



Prayer for Berlin

April, 2008

Good News – Campaign «Be Berlin»

Recently Berlin's Senate went public with the campaign «Be Berlin». It encourages Berliners to express what their city means to them, to network with others, and to discover the many stories and faces of the city.

We also see this as an opportunity to discover and to sharpen the profile and the potential of the city. Together for Berlin wants to be a part of this.

For more information see www.sei-berlin.de

Good News – Crime Rate is down

The number of crimes recorded by the police once again decreased in the past year. This is the lowest crime rate since the Wall came down. In addition, the number of cases solved has risen.

There has however been a rise in cases of child abuse and neglect of children. The Chief of Police Glietsch explains: «The number of children being abused has not risen, but people are no longer just looking the other way.»

The number of assault and battery committed by youth actually decreased this past year by 18%. In the year 2006, violence among youth had risen by 8.4%. 44% of those committing such crimes came from immigration backgrounds. But, since over 40% of those under 18 in Berlin have such immigration backgrounds, this number must be seen in context. [Source: Der Tagesspiegel 3.8.2008]

Prayer:

- Thank God for the decline in crime and violence
- Pray that people will continue to not look the other way
- Pray for effective measures to stem crime

Events surrounding May 1st

For the past two years, May 1st has been relatively peaceful – this is an answer to prayer! For quite some time, Christians have been praying for the peace of God to be evident on this day. Many have

been present in these areas to pray. In 2008, residents of Kreuzberg will once again sponsor «Myfest». Together For Berlin will be participating for the fifth time with an open-air prayer service entitled «May 1st – a day of Hope?» This year, it will take place on the Heinrichplatz in the center of the district. Important planning and preparation activities are taking place during April. The police are carrying out prevention and informational events in schools in an attempt to dissuade youth from violence.

Prayer:

- Pray for a peaceful April 30/May 1, so that it will indeed become a Day of Hope
- Pray that God will bless all preparations: The prayer service, «Myfest», and the prevention activities of the police
- Pray that God will encounter those potential violent offenders and prevent them from being violent

Choose Life!

The number of reported (!) abortions in Germany has been steadily declining since 2004. In the past year, that number declined by 2.4 percent (= 2800 more children who were allowed to live). Berlin, however, with a rate of 323 abortions per 1000 births still has the highest rate of abortion in Germany! Even so, this rate has been declining since 2001. The rate of abortions in Berlin is declining faster in Berlin than the national average. In 2001 there were 403 abortions per 1000 births. That means that nearly every second baby was aborted! Now it is «only» every third. God continually encourages us to choose life. [Source: Statistisches Bundesamt]

Prayer:

- Pray for God's mercy on those who have forced others to decide to abort a child and for those who have decided to have an abortion
- Thank God that an increasing number of Berliners have decided against an abortion and have chosen life
- Let us invite the Spirit of the Lord, who is the Spirit of Life, into our city!

Ruling on Prayer Rooms in Schools

In March, a Berlin court ruled temporarily in favour of a 14-year old Moslem who attends High School in Wedding. He had fought for the right to pray in the morning on the school premises during

a break or a free period. The court ruled that the school must enable him to do this. The reasoning: The practical outworking of religion belongs to the freedom of religion. The judges declared that schools must provide «acceptable conditions for unhindered prayer». Many school directors expressed dismay over the ruling, because they feel it will hinder peaceful co-existence at the schools. In order to comply with the ruling, all schools would need to have their own prayer rooms. Not only this Moslem student had been denied prayer – in some instances, Christian prayer groups had also been denied the use of rooms in schools for prayer meetings. The Minister for Education will wait to decide what to do until after the final court decision is made. Since there are many Christian student prayer groups which meet during breaks, it is unclear what such a court ruling would mean for these groups.

Prayer:

- **Pray for a wise decision on the part of the judges and the Minister of Education**
- **Pray that Christians will continue to be able to have prayer meetings at schools**

Healthcare City Berlin

Berlin is becoming more and more city of healthcare. Soon the large pharmaceutical company Pfizer will be moving its headquarters with approximately 500 jobs from Karlsruhe to Potsdamer Platz. The Verband der Angestellten-Krankenkasse is also moving to Berlin. Even now, approximately 180,000 people (nearly every eighth Berliner) is working in the area of healthcare. Berlin's University Hospitals are leading in research and development. And more Christians are asking themselves how they can serve others through prayer for healing in the name of Jesus. Christians who offered «Christ-centred healing» at an esoteric trade fair in February had good experiences in prayer for the sick. Many people who were prayed for heard the gospel for the first time. A large number of those also experienced direct physical healing.

Prayer:

- **Pray that Berlin will be a place from which healing and health in physical and spiritual areas will go forth**
- **Pray that healing through prayer in the name of Jesus will spread throughout the city**

Popular Vote about Religion Classes in the Schools

In January it became official: 34,472 signatures enabled the first hurdle to be crossed in connection with the popular vote concerning religion and ethics classes in Berlin schools being treated on an equal basis. This was necessary because the red-red Senate had replaced mandatory Protestant/Catholic religion classes with ethics classes. This no longer allowed students the choice between religion classes and ethics classes. Thus, religion classes were pushed aside. Now the second phase of the popular vote is beginning. 170,000 signatures must be gathered in Berlin. This second phase of gathering signatures will take place from September 2008 to January 2009. The majority of the people, regardless of their party affiliation, desires to keep religion classes in the current form, which is also the current form in all other states in Germany. This desire was documented by the newest representative polls (Forsa Berlin-Barometer January, 2008).

Prayer:

- **Pray for good planning and success of the campaign**
- **Pray for broad support for the campaign in the general public and the media**

Keeping On – planned brothel

As expected, Ismael Karaca, the potential owner of a new brothel in the Kurfürstenstraße, has filed a claim in court. It was feared that this new brothel would cause stress to the residents in the area, and that prostitution in the area would increase, so the district had not agreed to his request for the development of a brothel. Residents and local politicians continue to fight against approval of the brothel.

Prayer:

- **Pray that God will encounter Mr. Karaca and give him other ideas on how to earn money**
- **Pray that the case will not be successful in court**

Dates

- **May 1, 11:30 am, Open-Air-Service** for a peaceful May 1st holiday, Heinrichplatz in Kreuzberg
- **May 5, Pentecost Sunday, 10:00 am, Intercultural Service** co-sponsored by Together for Berlin, Heilig-Kreuz-Kirche, Blücherplatz, Kreuzberg. Following the service until 1pm there will be gospel and religious music.