

Prayer for Berlin - March, 2006

Good News – Transforum

‘The whole gospel for the whole city’ was the topic of the second Transforum, this time with a larger number of international participants. A number of speakers told of their experiences in Berlin, Germany, England, Norway, the USA, and Switzerland. As they listened, the 150 participants began to realize that the penetration of large cities with the gospel is obviously on God’s ‘agenda’. It was repeatedly emphasized that words and deeds, evangelism and social action are all part of the proclamation of the gospel.

There were 14 workshops, among others ‘Multi-cultural churches and their impact on the city’, ‘Strategies and models for penetrating the city with prayer’, and ‘Strong families – strong churches – strong society’. Networks among the German cities represented and also within Europe were built at the conference through encounters between participants, united prayer and work. It will be interesting to see what God develops as a result.

Events Surrounding May 1st

In the last two years, we have seen the ritual of violent riots broken, and now in 2006, we want to protect that which has been reached, and even accomplish more. The ‘Myfest’ will take place again in Kreuzberg. Among other things, Christians will sponsor an Open-Air service. The preparations for the accompanying prayer events are already taking place. We will share more in next month’s prayer news.

Prayer

- *Pray for a peaceful April 30th and May 1st*
- *Pray for good conceptual planning for ‘Myfest’, the police operations, and the Christian events*
- *Pray that God’s peace will reach potentially violent people*

Problems of young emigrants

Since the riots in Paris, the circumstances of young emigrants including those in Berlin have become a concern. We can no longer ignore the fact that there are parallel societies and a tendency towards the development of ghettos in parts of Kreuzberg, Neukoelln, and Wedding. In these areas, there are schools in which there are only a few Germans or none at all. The numbers of young emigrants who are unable to qualify for vocational training positions or employment because of lack of education is dramatically high. Only slightly less than one third of young Turkish emigrants finish vocational training.

In Berlin there is a serious increase in violence and drug addiction among these youth. They gain prestige in the scene through a prison record. Money is obtained illegally, often through drug dealing.

Such young people with no prospect for the future are especially susceptible to Islamist and anti-Semitic ideologies. ‘Jew’ is already a swear-word among children fighting with one another. Since Arabic TV can be watched over satellite, many children in Berlin are growing up with unopposed hatred of Jews. There are Arabic TV programs for children in which Jews are called ‘monkeys’, ‘vermin’ and ‘pigs’ just as during the Nazi regime. In Neukoelln or Kreuzberg, Jews no longer dare wear a skullcap or a Star of David on the streets. They are berated, molested and even beaten. There is no solution to this problem in sight. Politicians are becoming increasingly aware of this problem, but they are often criticized, because their comments do not fit together with the picture of a peaceful multi-cultural society.

Prayer

- *Pray for an increased willingness among people of influence in society to face these problems*
- *Pray for effective ways of giving emigrants a socially acceptable perspective*
- *Pray for effective political measures to stop the anti-Semitic agitation of some Arabic TV networks*

ProChrist in Berlin

From March 18-26, the evangelistic campaign ProChrist 2006 will be broadcast all over Europe in more than 1200 locations. In Berlin there are at least 14 locations. Churches, alone or in cooperation with others, will host creative evenings for people to ‘doubt and be astounded’ (the motto in German: Zweifeln und Staunen). Each host location begins with a local program and then joins the satellite broadcast. Ulrich Parzany will be preaching. The goal is to reach those on the fringes of churches and secular people outside of churches.

Prayer

- *Pray for joy, credibility, and success among those inviting others*
- *Pray for persuasive messages and the creative elements*
- *Pray for clear and lasting decisions for Christ*

Berlin’s Scientific Potential

Dr. Manfred Gentz, vice president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Berlin, said recently: ‘Berlin’s outstanding resource is knowledge. Because the changes in Berlin are so extensive and the challenges so immense, products and solutions for tomorrow’s world are being worked on all over the city. Berlin’s think-tanks, laboratories for the future, and idea workshops are the most valuable potential for businesses, organizations, and politics.’

In Berlin there are 125,000 university students. Approximately 15% of those are foreign students. The finances of state-run universities are limited, but even so they are seeing success.

Berlin's Freie Universität (Free University) won the first round of the 'Excellence Competition' sponsored by the national government by entering an innovative concept and persuasive plans. Up to 21 million Euros per year are available to the winners.

Berlin supports co-operation between science and economy, especially in the research areas of biotechnology, medical technology, and also in many other areas.

Prof. Dr. Horst Albach (Humboldt-University) said some remarkable things on the occasion of the opening of the European School for Management and Technology (esmt) in February. When asked how European executives could be trained for the coming decades, Albach answered, 'Only through work and prayer'. The one without the other would not be enough. The concept must be 'ora et labora'.

He thus underscored the prayer request concerning Berlin's potential which we have often mentioned in our prayer mail.

Prayer

- *Thank God for the high quality of research and science in Berlin*
- *Pray for further the advancement and growth of research in Berlin for the good of mankind worldwide*
- *Pray for more jobs in this area*

Keeping On – Economy

The economic index shows that the state of business in Berlin companies is better than it has been at any time in the past ten years. The economic situation has stabilized - experts even expect a growth of one percent in 2006.

The motor behind this modest growth, according to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, is the Berlin industry. It is the backbone for the branch of provision of services, which has also shown increased growth. On the other hand, the situation in the building trade is not good. More than 30 percent of construction-related companies describe their situation as unsound and only 15 percent as good. People in Berlin continue to lose their jobs, but in the meantime, the loss can nearly completely be regained through newly-created jobs.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry is assuming that the positive tendency from the year 2005 is not just a flash in the pan, but rather 'the beginning of a positive development'. Whether this development can continue and even get stronger depends upon whether the construction of the airport in Berlin-Schoenefeld is approved or not. Many new jobs could be created and Berlin companies would receive new business.

The Soccer World Cup this coming summer also contributes to the boom. Many companies are hoping to increase their business as a result of this huge event. Approximately 10,000 jobs in Berlin and the surrounding areas could result. Most of these jobs are temporary, and yet even this can bring new life to the economy, relief for the social budget, and above all a help for the unemployed.

Prayer

- *Thank God for the positive development in 2005*
- *Pray for further growth in Berlin's economy, for new jobs, and that existing jobs can be maintained*
- *Pray that a court decision can soon be made for approval of the airport, so that companies can plan with certainty*

40 Days of Prayer and Fasting

As in 2004 and 2005, '40 Days of Prayer and Fasting for our Nation' will once again take place during the traditional time of fasting before Easter from March 7th to April 15th. In the last years, tens of thousands of Berliners took part. In the weeks before Easter, Christians want to pray not only for their personal renewal, but also for societal and spiritual change in Germany. 'Seeing our nation change' is this year's motto.

Prayer brochures with specific requests (in German only) can be obtained without cost from

dte@chrismedia24.de or www.down-to-earth.de

Teahouse at Drug- and Prostitution-Scene

The Christian organization Teen Challenge has been running a 'Tea House' on the so called drug and prostitution mile in Berlin's Kurfuerstenstrasse for the last 30 years. End of 2005 the owner needed the rooms for his own use and cancelled the rental agreement. In the meantime a new location near Berlin's most infamous drug- and prostitution scene is in sight - however, at considerably higher monthly rental costs.

Prayer

- *Thanks for the decades of ministry among drug addicts and prostitutes*
- *For ways to finance the new facilities*

Prayer Seminars

Members of the Prayer Forum offer seminars on topics such as 'Strategic Prayer Concepts for Cities/Districts', 'Praying on the Streets', etc. Contact the editors for more information.