



Prayer for Berlin

November 2011

- **Pray for good personnel decisions for the Berlin Senate**
- **Pray that government policies will encourage justice, godliness, social balance, and integration in the city**

Good News: Arsonist arrested

In October, the investigations over the last months – and many prayers – resulted in a first success. A 27-year old man was arrested by the Berlin police in connection with the arson attacks on cars. He confessed to setting over 100 cars on fire because of frustration due to unemployment. Damages are estimated to be in the millions. He has been charged with arson, but that doesn't solve the problem of arson attacks on cars. Even after his arrest, there were still many cars set on fire. In 2011 until the beginning of October, 407 cars have been set on fire. Many others were also damaged, resulting in over 500 cars that have burned.

Prayer:

- **Thank God for successful investigations**
- **Pray that the arson attacks will cease completely**

Surprising Turn-Around

In the last prayer mail, we assumed that there would be a coalition between SPD and the Greens. However, the coalition negotiations disintegrated because of insurmountable difficulties. We see the fact that the “cards needed to be re-shuffled” as an answer to prayer. We had been praying every Wednesday from May up until the elections and also at a city-wide prayer service for the right government officials for our city.

In the Prayer Forum from Together for Berlin, we have decided to pray during the coalition negotiations between the SPD and the CDU that God's good purposes for our city will be brought about. To our surprise, we quickly received permission to use a room in the Rote Rathaus. Prayer will take place in room 350 (main entrance) every Wednesday until Nov. 16 from 6-7 pm. The coalition negotiations are supposed to end on Nov. 15.

Prayer:

- **Pray for a good “working atmosphere” and sustainable compromises for controversial viewpoints**

Arson attacks against trains

During the month of October, arson attacks on train cables caused late arrivals in both long-distance and local train traffic. They also caused uneasiness among the general public. Plastic bottles filled with gas, tied together with wire and a starter, were found on many tracks of both trains and trams. Thank God that most had not ignited. Otherwise Berlin would have sunk into chaos. However, the perpetrators have not yet been identified. Following a claim for responsibility, left-wing activists are suspected. The group is named after an Icelandic volcano, indicating that more fires are planned. Mid-May on the Ostkreuz, there were attacks which were claimed by a group with a similar name. There are more left-wing extremists living in Berlin than anywhere else in the nation. According to the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, 2,200 left-wing extremists live in Berlin. More than half of them are estimated to be violence-prone.

Prayer:

- **Pray that the perpetrators will be arrested and the crimes solved**
- **Pray that residents will be alert and that potential crimes will be discovered before they take place**
- **Pray that left-wing activists will distance themselves from violence**

New churches in Berlin booming

Researchers have noticed a strengthening among religious groups in large cities. Their research, which also reported on religious life in the capital city, was recently presented in Berlin. They reported that there is no evidence that the number of Christian churches is diminishing. Quite the contrary—there are many religious groups. The report showed a turning away from the state church, but not from faith. Evangelical, “hip” churches are springing up everywhere in Berlin and are attracting many young people.

Prayer:

- **Thank God for new churches**
- **Pray for spiritual renewal in existing churches**
- **Pray that both existing churches and new churches will reach new segments of society**

Taizé-Gathering

Tens of thousands of youth from all over Europe and other parts of the world are attending a Taizé Gathering in Berlin from Dec. 28, 2011-Jan. 1, 2012. The state churches and the Berlin Senate have invited the ecumenical fellowship from Taizé to prepare for the Gathering together with churches of all dominations. The Gathering is composed of a small number of simple building blocks—international small groups, corporate prayer, and hospitality. Groups meet during the mornings in various places all over Berlin and the surrounding areas. During the afternoons, participants come together at the Berlin Messe-Centre. Berlin residents are invited to join the participants in prayer, singing, contemplative silence, and discussions about faith in an international context.

Churches and private individuals and families are needed to host youth attending the Gathering. Two square meters in a warm room are all that are needed to host one young person. The youth will be bringing camping mats and sleeping bags and can sleep on the floor. Cordiality is more important than comfort. They would appreciate a simple breakfast and will be gone all during the day. Those desiring to host youth should fill out a form on www.taize-berlin.de The Taizé brothers and the preparation team invite others to join them during daily prayer times beginning immediately, Monday through Saturday, 12:30 in the Marienkirche on the Alexanderplatz.

Prayer:

- **Pray that Berlin will be a good host for the youth from all over the world**
- **Pray for good, faith-strengthening encounters between guests and residents**

PrayDay

On November 15th, the worldwide PrayDay, Christians are called to pray for schools. Parents and teachers are also taking part. The PrayDay is an initiative of the student branch of the SMD (www.prayday.de). Week after week, many thousands of Christian students meet at their schools for prayer. They don't have to meet at the same time, nor even have a room. And yet, the number of student Bible studies (SBK) is declining. Why? Many SBK's are prohibited, because school directors want to separate religion and schools more completely. Atheists are more vocal than ever before. The school year has been shortened, resulting in more pressure for both students and teachers. Some students report an enormous pressure to perform well in school. As a result

there is little motivation to participate in any extra-curricular activities. But prayer can remove these obstacles! See dates in Berlin below!

Prayer:

- **Thank God for students, parents, and teachers who pray**
- **Pray for courage for visible life with Jesus at schools**
- **Pray for meaningful measures for reducing pressure on students and teachers**

Book Suggestion: Für Schulen beten. Impulse für veränderndes Gebet. (Praying for schools—impulses for prayer that changes things - German only)
<http://tinyurl.com/3z325jd>

Keeping On

The post-migration Theatre Ballhaus on the Naunynstraße in Kreuzberg (see September prayer mail), which has made a name for itself nationwide through its wonderful intercultural and integrative approach, is in danger of extinction. Because it is a “free theatre”, it receives no guaranteed subsidies. It finances itself through its own earnings and sponsorships and third-party funds. Up until now, ten jobs were financed through the Berlin Initiative KulturArbeit (www.berlinerkulturarbeit.de), which provides funding for jobs in the arts. These ten jobs are now being terminated. If no alternative solution or funding can be found, the theatre will have to close in the summer of 2012.

Prayer:

- **Pray for creative solutions which will allow this theatre to continue its brilliant, integrative impact in Berlin**
- **Pray that politicians will develop a view for projects which will reach new segments of society and contribute positively to integration**

Dates

- **Prayer for the Coalition Negotiations: Wednesdays, 6-7pm on Nov. 2, 11, and 16** in room 350 of the Rote Rathaus
- **Teaching and Prayer Conference for Israel, Nov. 4, 3pm – Nov. 5, 9pm** Gemeinde auf dem Weg, Topic: »Germany on its way to the Valley of Decision«, sponsored by Christen an der Seite Israels
- **PrayDay, Prayer for Berlin's schools: Nov 15, 7 pm**, Freie Evg. Schulen Berlin, Christburger Str.14, 10405 Berlin