

Prayer for Berlin

July and August, 2007

Good News

In February, following the opening of a large Scientology headquarters, we asked for prayer that Scientology would be once again watched by the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution. Now the Senator for the Interior, Mr. Körting, has done just that, saying that the activities of Scientology are not „in accordance with the Constitution”.

Good News

Donations for the ministry of Together for Berlin have greatly increased since May, which means that we have enough money to continue through the end of the year. Please continue to pray for the finances needed for the half-time position for Harald Sommerfeld, who had to be let go as of June 30th because of lack of finances.

Good News: Berlin – Manchester

In June nearly all of the editorial staff from our prayer newsletter were able to visit Manchester and to get to know the ministry of City Link. Intense prayer, deep spirituality, warm fellowship that doesn't demand that everyone be the same, as well as social work are all present in this ministry—that really impressed us. Everyone does his/her part in making the gospel known throughout the city.

We want to continue the relationship between the two cities and the two ministries and are pleased that the leaders of City Link and other Christians from Manchester will be coming to Transforum in February, 2008. We can learn much from these Christians in England.

www.citylinks.org.uk/

Churches reaching their neighborhoods

How are churches becoming relevant in their neighborhoods? How are they exerting a positive influence on people, circumstances and atmosphere in the city? The amount of love and creativity shown by churches and individuals in Berlin was evident at the last Leaders' Breakfast sponsored by Together for Berlin. During seven short

interviews, encouraging experiences were shared. For instance, one church in Spandau is participating in the local district conference and has become a reliable witness for relevant faith for residents and politicians. An Alpha Course in a prison has united workers from different churches. Other examples of prayer for various districts, evangelism on the streets, and ministry among disadvantaged groups made the variety of ministries evident.



All examples show that renewal begins with an individual. The one who has experienced God personally can then begin to invest himself in the city through prayer, through his testimony, and in various practical ways. In this way, he helps to bring about change in individuals, circumstances and even the general society in Berlin. The local church can be the catalyst and change agent for such changes. Together for

Berlin gathers these ideas and shares them with others.

Pray:

- For a noticeable growth in further Christian involvement in the city
- That creative love would begin to meet the needs of people in Berlin
- That many people would come to Christ as a result of these testimonies of the love of God

Popular vote: Ethics/Religion classes as electives

In spite of marked opposition of churches, Berlin's senate made a decision in the school year 2006/2007 to make ethics a required subject in the higher grades. Even children who want to take religion classes still have to attend ethics classes. "Thus the Senate is forcing something which it cannot do—a monopoly on the passing on of values in schools," says the recently formed group "Pro Reli". This initiative would like to see the

issue of ethics/religion as required subjects brought to a public vote. Then the students would be free to decide whether they want to take ethics or religion classes.

Because religion classes can now only be selected in addition to ethics classes, fewer students are enrolling in religion classes. By the end of November, 2007 20,000 signatures must be made on the petition in order to bring about a popular vote concerning this issue. Among the first to sign the petition were Bishop Wolfgang Huber and Cardinal Georg Sterzinsky. Forms for signatures can be ordered by calling (030) 604 050 00 or downloaded from the internet at: www.pro-reli.de. This homepage will also inform you of the progress of the number of signatures collected.

Pray

- **For enough support for this petition**
- **For the success of this initiative and for a change in thinking among politicians**
- **For more ideas on how we can confront this issue**

Keeping on: Protection from terrorism

We are thankful that the G8 summit was peaceful for the most part (apart from some outbreaks in Rostock) in spite of the real threat of violence. Let us continue to pray for protection for our city from violence and terror against individuals (for instance against foreigners) and property (setting cars on fire), as well as religiously motivated terrorism. According to press releases, there is an increased danger in Germany from suicide bombers.

Pray

- **For a decrease in violence against individuals**
- **For good political and social measures to fight against aggression**
- **That planned terror would be uncovered before it happens**

Alpha course behind bars

From February to March 2007 a pilot project of an Alpha Course was held in the prison in Charlottenburg. Those who held the course have deemed it a successful experiment. Eight volunteers from six different churches came together to hold the course in the prison, and an additional four people supported the effort in prayer. This

pilot project has been thoroughly evaluated to help plan for further such efforts in the future. One of those taking part in the course has since been released from prison, ten others are now participating in a Beta-course which meets every other week.

In the fall, two new Alpha-courses are planned, one in Charlottenburg, the other in Tegel. Preparations, including prayer, have already begun. Having enough people to lead the course is an important criteria for being able to hold the course, as well as an open door and practical concerns on the part of the prisons.

There is a need for five further people to help lead the course; at least three of these should be men. Those interested in helping lead the course or praying for it should get in touch with Brigitte Heinhold (brigitteheinhold@web.de). A further prayer request is that hardened structures in prisons which are a burden for those holding the courses could be changed.

Pray:

- **Thank God for the first successful Alpha-course behind bars and pray for the follow-up**
- **Pray that further courses will be successful and pray that the needed helpers could be found**
- **Pray that hardened structures in the prisons could be changed, and pray for openness to the gospel among prisoners and staff personnel**

Summer school vacation

Summer vacation time begins soon, and many Berliners will be taking vacations. We wish all of our readers a relaxing and strengthening vacation time.

Pray

- **That summer vacations will bring real relaxation and renewal**
- **That relationships among couples and families can be strengthened and deepened during vacations**

Looking ahead

On October 3rd, German re-unification day, there will be a praise and prayer day for our nation.