



Prayer for Berlin

February, 2008

Good News

Last year, the birth rate nationwide grew by about 1%, but in Berlin, the rate was even higher. By September, 2007, there had been 4.6% more births registered here—exactly 866 more children than the previous year. The number of births declined only in Zehlendorf-Steglitz (-0.2%). The district with the most births is not Pankow, but rather Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf (growth of 8.8%). Nevertheless, Pankow was most often mentioned in newspapers as having a high birth rate (+7.6%), including the “fruitful” area of Prenzlauer Berg.

There they are even having trouble finding enough room for children beginning school. The Freie Evangelische Schule in the district also has many more applicants than they have room for. Although the number of abortions decreased slightly, Berlin still has a higher percentage of abortions than the nationwide average.

Street workers

Street workers have been working in Berlin since the 80's. Among others, “Gangway” and “Outreach” are responsible for social work on the streets. Christian ministries such as the “Berliner Stadtmission” and “Teen Challenge” or “Straßenkinder e.V.” have been active for many years, approaching young people on the streets. The goal of the social workers is the same everywhere: Giving advice to and supporting young people, and finding solutions to conflicts so that they won't end in violence and crime.

For many youths, street workers are the first adults, sometimes even the only adults, who attempt to reach them and take them seriously.

These contact persons are especially important for children and youth who spend most of their free time on the streets, in parks or in malls. Often, parents are not able to help their children because of unemployment, or because they have given up on themselves, or because of domestic violence, or simply a lack of interest.

In the case of immigrant families, the language barrier also plays a role. In Neukölln, 70 percent of the street workers come from immigrant families. They understand the language of the youth on the street and are respected by them.

It's very alarming that the kids on the street who need help are getting younger and younger. Even very young children are skipping school and are looking for a substitute family on the streets. The Christian ministry “Teen Challenge” is active on the Kottbusser Tor in Kreuzberg. They have rented new rooms that need a lot of renovation. A café is planned, in which social help will be offered as well as a Christian perspective.

Repeatedly, their staff has been able to help young people begin to deal with their addictions and get them into Christian rehabilitation centers. “Straßenkinder e.V.” works with children and youth on the Alexanderplatz and in the Friedrichstraße train station and has meeting rooms in Friedrichshain.

Prayer:

- **Pray that young people will build trust to the street workers**
- **Pray for God's mercy and for His help in this great need**
- **Pray that many will find their way out of a life on the streets, drugs, and alcohol through the ministry of Christian organisations**

Berlinale with a Prayer Breakfast

The Berlinale is the most well-known film festival in Berlin, drawing visitors from all over Germany and the world. From Feb. 8-15 during the Berlinale 2008, the “Berlinale Prayer Breakfast” entitled “Faith in Film” will be held every morning from 9:30-11:00 in the Green Bear Lounge in the Filmhaus on Potsdamer Platz.

Prayer:

- **Pray that movie makers, performers, and guests will become believers through conversations about faith**
- **Pray that Christian values will be promoted in the film business**

Christian Cafés and Meeting Points

Cafés in Germany are cozy places for conversation. In Berlin, there is a growing Christian café-scene which is attracting varied portions of society. In these cafés, visitors can talk to staff about faith if they so desire.

Some examples: In Pankow there is the café “Impuls” run by the Marburger Kreis. In Berlin-Mitte there are

the CVJM restaurant “mittendrin” and the café “Miteinander” from the Berliner Stadtmission. The evangelistic social work “City-Station” is not far from the Kurfürstendamm. In the multi-cultural districts of Neukölln and Kreuzberg, there are “Luthers Café run by a church, and “Breakout” which has become a meeting place for many Arab and Turkish youth. Just last year, a library café and the “Johannes 3,16” (John 3:16) opened in Schöneberg.

A project similar to the café from Teen Challenge mentioned above is planned by the group called Neustart (New Beginning) in the red-light district in the Kurfürstenstraße. The end of January, the “Café Contact” opened in a youth and family center in Moabit.

Prayer:

- **Thank God for Christians involved in these ministries and pray for more staff**
- **Pray that people will be touched by God’s love in these cafés.**
- **Pray that more Christians and churches will go out and meet people in such ways in the areas in which they live**

God’s Heart for our Cities

This is the motto of the conference „Transforum 2008“ sponsored by Together for Berlin and other city networks from Feb. 21-23. It is designed to inspire and equip churches and individuals to reach and change the areas in which they live with the gospel.

The program includes a wide variety of topics such as: A Pastor’s Day, a Day for Leaders in Business and Society, a wide choice of practical seminars, and inspiring talks and reports from various projects. Speakers come from Berlin and other cities in Germany, Europe, and the USA.

Please pray the preparation. It is our desire that God will prepare the hearts of participants and enable them to put what they learn into practice. Together for Berlin wants to help them do this. For more information see: www.transforum-berlin.de

Prayer:

- **Pray for successful planning and implementation of the conference**
- **Pray for protection for staff and participants**
- **Pray for impulses from Berlin and other cities as to how people, milieus, cultures, and districts can be changed by the gospel**

Increased Threat of Terror

The danger of terrorist attacks against Jewish targets in Berlin has increased. Security forces are warning

against activities by militant Islamists seeking revenge because of the trial of the suitcase bomber Youssef al Hajdib and the arrest of other Islamists in Sauerland. Specific details are unknown.

Prayer:

- **Pray that all activities of terrorists will be discovered ahead of time**
- **Pray for a heightened awareness on the part of police and people alike**
- **Pray for God’s special protection for Jewish buildings and facilities**

Michael on the street and in the prison

People seldom just “meet” Jesus. Most normally they find their way to Him through other people. Michael is a man who dares to get into contact with people that are outside of his normal business and private horizon. He is a “normal” Christian who works for a software company and is active in his church. More than ten years ago, God impressed him during a time of prayer that he should serve the poor and the needy. So far, so good—but nothing happened until he realized that God wanted to let him choose where he should become active.

He got in contact with Together for Berlin’s Forum for Ex-Convicts and is now ministering to both former prisoners and those still behind bars. In addition, he motivated the music team of his church to do the music at the worship service in the prison once a month. He has become friends with a homeless person who earns his living by begging in the S-BahnhoF who wants to stop drinking this year. Michael is helping him—as a friend.

Prayer:

- **Pray that God will bless Michael and other Christians also ministering in this area, as well as those to whom they minister**
- **Pray for ideas how Christians can minister appropriately to people in their neighborhoods**
- **Pray that God will call other groups and teams to minister in these ways**

Dates

- **Prayer Service for the City** - Topic: „Prayer for the Prisons“ Feb. 9, 2008, 7pm Apostel-Petrus-Gemeinde, Märkisches Viertel, Wilhelmsruher Damm 161, Bus M21, X33
- **Prayer during the Time of Fasting** for Justice and against Poverty from Feb. 6-19, Wednesdays, 7am at the Christus-Treff Berlin, Isingstr.5-6, 13435 Berlin-Treptow, Micha-Gruppe Berlin, www.micha-initiative.de // www.christus-treff-berlin.de