



Prayer for Berlin

April 2011

Good News – House of Prayer

Something's happening in our city! At the end of 2009 some Christians got a vision for an interdenominational 24-hour house of prayer in Berlin. It is to be a place where God is praised every day of the year, a house of prayer that is independent of any church, thus strengthening unity in Berlin. A small team of young people with no experience has begun. God is putting the puzzle pieces together and has brought them together with others who have the same vision.

Since March 1, they have been meeting in a 100m² room near the Hauptbahnhof in the Heidestraße. The team would appreciate prayer and support—they also need to furnish the room with the necessary equipment. Further information can be found at: www.rundumdieuhr.org. Or write to the team at: info@rundumdieuhr.org

Berlin and Organic Products

There are more organic farmers in Brandenburg than anywhere else in Germany. They farm 11.5% of the agricultural land. In addition, the demand for organic products is higher in Berlin than anywhere else.

This would be a perfect situation except for the fact that there are holes in the supply chain. The organic restaurants don't have time to shop at dozens of farmers, and intermediate trade is missing, especially in the gastronomy branch. On the other hand, the farmers complain that the restaurants do not cook enough seasonal dishes. Raising tomatoes year-round is simply not an option in Brandenburg. It would be good for the environment and people in general if efficient solutions could be found.

Prayer

- **Pray for creative and efficient business solutions for the logistical problems**
- **Pray for more willingness to eat seasonal products**
- **Pray for the development of the organic sector and the creation of new jobs**

New Chief of Police sought

Dieter Glietsch, the current Chief of Police, will be retiring and leaving office on May 31. A qualified successor is being sought. Currently there are several candidates for the office.

Mr. Körting, Senator for the Interior, will decide about the candidates in April. Under the current Chief of Police, the security situation in Berlin has improved greatly. He was particularly successful in dealing with the autonomous activists. New police tactics have contributed greatly to a lessening of tensions.

His successor will find the job to be a huge challenge.

Prayer:

- **Pray that the person who would be the best from God's perspective would be called**
- **Thank God for the retiring Chief of Police and the work he has done**

The Pope's Visit in Berlin

On September 22 Pope Benedict XVI is coming to Berlin. He was invited by the Federal President. It is planned that the Pope will speak in the morning to the Parliament and will hold mass in the afternoon. Intensive preparations for his visit have already begun. The forecourt of the Charlottenburger Schloss and the Olympic Stadium are being discussed possible places for the mass to be held.

Many, including Protestants, are hoping for a clear sign from the Pope about the unity of Christians, particularly in secularized former East Germany. There are 320,000 Catholics living in Berlin, 20% of them are non-Germans.

The Lesbian and Gay Association is planning eye-catching protests against the position of the Catholic church in regards to sexuality, especially in the areas of birth control, abortion and homosexuality.

Prayer:

- **Pray for the Catholics in the city**
- **Pray for a strong ecumenical witness for the faith through the Pope's visit**
- **Pray that there will be no aggressive confrontations between Christians and protestors**

Price of Housing has risen

The pressure on the housing market is rising. Since 2000 165,000 new households have been founded, but only 40,000 new places of residence have been

built. “For this reason, rental prices are rising in the city.” This can be seen in the 2010 housing market report released on Tuesday by the Investitionsbank Berlin. “Whoever moves, loses, “ says the author of the study, Annamaria Schwedet. “The high demand allows house owners to demand much higher prices with new rentals than usual.” (Der Tagesspiegel 02.03.11)

The availability of low-priced housing for under six Euros per square meter and month (rent with no utilities) is declining. The rapidly rising rental prices are set against a stagnating net household income. These numbers shed light on the so-called “gentrification” process, which is certainly not just leftist propaganda, but is rather a real problem. Long-term renters, students and low-income people are being pushed out of housing which has been redeveloped and therefore much more expensive.

This process is permissible in a free-market economy, and the city cannot control, but it endangers social peace—and therefore the situation needs our prayers.

Prayer

- **Pray for cautious and socially acceptable senate control of the housing market**
- **Pray for low-cost alternatives for appropriate low-income housing**
- **Pray for sustained social peace**

For a peaceful May 1st

Since 2004 there has been a continual effort on the part of Christians for a peaceful May 1st. The public prayer service, which has usually taken place on the Mariannenplatz, as well as the prayers of many Christians on site leading up to May 1st are tangible expressions of these efforts. Last year many prayers were answered. The acts of violence predicted by many simply didn't happen.

Once again this year, a public worship service and a prayer initiative are planned. In contrast to last year, the autonomous activists have not been conspicuously calling continually for violence (arson attacks on cars).

On the other hand, there is a lot of anger under the surface. The topic “gentrification” (see topic above) is on the minds of many people in Kreuzberg. The tourist boom is changing the Wrangel district. Shops for things needed for everyday life are being eliminated by chic restaurants or boutiques. There is resistance against the flood of tour-

ists who have read interesting descriptions of Kreuzberg and its alternative scene in their guide books. In addition to their usual demonstrations in Kreuzberg, leftist autonomous activists are planning a demonstration on the evening before May 1st on the Rosenthaler Platz in Berlin-Mitte. This year, there are to be no right-wing demonstrations in Berlin on May 1st.

Prayer:

- **Pray for success for all those who desire the best of the city and peace on May 1st**
- **Pray for a solution to the specific problems in Kreuzberg – especially in the area of gentrification**
- **Pray that the police will be able to respond wisely and appropriately to possible provocations on May 1st**

Forced Auction of the Tacheles

On April 4 the area on the Oranienburger Straße in Berlin-Mitte, to which the independent art centre Tacheles belongs, will be auctioned off. One of the most meaningful breeding grounds of contemporary art in Berlin could be facing destruction. Mayor Klaus Wowereit desires to convince the new investors to continue using this area as an art centre, because it is listed as a protected cultural area.

With its many studios and workshops, the Tacheles is an important part of Berlin's creative and experimental art scene, and it is also a magnet for visitors. Young artists find opportunities for development here. Exhibitions, stage productions, concerts, etc. contribute to Berlin's cultural life.

Prayer:

- **Pray that the art-laboratory Tacheles can be continued**
- **Pray that the Senate will encourage the preservation of similar non-institutional breeding grounds for artists**

Dates

- **Saturday, April 2, 3-6pm: Seminar "Praying on the Streets" in the Café Sehnsucht, Skalitzer Str. 133 at Kottbusser Tor, Registration and information at stresemann@gfberlin.de**
- **Sunday, May 1, 11:45: Open Air Prayer-Worship Service for a peaceful May 1, Mariannenplatz, Kreuzberg**