



Prayer for Berlin

May 2010

Good News – fewer unemployed

In March, unemployment in Berlin sank to its lowest level since 1996. In addition to the income, this usually means a sense of significance and zest for life for those who are (once again) employed. In spite of the recovery however, the situation is still not good.

In Berlin, there are still approximately 241,000 people registered as unemployed. That is the second-highest rate among states in Germany.

Prayer

- **Thank God for more people who are employed**
- **Pray that current jobs can be preserved and that new jobs will be created**
- **Pray that industry and companies will have new, creative ideas**

Current News: Peace on April 30 and May 1

Berlin is getting ready for the May 1st weekend. Concerns about left-wing extremist violence and clashes between right-wing and left-wing extremists are making the rounds. It could start on the evening of April 30. A group of up to 3,000 Neonazis, some of whom are violence-prone, have registered a demonstration march through Prenzlauer Berg for May 1st. According to current regulations, this demonstration cannot be banned.

Counter-demonstrations (up to 10,000 people) composed of people from various levels of society will attempt to prevent the Neonazi march through the use of sit-down blockades.

The police are faced with a dilemma-- If they prevent the sit-down blockades, the left-wing groups will riot. On the evening of May 1, violence could easily erupt following the traditional "Revolutionary May 1st Demonstration". However, the route does not go through the peaceful "Myfest". According to recent reports, there should not be a lack of police available, since more will be on duty than last year.

During an open-air worship service with the motto "Hunger for Righteousness" sponsored by Together for Berlin, there will be prayer for peace especially for this day. The project "StreetUniverCity" which is working toward education for immigrants will be introduced. The offering taken during the service will

go towards this project and a Christian ministry to drug addicts.

An inter-cultural band will play. There will be an interview with a representative of the police. Prayers for blessing for him and his colleagues will be said.

The worship service will end with a Biblical peace greeting in five languages, among others Turkish and Arabic.

Prayer:

- **Pray that clashes between left-wing and right-wing extremists can be prevented through de-escalation among demonstrators and the police**
- **Pray for protection for the demonstrators, the police and innocent by-standers**
- **Pray that the worship service will go well, for fair news coverage, and that the prayers for peace will be answered**

Projects of Hope (4): Neustart (New Start) expands its ministry to prostitutes

Between the Hackesche Markt and the Friedrichstraße up to the Oranienburger Straße, there is a boulevard with cafés and shops frequented by Berliners and tourists. The street is also known for dusk-to-dawn street prostitution and the presence of pimps.

During the last weeks, a small "Neustart" team has been going up and down this red-light district. The women staffs offer the women something hot to drink, and are available for personal and spiritual conversations. They pray for them and offer their assistance when the women need help.

Up until now, "Neustart" has been ministering to drug addicts on the Kurfürstenstraße (Schöneberg/ Tiergarten) and in the women's prison in Lichtenberg. Information is available at: 222.neustart-ev.de

Prayer:

- **Thank God that Christians followed God's call to minister – ask Him to call more workers into the harvest**
- **Pray that cases of forced prostitution will be discovered**
- **Pray that the staff will be able to establish trust relationships with those they want to minister to**

Projects of Hope (5): Stadtmission begins a mobile summer help for the homeless

Many of those living on the street are left to their own resources during the warmer months, threatened by violence and without hope for a better life. For this reason, in April, the Berlin Stadtmission began the project "mobile summer help" for the homeless. The

project hopes to be a new building block for them on the way towards a system of help.

A team will be on the streets from Sunday to Thursday from 6pm to midnight and will drive to places in the city where the homeless often gather. The team will supply them with necessary supplies, counsel them and arrange accommodations.

Prayer

- **Thank God for all those who minister to the homeless with the Stadtmission**
- **That people can be helped effectively**
- **That many homeless can find new courage to actively look for a way out of their situation**

National Funding of Social Projects

Approximately 3000 social projects in the city are being carried out by hundreds of organisations, which are being paid for by the Senate. Every year, Berlin spends approximately 2.5 billion Euros for such projects. During the last 15 years, the state has been relinquished the administration and the fight against poverty to private institutions. As a result, subsidiarity is functioning in principle all over Germany. Nevertheless, it has recently become the object of criticism. The founder of the “Treberhilfe” recently attracted attention through his luxurious lifestyle and there is talk of the misuse of money.

The checking of the usage of allocated money on the part of public authorities is not functioning well. Among other things, complicated group contracts with charity organisations and the transfer of ownership of federally financed real estate properties to private institutions are characteristic of an obscure administration system.

In Berlin a downright “Poverty Industry” has developed, by which one can clearly make a profit. The awakened mistrust of private institutions, which quite often take care of social concerns very competently, is also hitting Christian institutions as well as the “Berliner Tafel” which as a result is receiving fewer donations of food.

The Senate wants to put stronger regulations into place and is considering further measures to prevent the misuse of federal funds.

Prayer:

- **Pray for consistent political measures which will make social work more transparent**
- **Pray that private institutions can be prevented from making profit out of poverty**
- **Pray that the work of the Berliner Tafel and other good social projects will not suffer as a result of the Treberhilfe affair.**

Culture and intercultural art

More than 500,000 residents from non-German backgrounds live in the city. Every eighth Berliner does not have a German passport. (Source: Berliner Senate). In addition, there are many immigrants. It is natural in such a multi-cultural diversity that societal and cultural participation play a large role in successful interrelations.

In this way God’s good intents for reconciled and complementary relationships among people of various cultures and people groups are being supported. Intercultural projects and educational opportunities (among others those of the Berlin Senate) aim to enhance participation in cultural activities and in addition, they increase intercultural competency among Berlin’s people of German origin.

Art’s “Imaginationsräume” (spaces for the imagination) offer an excellent platform for breaking down stereotypes and for generating surprises, and bring artists and audiences of every background together for a fruitful exchange of ideas.

Prayer:

- **Thank God for the Berlin Senate’s promotion of projects for professional artists with an immigration background**
- **Pray that the civic cultural activities will be expanded to include intercultural offerings, thus reflecting Berlin’s diversity**
- **Pray for more places of interaction among artists and cultural educational activities which will overcome language and cultural barriers, thus contributing positively to life in the city**

Keeping on: Perspective for young adults

Young adults in the city still do not have adequate vocational perspectives. It is especially hard for those who have an immigrant background to find employment.

Let us continue to pray for vocational and personal perspectives and projects which can encourage these young people.

Dates

- **Prayer initiatives surrounding April 30 and May 1:**
<http://gebetfuerberlin.wordpress.com/aktuelle-anliegen/>
- **May 1, 12 noon, Open-Air-Worship Service,** Motto *Hunger for Righteousness*, on the stage on the Mariannenplatz in front of the St.-Thomas-Kirche, Berlin-Kreuzberg. Bus M29 and 140, U-Bahn U2 Görlitzer Bahnhof