



118th edition - October 2013

Good News 1: Less Violence

The number of criminal offences committed in BVG vehicles has gone down drastically in recent years--from 6.02 offences per 1 million passengers in 2006 to 4.38 offences per 1 million passengers in 2012. There are less violent acts being committed against fellow passengers and employees, as well as less property damage through graffiti. Costs for the removal of damage done by vandalism declined from 8.7 million to 4 million Euros. There continue to be acts of violence, robbery, and vandalism, but compared to the number of passenger journeys each day, the extent is small. This is a result of investments made in security in recent years. And it was most certainly also a result of prayer. [Source: Berliner Zeitung]

Prayer:

- **Thank God for the reduction in violence and vandalism**
- **Pray that useful measures can be found and that violence will continue to decline**

Good News 2: Thor Steinar is closing

The Thor Steinar store in Friedrichshain is closing. The brand-name is closely associated with a Nazi mindset. This led to a strict ban on wearing this brand of clothing in the national parliament and in soccer stadiums. In the past there had been protests against the store every now and then. Christians have been praying that clothing that is openly sympathizing with right-wing activism would no longer be able to be sold in the very place where the SS tortured their enemies.

Refugees in Hellersdorf and Britz

It has become quiet following the uprisings in relation to the home for refugees in Hellersdorf (see prayer news from September). A new initiative founded by university students called "Hellersdorf Helps Refugees" (Hellersdorf hilft Asylbewerber), which is informing people on Facebook what sorts of things refugees need, is sending a clear welcoming signal to the refugees. In addition to gathering goods for the refugees, they are also writing letters in the mother-tongues of the refugees to welcome them, explain the situation, and allay their fears.

In the district of Britz in Neukölln, where a home for 400 refugees is to be built, public campaigns and residents' alliances have responded early on. In order to not become a "second Hellersdorf", a town hall meeting was held. Right-wing activists were not allowed to attend. Over 500 residents came, who all had the desire to give the refugees security, peace, support, and help. [Source: Tagesspiegel; Facebook HellersdorfhilftAsylbewerber]

Prayer:

- **Thank God that Hellersdorf has settled down**
- **Pray for the initiatives such as those in Hellersdorf and Britz which provide an atmosphere of welcome and support**
- **Pray for wisdom in dealing with the needs of the refugees**

Elected to the German National Parliament (Bundestag)

Berlin will be represented with 27 of the 630 delegates in the Bundestag, 4 more than before. 12 of them were elected directly in their districts (first vote). The rest came through the political party list (second vote). The Berlin CDU will now have 9 instead of 6 delegates in the Bundestag. The SPD will have 8 delegates from Berlin; the Linke 6 and the Grüne 4. Here are the elected delegates who will represent us Berliners in the Bundestag:

CDU: Frank Steffel (Reinickendorf), Kai Wegner (Spandau-Charlottenburg-Nord), Karl-Georg Wellmann (Steglitz-Zehlendorf), Klaus-Dieter Gröhler (Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf) and Jan-Marco Luczak (Tempelhof-Schöneberg) were elected directly. Monika Grütters, Christina Schwarz, Martin Pätzold und Philipp Lengsfeld came through the political party lists.

SPD: Eva Högl (Mitte) und Fritz Felgentreu (Neukölln) were elected directly. Swen Schulz, Mechthild Rawert, Klaus Mindrup, Cansel Kiziltepe, Ute Finckh-Krämer und Matthias Schmidt came through political party lists.

Linke: Gregor Gysi (Treptow-Köpenick), Petra Pau (Marzahn-Hellersdorf), Gesine Löttsch (Lichtenberg) und Stefan Liebich (Pankow). Halina Wawzyniak und Azize Tank came through political party lists.

Grüne: Hans-Christian Ströbele (Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg-Prenzlauer Berg Ost) was elected di-



Prayer for Berlin October 2013

rectly. Renate Künast, Özcan Mutlu und Lisa Paus came through political party lists.

Prayer:

- **Why don't you "adopt" one or two delegates to pray for specifically?**

Work among Turkish Men

It is easy to demand that people of other cultures adjust to the "mainstream culture". But how can that happen when different values have been taught from childhood on? One needs people who want to help who know both cultures. Kazim Erdogan wants to help Turkish men in particular in this difficult area. In addition to his work in the area of psychosocial care in the district of Neukölln, he leads various volunteer projects, for instance "Turkish fathers and men in dialogue". In recent times, Turkish marriages are increasingly breaking up because there are many imported brides and bridegrooms. Often the man discovers after arriving that he needs to acquire skills here and that the woman is farther along in this area than he is. But he has never learned to deal with such a situation. Violence in the marriage often results. Cultural values such as honour, value, and pride hinder the learning process. Mr. Erdogan's work helps to break through the inability to communicate in the families. Alternatives to conflict solution through violence are practiced through talking about them in the group. Turkish men learn a different meaning of "honour" and can learn to reflect about their own culture. They can find new ways of dealing with one another in the family and marriage. A different work among Muslim men called "Heroe" goes into schools to speak about the term "honour" to give youth a different perspective. We need many more such bi-cultural initiatives which are able to show new ways.

Prayer:

- **Thank God for these ground-breaking initiatives**
- **Pray that more people will be trained for such programs**
- **Pray that the Turkish youth and men can be successful in relearning culture**

Financing Private Schools

Currently every 10th student in Berlin attends a private school. The Senator for Schools Sandra Scheeres submitted a draft of a law which would eliminate the current good practice. Her draft would require even recognized sponsors when opening a new school to once again have to wait three to five years before receiving government help. Following opposition by the CDU, the Senate stopped the initiative entirely on Sept. 17. This is an answer to prayer. We had prayed for exactly this on Sept. 11 during our prayer for politics! This would have affected

Christian schools and also the founding of additional Freie Evangelische Schulen Berlins. (FESB).

Prayer:

- **Thank God that the initiative was stopped**
- **Pray for other good solutions to save money**
- **Pray for God's blessings on Christian schools and day-care centres**

Keeping On: Apartment Construction

We have prayed often for the construction of affordable housing to counter the negative effects of gentrification. The decisions of the coalition are now being supported financially: 64 million Euros per year for the development of new housing in each district, so that up to six people can be hired who will speed up the processing of construction permits. In addition, each district will receive 500 Euros for each apartment construction permit approved within six months.

Thanking -- celebrating -- praying on October 3rd

23 years of German unity will be celebrated interculturally and ecumenically on October 3, 2013 from 3-7pm. Gratitude for God's grace will be the focal point as we pray especially for North and South Korea.

3pm Ecumenical devotional in the Kapelle der Versöhnung Bernauer Straße 4, 10115 Berlin-Mitte, Revival Gospel Choir, Sermon Pastor Johannes Park, Korea/Frankfurt/M.

4pm Walk along the former border and the Wall memorial

5pm Christus-Kirche, Anklamer Str. 31, 10345 Berlin-Mitte, Interview with contemporary witness Hartmut Richter. Information about the situation in North Korea and prayer; fellowship around food in the courtyard

Prayer:

- **Pray that a culture of remembrance can be formed and strengthened in light of German unity**
- **Pray that the general public will have a sense of gratitude for God's miracle of unity and freedom**

Dates

- **Oct 3, 8pm to Oct 5 8pm: 48 HOURS BURN**, Gebetskeller Kreuzberg, Adalbertstr. 97 (at the Kottbusser Tor in the Passage behind Rossmann)
Oct 9 6pm: Prayer for City Politicians in front of the Rote Rathaus
- **Oct 23, 7pm: Prayer Evening for the prison system** sponsored by the Forum Help for Criminal Offenders Berlin, Ev. Frei-kirchliche Gemeinde Tempelhofer Damm 133

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