



Prayer for Berlin

June, 2009

Good News – “District Mother” becomes a profession

A model project has been running since September, 2008 in which female emigrants are being trained by the “Diakonisches Werk” to support emigrant families in their daily problems. They give advice in dealing with drug problems, help when going on official errands to governmental offices, and give advice about raising children. Thus these women are becoming “district mothers”.

Now this project is scheduled to become an official profession. The women are being offered a two and a half year vocational training course that is beginning in two Christian educational facilities. The official profession will be called “social assistant” for intercultural family affairs. With this successful project, Berlin could become an example for other German cities.

Prayer:

- **Thank God for this groundbreaking initiative**
- **Pray that God will bless all those involved**

Good News - Fewer attacks on bus drivers

We have often asked for prayer for the protection of employees of the public transportation services (BVG) against aggressive attacks. The BGV has now reported that the number of attacks against bus drivers and security personnel in the last year have declined drastically. In 2005 there was the highest number of reported cases: 709. In 2007, there were 554 cases; in 2008 326 cases! The reason behind the decrease is video surveillance, but also the fact that fellow passengers are no longer tolerating the attacks. Let us thank God for this!

Atheist Bus-Tour is beginning in Berlin

Last year hundreds of public transport buses were seen all over London with the atheistic advertising message: “There’s probably no God”. This British “Atheist Bus Campaign”, which was accompanied by protests, has now also been started by German atheists. The Initiative “Buskampagne.de” wanted to advertise on public transport buses with the slogan “There is (with near utmost probability) no God”.

But after none of the bus companies they asked agreed to the advertising campaign, and the one company in Essen that had agreed pulled back because of protests and calls for boycotts, the initiative decided to rent a private double-decker bus from May 30-June 18 which will travel through 24 cities. The atheists want to advertise for a self-determined life without God. The campaign will begin in Berlin. Some Christians will be on site to pass out flyers with the slogan: “There is (with near utmost probability) only one God—try Him out!”

Prayer:

- **Pray that this slogan will help people begin to ask about God**
- **Pray that Christians will take the opportunity to share their faith**
- **Pray that God will encounter especially those who are so actively opposing Him**

Afterpains of May 1st

Following several years in a row which the violent outbreaks on May 1st declined, a massive violent outbreak started by the “black block” at 7pm occurred this year right at the beginning of the “Revolutionary May 1st Demonstration”. Rocks and bottles were thrown at the police. The fact that no police were seriously injured during the outbreak is being viewed as an answer to prayer by those who were praying onsite during the demonstration.

Although over 400 policemen reported injuries, no one had to be admitted into the hospital. There was also no extensive property damage. In spite of the short notice, around 400 Christians gathered for an open-air worship service on the morning of May 1st at the Mariannenplatz to pray together for peace in the city. Even though there was rioting in Kreuzberg, the other troubled areas of the city for which they prayed remained calm. It was also quite calm on April 30th.

The May riots had an aftermath in the Federal Parliament. The representatives addressed the issue of the riots during a special discussion. Following the debriefing of this year’s demonstration, the police will most surely be especially vigilant in the near future towards potentially violent demonstrators.

It remains an urgent prayer request that the nearly daily arson attacks on cars in Berlin can be cleared up and the perpetrators arrested.

Prayer:

- **Thank God for His protection for life and limb in spite of so much violence**
- **Pray that the police will be successful in stopping violent activities in the city**
- **Pray that the Spirit of love will reach those who are full of hate**

Homosexuality and politics

For homosexuals, Berlin is an important city from which they further their activities. On June 27, there will be another Christopher Street Day. On the occasion of the 60th birthday of the Republic, the organizers are demanding a change in the Constitution which would prevent discrimination because of sexual identity.

Berlin's politicians have resolved to lead the way pertaining to the furtherance of equal treatment of registered common-law unions and marriages. On April 2nd, a petition made to Parliament by the SPD and the Linke entitled "Initiative: Berlin advocates self-determination and acceptance of sexual diversity" was accepted by all (!) parties.

The name itself reflects what it's about—the goal is not more tolerance, but rather acceptance (affirmation and recognition). Since then, Berlin has developed the initiative into a well-developed program as to how this acceptance should be achieved among the population. Special programs in pre-schools, in schools, in youth work and in all public authorities are being designed to work towards the acceptance of homosexuality as a natural life-style.

In addition, they are thinking about a broad advertising campaign. It's becoming increasingly difficult for Christians to stand up against the pressure to accept this life-style.

Prayer:

- **Pray that many homosexuals will be captured by the love and light of God**
- **Pray that impulses that benefit life will go out from Berlin**
- **Pray that people will realize that they are responsible for their sexual life before God**

Jona's House

On the western edge of the city, there is a facility which offers a safe haven for children and youth 365 days a year—Jona's House. It is the first project of the foundation established by Prof. Dr. Dr. Jürgen Bier (who passed away in 2007) and Prof. Dr. Angelika Bier. It is located in the troubled district Spandau in the area of the Heerstraße-Nord.

Many children and youth in this area experience neglect in various ways from early on. This results in developmental deficits, and the children respond with inappropriate social behaviour. Jona's House breaks through the cycle of social disadvantages.

Here social and Christian values are being conveyed to the children and youth. Staff take care of the children's physical, mental and emotional needs and give them meaningful perspectives for a responsible life. In addition to workshops there is a daily "Jona's Heart" and

every other week a "Kid's Party" where Christian values, including prayer and singing, are conveyed.

Here young people can experience that they are valued and loved by God.

There are always people they can talk to who encourage their talents and help them with their learning disabilities. The staff also help them find placements for work experience and vocational training.

Prayer:

- **Pray that the children will develop well and that they will meet Jesus**
- **Pray that more part-time staff can be recruited, especially young men**

New Bishop elected

The Synod of the Protestant Church in Berlin-Brandenburg-schlesische-Oberlausitz (EKBO) elected Dr. Markus Dröge in the fourth round as the new bishop. The bishop represents the national Protestant Church in ecumenical councils and in public relations.

In addition, he is the chairman of the church leadership. The change of office will take place on November 14, 2009.

Mr. Dröge is the superintendent in the church district Koblenz. He also has a degree in systems counselling. Markus Dröge is married and has three children. His predecessor, Bishop Huber, wishes him – and that is also our **Prayer:**

- **Joy in his new office as bishop and courage in the face of the challenges of giving spiritual orientation over the next years**

Dates:

May 31, 6:00 pm-9:30 pm Intercultural Prayer Service: African Jesus Miracle Harvest Church, Koloniestr. 29, Berlin-Wedding, with prayer walks in the Soldiner District

