



Prayer for Berlin

April, 2007

Good news

During the EU Summit and anniversary celebration on March 24-25 in Berlin, the city was peaceful and cheerful, nearly like the days during the Soccer World Cup in 2006. The heads of state from 27 countries, the many guests and journalists felt at home here in the "center" of Europe. This is not to be taken for granted, because massive protests had been announced by left-wing extremist groups – in accordance, many security forces were on hand. Let us thank God that everything went undisturbed and that the summit escaped attacks and riots. The only demonstration – (by the way, our prayer teams were on the scene) – ended non-violent in spite of radical vocabulary and had only 10% of the expected number of participants.

Although the "Berlin Document" that was produced at the Summit is only a low-content compromise without reference to the Christian roots of the continent, Chancellor Angela Merkel added in her widely-publicized speech at the ceremony, "For me, this understanding of mankind comes from the Judeo-Christian values in Europe". This very clear statement is an answer to prayer! Let us pray that our chancellor's influence will increase in this regard.

May 1, 2007

In the last three years, residents and the police have been successful in repelling the violence in Kreuzberg surrounding May 1st. This has been accompanied by intense prayer. This year there is a growing danger that left-wing extremist groups want to regain the streets for violence. The mobilization began unusually early. A alliance of about 20 groups has called for a "revolutionary May 1st demonstration", which is to begin at 6pm on the Luisenpark and go through the Kreuzberger district to the Spreewaldplatz.

The reason for the demonstration is the G-8 summit in June and the 20th anniversary of the "Kreuzberger uprising". On May 1, 1987 the first street violence was reported, and it has continued yearly ever since. Already mid-February, an "Initiative May 2007" called for unregistered demonstrations "against the cops in the district" on the occasion of the anniversary.

A demonstration on March 25, which was to be the prelude to May 1st, had only 500 peaceful participants, as opposed to the promised 10,000, and it stayed peaceful. The preparations for "Myfest", sponsored by residents in the last years as an alternative to the violence, are not going well. There were differences of opinion with the new district mayor. Nevertheless, the residents themselves are once again organizing the festival. As in previous years, there are also efforts to hold a noon prayer service on a stage. During the last years, prayer efforts among the local churches were increased. One request is that these prayer efforts will be increased and that churches will work together to take responsibility for their district. (Source: Berliner Zeitung, 08.03.2007)

A further problem is that many people attempt to honor dark spiritual forces through heathen rituals on this so-called "Walpurgis night" from April 20 to May 1st. It has often been violent in the past in the district Prenzlauer Berg during this night.

Prayer:

- **Pray that the peace of God will reign over the potentially violent people on April 30 and May**
- **Pray for successful preparation for the Myfest and the prayer service**
- **Pray for wisdom for the strategic planning of the police**
- **Pray that churches in the district will work together to find solutions for the district's problems**

Churches that are changing their surroundings

That Jesus Christ would be preached to people everywhere as the Savior and Lord of the world is the number 1 commission and prayer request – also for Christians and churches in Berlin. Every person, no matter how old or from what culture, should hear this message in a way that he can understand. Evangelism of all different sorts has priority!

In addition, evangelical Christians all over the world have re-discovered the breadth and fullness of the gospel in the last 30 years – It is first of all the saving message for individuals, but in addition, the gospel changes the social environment. The structures, cities and streets where we live need to be touched by God's love. They need to be changed and transformed, thus becoming better places. In the Sermon on the Mount it says, "You are the light of the world and the salt of the earth." (Matt. 5:13-14) In other words, the values of God's kingdom must be carried by us into society.

It is also clear that renewal must begin with the individual. The one who has experienced God's love can invest in his city through prayer, through his testimony and through practical means. In this way, he can help to change people, circumstances and the society in his city.

The local church can be a catalyst and pivotal point for such changes. This can be observed worldwide and also here in Berlin. It is good to belong to alive and growing churches. More and more Christians, men and women in leadership positions, are beginning to think about how their church can reach their district with the gospel, thus improving conditions for those living there. For instance, a church in Spandau is actively involved in the district conference and is taking care of children and youth from rough backgrounds. Their ministry is a testimony to the practical relevance of faith, even at the level of local politics. It is also an invitation to get to know the faith and the Lord behind the ministry.

In the prayer newsletter this year, we want to give impulses about how Christians can be light and salt. We want to pray that churches and many individuals within the churches can experience change in their hearts and in the circumstances in our city.

Prayer:

- **Pray for passion in the churches and among individual Christians and that Jesus will reach the hearts of people resulting in a changed climate in the city**
- **Pray for churches with relevant evangelism and influence in society and culture**
- **Pray for churches which are deeply founded in the gospel but nevertheless open for people and the city**

Many children not allowed to live

Last year, Berlin could have had 10,024 more children being born, but these babies were aborted. Every fourth child was not allowed to live. For the first time, a tabloid newspaper called a scandal, and reported about the negative psychological consequences of an abortion. Most abortions were not performed on women under the age of 18 as one might think. Most women who terminated their pregnancies were between 20 and 40 years of age—career women, housewives who already had children. Berlin has the most abortions in the nation, although the number of abortions decreased by 5.5% from the year 2005.

The real reason for these high numbers can only be surmised. Cardinal Georg Sterzinsky named social distress, inner helplessness and the high number of singles as possible causes. Churches are actively involved in helping women see other possibilities and are also helping in practical ways. The right-to-life group “Kaleb” is also active in Berlin.

From April 21-28, the ecumenical “Week for Life“ will be held again. It will be officially opened in Bremen and has as its motto “With children into the future”. Interested persons can read or download a brochure on the internet at <http://www.woche-fuer-das-leben.de> Churches and groups who are looking for ideas and support for this event can contact “Kaleb” at: info@kaleb.de.

Prayer

- **Pray that many women will decide to give their children life**
- **Pray for more positive support towards life at the information centers, especially for 20-40 year olds.**
- **Pray that society will begin to respect life**

Problems in the department of justice

The new Senator of Justice Gisela von der Aue recently let the long-time, knowledgeable State Secretary Flügge go. Allegedly this was in connection with the medicine and pharmacy affair of the Berlin prisons, but it is unclear whether it was a governmental and/or administrative mistake. If is, however, obvious, that a more careful monitoring and management by the politicians in charge is necessary. Recently a drunk driver who was on parole caused a fatal accident after a judge mistakenly released him following a parole violation. Was this just an error made by the judge or justice system that ended fatally for the victim? Nearly daily our newspapers report about violence in our schools, in trains or buses, on the way to school, outside of discos, and these acts of violence are getting more and more brutal. Neglected children are living in the midst of trash, a situation which is supposed to be prevented by the youth authorities, doctors, etc. What are the causes? A wrong political direction? Is our society encouraging crime with its liberal leanings? Where is the balance?

Questions that the politicians, judges, and administration officials would like to identify beforehand and find answers for. They need praying Christians to help them find the answers, whether they realize that or not. According to Isaiah 28:6, the Lord can be a “Spirit of justice to him who sits in judgment”.

Prayer:

- **Pray that nothing can hinder the legislative process or the application or interpretation of the law**
- **Pray for the Senator of Justice, judges, district attorneys and the police, that they would follow the law, be successful in their investigations and a good sense of proportion**
- **Pray for politicians on the federal and the state level, that they would promote effective and helpful reform measures**

Dates:

- April 15 7pm: Praise concert "Worship Experience" with Noel Richards & Band at C-Campus, Waidmannsluster Damm 7 c-e, 13507 Berlin (Reinickendorf)
- April 19: Prayer for Berlin - Foyer of the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Memorial-Church
- May 1: Probably Prayer service - see article above