



# Prayer for Berlin

April 2013

## ***Good News: Baby Boom in Berlin***

The baby boom is continuing. Since 2007 more babies have been born in Berlin than the number of people who have died. This is not the case in any other state except Hamburg. In 2011, 35,579 babies were born. According to the most recent numbers, Berlin has become the baby-capital. The complete numbers for 2012 are not yet available, but the Secretary of Health, Czaja, assumes the numbers will continue to rise. There is another noteworthy thing happening in Berlin: About four percent of the births did not take place in hospitals, but rather in birth centres or at home with a midwife. This percentage is twice as high as the national average. Source: Berliner Zeitung

### **Prayer:**

- **Thank God for the newborn Berliners**
- **Pray for wisdom for their parents to help them grow up well**
- **Pray for sufficient support for the young parents, for instance through mentoring and parental assistance**

## ***Holidays as Opportunities***

Good Friday and Easter are traditionally the days when people who don't usually go to church attend worship services. The Easter Eve services are favourites. In some churches in East Berlin, they are nearly overcrowded. Many concerts with special Easter music take place that acquaint the listeners with the events surrounding Good Friday and Easter.

### **Prayer:**

- **Pray that many people will be touched by the worship services and concerts. Pray that they will understand the gospel.**
- **Pray that many one-time church-service visitors will become regular participants in churches and find a true home in faith**

## ***New Airport Director***

Following several unsuccessful attempts to find a new airport director, Helmut Mehdorn was named the new director of the airport corporation. He is well-known (and regarded as quite formidable), hav-

ing formerly been the director and restructuring specialist of the German Rail System and of Air Berlin. Right from the start, he showed that he is not afraid of uncomfortable ideas and taking drastic measures-- He suggested keeping the Tegel airport open for charter or government flights even after the planned opening of the new airport BER in 2015. Following many court appeals and verdicts, this seems to be impossible. Mr. Mehdorn will now attempt to prove himself by quickly taking care of a list of 20,000 deficiencies (from very small to very large) which are blocking the completion of the airport in Schönefeld. Costs are threatening to rise considerably. In addition, recent studies show that the new airport's capacity is not adequate. The new Board of Directors under the chairmanship of Premier Matthias Plazcek, and the new Director Mehdorn will have to make extensive decisions.

### **Prayer:**

- **Pray that Mr. Mehdorn will be able to assert himself, be wise and courageous in making decisions, and yet remain humble**
- **Pray that further damage as a result of delays and increased costs can be avoided**
- **Pray that the three shareholders--the federal government, Berlin, and Brandenburg will work together effectively**

## ***Residents discuss „Berlin 2030“***

A "City Development Concept Berlin 2030" will be developed by the year 2014 under the leadership of the Senatorial Administration of City Development and the Environment. Fundamental questions concerning city development over the next years will be discussed: How is Berlin doing? What are the city's strengths? What things are at risk, and where do people want to see development? Then, an overall concept will be developed for the city. Michael Müller (SPD), who is the responsible Senator, wants to have residents join the discussions. Thus, on April 24th, 5pm in the Rote Rathaus, a "City Forum 2030" will take place, the first in a series of public meetings which are designed to accompany the planning process. These meetings will be patterned after those concerning city development that took place following reunification of Berlin.

### **Prayer:**

- **Thank God for the opportunity to publicly discuss important goals of the city's politics**

- **Pray for those in charge, that they will set good goals for Berlin**
- **Pray that Christians will take part in this process, bring good ideas for Berlin's future into the discussion, and that they will be heard**

### ***May 1st Demonstrations***

The NPD has announced plans for a large demonstration in Schöneweide on May 1st. Among others, the Federal Chairman of the NPD, Holger Apfel, will be speaking. The Neo-Nazi demonstration will have "Get Out of the Euro" as its motto. An additional large May 1st demonstration is planned for Frankfurt/Main. Neo-Nazis have a stronghold in Schöneweide and are publically present through the right-wing shop "Hexogen" and a Nazi bar "Zum Henker", where Berlin Neo-Nazis meet.

Antifascist Groups have announced blockades and a counter demonstration against the right-wing rally on May 1st. Antifascist groups are planning a large demonstration followed by a concert on April 30 at the S-Bahnhof Schöneweide. In view of the aggressiveness with which both extremist groups are encouraging participation in their demonstrations and counter demonstrations on the internet, there could be massive conflicts on May 1st. As was the case in 2010, a citizens' movement with prominent representatives of several political parties is attempting to prevent the NPD events. In 2010 the Neo-Nazis had to break off their demonstration because of the thousands of counter demonstrators.

In Kreuzberg, the "Revolutionary May 1st Demonstration" is planned again. In the past this has often been the scene of altercations with the police during the night. In recent years, these were greatly reduced, which was an answer to prayer. The new Chief of Police, Mr. Kandt, is facing his first huge test.

#### **Prayer:**

- **Pray for peace on April 30/May 1 and for protection for demonstrators and police forces**
- **Pray for wisdom and success for the police in their pre-planning and on-site presence**
- **Pray that the NPD demonstration can be stopped by peaceful means**

### ***Opportunities for Christians to Minister on May 1st***

Over the last years, Together for Berlin has called for prayer for peace on May 1st, local and personal, on

the streets and in an open-air worship service in Kreuzberg. This year will be different. Instead of a public worship service, there will be a series of decentralized events.

- Churches and prayer groups in the city are being encouraged to meet in their own places on April 30 and May 1 to pray for peace in the city.

- From 8pm on April 30 to midnight on May 1, there will be continual praise and worship music in the **Prayer Basement at the Kottbusser Tor** (Adalbertstr. 97 in the arcade behind Rossmann) Entrance on the hour.

- On May 1st there will be **Three Blocks of Intercessory Prayer** for peace in Berlin in the Prayer Basement. You are invited to come to pray--from 10-12am, 2-4pm, and 6-8pm.

- In front of the Café Sehnsucht from Teen Challenge (Skalitzer Str. 133, Near Kottbusser Tor) there will be music, cake, and an information stand about substance abuse counselling, etc. Support from churches is welcomed. For instance, you could bake a cake and bring it - and then pray in the Prayer Basement.

### ***Serve the City***

"Many little people in many little places that take many little steps can change the face of the world!" This is the motto of worldwide movement "Serve the City". The Berlin group describes itself: "Many people in our city would like to do something good and help others, but they don't know where to begin. Thus it often remains just a wish. STC Berlin wants to create opportunities to make that wish come true. STC began in Brussels in 2005. Since then, this movement of volunteers has expanded to over 80 cities. "We want to serve as many people as we can -- worldwide. That's our dream!"

Next outreach in Berlin: April 20. More information and registration: [www.servethecity-berlin.de](http://www.servethecity-berlin.de)

#### **Prayer:**

- **Thank God for this creative initiative**
- **Pray that many will be motivated to serve where people in Berlin need them**

### ***Keeping On - Gentrification***

We continue to pray that solutions can be found and that affordable housing can be available for lower-income Berliners.

### ***Dates***

**Political Prayer for the City April 10, 6pm in front of the Rote Rathaus**

**Prayer Events April 30/May 1 See above!**