



# Prayer for Berlin

December, 2007

## Good News

It is obvious that God is answering our prayers for positive economic development in Berlin. The potential of the city is becoming more and more apparent. Before the fall of the Wall, Berlin had many heavily subsidized industries. After these subsidies ceased, many of these industries collapsed. For a long time, no one could see any possibilities to boost Berlin's industry.

Berlin's "old" industry declined, but at the same time, new branches emerged, which are being strongly supported by the Berlin Senate. Five fields of competence have been identified: biotechnology, medical technology, optical technology, IT and communications technology, and transportation systems. These developments brought a 12 percent increase in contracts during the first six months of 2007. Berlin is currently working on an image and marketing campaign designed to further the economic and tourist development of the city.

## Prayer

- **Thank God for the increasing positive development**
- **Pray for further upswing of industry**
- **Pray for good results from the image campaign**

## Widening gap between social classes

The current Berlin social atlas describes an alarming development. An article appeared in the TAGESSPIEGEL on Nov. 22, 2007 entitled "The Capital City with two speeds" („Hauptstadt der zwei Geschwindigkeiten“): „The gap between the wealthy areas of the city with a positive dynamic and the stagnating quarters with huge social problems is widening. The critical areas however are changing. Some of the traditionally „difficult“ districts in Kreuzberg are profiting from the slight upswing in the job market, but the situation in Wedding,

Neukölln, and Tiergarten is getting worse, in spite of a good economic situation.

This fluctuation is meaningful for the following reason: People move away from areas where no one wants to live as soon as they can. Those who are left are those who cannot afford a better situation. Many people in these areas are not ethnic Germans, and they earn on the average 20 percent less than Germans. For this reason, it's even harder for them to move to another more-preferred area.

Scholars have developed a "ranking" of Berlin quarters in this regard and others. Several quarters in Wedding are at the very bottom....only quarters in the preferred living areas of Berlin are developing well."

The report also mentions growing social problems in Marzahn-Hellersdorf.

## Prayer:

- **Pray for effective political policies to help problem districts**
- **Pray that the work of the „district managements“ would be effective and would grow**
- **Pray for churches and Christian initiatives which will "adopt" their districts in prayer and help projects**

## The construction of new religious centres

Berlin is increasingly becoming attractive for non-Christian religions. Immigrants are bringing their religions with them into the city. In addition to Islam, which is already prevalent, many Eastern religions are gaining ground. They often attempt to build a prominent visible presence through the construction of spectacular buildings, often with financial help from foreign countries.

This indicates not only a need on the part of adherents of these religions to have a place to worship—they also have set strategic goals in this regard. They desire to work from Berlin to reach other parts of Germany and even Europe, because what happens in Berlin often has a far-reaching impact. Other religions want to use this strategic potential. But we pray that all the gifts God has given this city would be used for HIS glory, so that His kingdom can be built here and spread from here. Please pray about the following three recent events concerning Eastern religions in Berlin.

## Prayer

Page 1 of 2

- **Pray that the truth of Jesus Christ will be sent out from our city to other parts of the world**
- **Pray that other religions will not be successful in strengthening their sphere of influence through their presence in Berlin**

### ***1. Hindu temple in the Hasenheide***

Construction of the second-largest Hindu temple in Europe began the beginning of November in Neukölln with a religious ground-breaking ceremony. Construction will be completed in three years. The building will hold 300 people. The district mayor of Neukölln, Heinz Buschkowsky (SPD), complete with red dot and wearing no shoes (thus symbolically endorsing Hinduism), banished evil spirits and placated 33 million gods in front of the 100 visitors at the opening ceremony.

The temple is not only to be a place of prayer, but also a centre for intercultural meetings and teaching. In an extension to the building, there is to be cultural centre for yoga, meditation, dance and music and a forum for health and economics.

#### **Prayer:**

- **Pray that politicians and others will differentiate more clearly between positive openness toward other religions and negative religious infiltration**
- **Pray that the Holy Spirit will increasingly lead people into fellowship with Christ, especially in Neukölln**

### ***2. Centre for Buddhism***

In addition to the Hindus, the Buddhists have begun a large project. The beginning of October, a large Centre for Buddhism was opened in Charlottenburg, which includes living units as well as rooms for meditation and teaching. A café serves as a meeting place, with the goal of actively spreading the teachings of Buddhism.

#### **Prayer:**

- **Pray that God will lead people who are searching for God into encounters with Christians**
- **Pray that those who are searching will not be lead astray**

### ***3. Yoga on the Teufelsberg***

Years ago, the Nazis planned to establish a university for the training of their leaders on the

Teufelsberg in the district of Charlottenburg. Construction was never finished because of the war. A hill made of war debris was formed over the ruins. During the cold war, an American radar station serving as an outpost of the West stood on the hill. Now, filmmaker David Lynch (thriller films such as “Blue Velvet” and “Twin Peaks”) is planning to establish a “University of invincible Germany” there. Transcendental Meditation (TM), an esoteric practice, is to be taught there. Negotiations are taking place, even though the area is a heavily wooded area which is under ecological protection and not to be used for buildings. Politicians have agreed that they do not want to allow construction there.

#### **Prayer:**

- **That the negotiations for the purchase of this land will fail**
- **Pray that the Teufelsberg will be used for the good of the city**

### ***Sharing the gospel***

The spread of other religions is a challenge to Christians to share their faith in Jesus in an attractive and authentic way. It is obvious that people are looking for spiritual answers more today than in the recent past. They are open to an encounter with the living God and are waiting to learn more about Him. During the Christmas season, there are many opportunities to talk about faith issues with adherents of other religions.

As in 2006, the CD “The Christmas Story in the Berlin dialect...and other major languages” („Weihnachtsgeschichte auf Berlinerisch... und anderen Weltssprachen“, can be purchased for 1 Euro at the office of Gemeinsam für Berlin (Tel. 030-23003403).

#### **Prayer:**

- **Pray that Christians and Christian groups will be more willing to encounter others in their neighbourhoods**
- **Pray that people who are searching during the Advent and Christmas season will come into contact with Christians who can share the Good News with them**

### ***Keeping on***

The protests against more brothels in the Potsdamer Straße are continuing. There has been no solution as of yet. Please continue to pray also for the prisons. Long-term changes need time and prayer.