however, the new measures must be at no added cost—the size of the classes will remain the same; no new rooms are available, nor is money being provided for the necessary materials. Many school directors were unable to go away on holiday during the summer break, because they had to oversee the renovation of their schools. The changes demand extra time and energy on the part of teachers, day-care workers and parents.

### Pray:

- **that the reforms will result in better situations for the students**
- **for the teachers - for their health, energy, and motivation for change**
- **that the relationships between parents, students and teachers will be characterized by respect**

## Christians in the Schools

Although schools are a „missions field at home”, many young Christians do not share this awareness. They are expected to be active in their churches rather than in their schools. During the last years, however, many student Bible groups have begun. There are approximately 20 student prayer or Bible groups in schools in Berlin.

These Bible groups are always initiated by students. Most groups meet one or more times a week for prayer or a short Bible study during a break or before school (!) or during a free hour. Some groups play a active role in student life. For instance, one such group had a booth during “project days”, another wrote an article for the school newspaper entitled, “What Christians think about death” following the death of a fellow student.

Christian students often experience opposition from fellow-students, teachers, or school directors. Posters are torn down, or not allowed at all, because the school directors are unsure of what kind of group it is.

Being a genuine Christian at school is a big challenge and a big opportunity. 100% of all youth go to school. How many of them go to church or Christian youth groups?

Together for Berlin supports the development of prayer groups in schools: [www.jede-schule.de](http://www.jede-schule.de)

On September 1<sup>st</sup>, all student Christian groups are meeting for “Prayer for the schools in Berlin”. On November 11<sup>th</sup>, the annual “Pray Day” for schools will be held: [www.prayday.de](http://www.prayday.de)

### Pray:

- **for Christian students - that they will meet one another, and then get together to pray for their schools (pray also for new Christian groups in the schools to be started)**
- **for Bible groups just getting started - for courage and patience in finding other Christians and getting the necessary authorization**

- for Bible groups already formed - that they will discover God's perspective for their schools and be motivated to work toward that end

### **Day of Prayer for the elections**

„CELEBRATE – PRAY – ACT“ – that was the motto of the Jesus Day on September 11, 2004 in Berlin. 40,000 participants attended and were encouraged to proclaim their faith, to praise God, and to pray specifically for our nation.

Now, a year later, days of prayer for our nation are once again being held in many places, including Berlin. Prayer is important for our country, especially in view of the fact that national elections will take place a week later!

The Leadership Team of the Jesus Day is asking for a special collection during these days of prayer to take care of the remaining 87,000 € deficit from the Jesus Day. The invitation for the Berlin Day of Prayer reads: "Praise and Worship, Prayer and Blessing in expectation, humility and unity, out of love for Germany! Sponsored by Jesus-Day together with Youth Prayer Concert and Together for Berlin" (see "dates" below)

#### **Pray:**

- that many will come together to pray on September 11th, and that many will also be praying continually for our country and the elections
- that God will answer our prayer for radical change in Germany
- for a significant reduction of the debt from the Jesus Day 2004

### **Ambivalent Mood for Change**

The liberal „Tagesspiegel“ made interesting observations about changes in public and publicized opinions in a commentary on August 13, 2005: "Topics such as welfare state, family, religion, education, and performance are no longer off-limits. The Pope is a German. Even in progressive circles, Christianity is being rediscovered. All political parties, even including the Greens and the PDS, are attesting to the value of the family...."

Germans are becoming more conservative middle-class, but they don't want to acknowledge that fact. Besides, the change is just beginning. The main current is still leftist, liberal, ecological. Someone who stands up for radical-conservative values – Christian dogmatic, against abortion, homosexual marriage or women's emancipation – doesn't have a chance in the near future. "

An odd chasm between openness for religion and faith on the one hand, and user-defined ethics beyond Biblical values on the other hand has been created! A pro-Christianity

mood is not to be seen as a change in the thinking about values. Prayer is still necessary so that the prevalent mood for change becomes a true turn-around to Biblical values and a living faith in Christ.

#### **Pray:**

- that pro-Christian tendencies will lead to a real examination of the claims of Christ
- that Christians will be helpful and credible partners and witnesses for those who are searching
- for true change of heart on the part of people of influence and citizens alike

### **Senator for Justice: Karin Schubert**

Karin Schubert, member of the SPD, was born on August 16, 1944 in Erfurt. She is married and has three children. After finishing her law degree, she worked as a judge in several different courts. From 1994 to 2002 she was the Minister for Justice in Saxony-Anhalt. Since January 18, 2002, she has been Mayor and Senator for Justice for the state of Berlin.

Dispensation of justice, criminal prosecution and execution of sentences are the responsibility of the federal states (exception: federal courts and the attorney general). The respective (state) Ministries of Justice are responsible for personnel and administrative duties as well as some other things. In Berlin, the Senate for Justice presides over the entire court system of the state of Berlin with the exception of the Labor Court and the Constitutional Court.

Ms. Schubert considers the following her main political emphasis: family law, equal status, criminal prevention, victim protection in criminal law, as well as the modernizing of the court system and organization.

Approximately 200 people work for the Senate for Justice. Some of these staff are judges and district attorneys, who contribute their experience in law and administration to the Ministry. At present, the Ministry is working on a justice reform.

#### **Pray:**

- for a successful judicial reform
- for just administration of justice and exposure of injustice
- for Ms. Schubert and her family

### **Dates**

- **Prayer for our Nation – a week before the elections: September 11th** 6-9 pm in the Gemeinde auf dem Weg, Babelsberger Str. 37, Berlin-Wilmersdorf – [www.gadw.org](http://www.gadw.org)
- **Dedication Service of the Christian Volunteer Agency of Together for Berlin:** Sunday, September 25<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm in the St-Pauls-Kirche, Pankstraße, Berlin-Wedding
- **Prayer and reconciliation conference Europe-Africa:** September 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> in the Gemeinde auf dem Weg, Babelsberger Str. 37, Berlin-Wilmersdorf. No further information available yet, please look up our homepage in a couple of days <http://www.gebet-fuer-berlin.de/html/aktuell.html>

Yes! Please forward our Berlin-Prayer-Mail to others who will be encouraged to pray for Berlin, Germany.

Yes, you may post it on your own lists and on your own websites. Please keep the GEBET FUER BERLIN contact information intact. Deal? Complete contact information on our website: [www.gebet-fuer-berlin.de](http://www.gebet-fuer-berlin.de) - Editor eMail: [redaktion@gebet-fuer-berlin.de](mailto:redaktion@gebet-fuer-berlin.de)

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