



124th edition - May 2014

Good News: More marriages and lower divorce rates

Family is becoming a trend—at least in Berlin. In Berlin 13,000 marriages were performed in 2012. This is an increase compared to previous years. In 2008 only 11,762 couples were married. In addition, the number of families in Berlin is growing—in contrast to the rest of the nation. Unfortunately also true: In 2013 6,626 marriages ended in divorce, affecting 4,382 children. This is sad. The good news—there were 8.8% less divorces than in 2012.

Prayer:

- **Thank God for marriages that stay together, and pray for protection and blessings for couples and families**
- **Pray for comfort for those who are suffering because of broken relationships**
- **Pray that those who are looking for life-time spouses will find them**

Problems surrounding the CSD

For the first time in many years, there is so much discord among the organisers of the Christopher Street Day that an Event Alliance is planning an “alternative CSD” on June 21. The differences arose because of the decision to change the name of the parade. The Board responsible for the CSD e.v. chose the new name “Stonewall Parade” and secured the trademark. Previous parades have cost the association lots of money. In 2012, it nearly went bankrupt. The conflict seems to be a symptom of a falling-out within the Association about the goals and the nature of the CSD. On June 21 this year, there will be several events around the Brandenburg Gate. On this day, Germany will play Ghana in the soccer World Cup. Therefore, the desired parade route along the Straße des 17. Juni does not come into question. However, the CSD Association wants to pursue the right to have its final rally at the Brandenburg Gate through legal means if necessary.

Prayer:

- **Pray that people will not pay much attention to the CSD this year**
- **Pray for wisdom for the Senate in attempting to meet the expectations of the different events at the Brandenburg Gate**

- **Pray that more and more people in our city will be interested in a lifestyle that pleases God**

Solution for the Oranienplatz

On April 8, after one and a half years, the refugee protest camp on the Oranienplatz in Kreuzberg was cleared nearly peacefully. Mid-March, Dilek Kolat, Integration Senator (SPD), had reached an agreement with the representatives of the refugees which was accepted by majority (see Prayer Mail from April). However, some representatives and activists had demanded an unlimited right of abode, which the Senate and the district are unable to grant, since that is the responsibility of the federal government and the European Union.

During the dissolution of the camp, there were a few scuffles and incitement to resistance on the part of activists. The refugees were moved to adequate housing. Their applications are being processed, and counselling is available.

Onsite, there are still a dozen refugees on hunger strike. Supporters are holding a vigil. An information tent about the plight of refugees was approved. The protest camp produced a lot of attention for the asylum-seekers—a welcoming culture, humane treatment, and inflexible asylum procedures have come into focus.

Dilek Kolat desires further political dialogue concerning these challenges.

Prayer:

- **Thank God for the solution on the Oranienplatz**
- **Pray for a new beginning in the refugee politics**
- **Pray that God will bless the work of Dilek Kolat so that she can continue to serve the city**

New Series: Occupation groups

Performance and high quality count in all occupations in our society. But earning more money leads to stress and time off becomes increasingly rare. Unfortunately giftedness and talent are being traded in the employment market like a commodity. God, however, treasures every individual service and sees the personality in every person.



In subsequent prayer newsletters, we will be introducing occupation groups (in no special order) which serve the city and its residents in special ways. At the same time, we will be praying for Christians working in these groups—that they will reflect God's love through the quality of their work and their attitude. The basic information for the short description and prayer requests come from personal interviews with Berlin Christians in each occupation group.

Doctors

Doctors often have to deal with much more than curing a cold. The daily decisions that doctors have to make are about life and death. In spite of expert knowledge, they often face ethical decisions that are not so easy to make. In addition to medical help, doctors are often asked about personal opinions. How can I deal with a serious diagnosis; what should relatives do; what alternatives do I have? Doctors carry a lot of responsibility and also experience a high degree of daily stress. The quota allowed by the Association of Health Insurance means that some doctors must work without pay at the end of the month.

On the other hand, because Berlin is being promoted as the city of health, there are many chances available in the area of medical research.

Prayer:

- **Pray that God's standards will be applied in life-threatening decisions such as prenatal diagnostics, euthanasia, side effects, etc.**
- **Pray for the strength to endure dealing daily with disease and death, especially for emergency doctors**
- **Pray for a supportive atmosphere among colleagues instead of burned-out lone fighters**

Prayer for Peace on May 1

An application made together with residents for an intercultural music-stage on Kottbuser Tor was denied because of security reasons. However, it may be possible next year.

Nevertheless, Together for Berlin (Gemeinsam für Berlin) invites you to take part in the prayer events (see dates).

Just as in previous years, small teams will be praying onsite before and during the demonstrations. For further information: r.stresemann@gfberlin.de

Prayer:

- **Pray for moderation among the left-wing and right-wing groups even before May 1 activities**
- **Pray that no violence and destruction will occur**

- **Pray that God will lead and protect those praying onsite**

Power Struggle in the SPD

Three people are currently sharing the power in the SPD: Klaus Wowereit (Senate) Jan Stöß (Party Chairman) and Raed Saleh (Parliamentary party leader). Thus, three power centres have developed which have begun to compete against each other. In light of the elections in 2016, the SPD is dependent on building up a successor for Klaus Wowereit. Strong leaders do not normally appear overnight.

Elections of the board of the SPD take place in May. A fight for the candidacy might take place between Jan Stöß and Raed Saleh. However, it is not clear whether Raed Saleh will actually decide to take on the fight and run for office. The SPD has been part of the Berlin government for 25 years. Their current ratings are low.

Leaders in other parties are also doing little to develop successors. Sociologists are beginning to see a fundamental problem in society—winning young people for leadership positions. Whoever gets to the top of the party is often worn down by everyday business, and creative ideas get lost.

Prayer:

- **Pray that the SPD will be able to develop potential successors for Wowereit**
- **Pray that God will call people to serve the city in politics**
- **Pray that God will bless all those who make themselves available within the SPD and the other parties**

Keeping On

Unfortunately, the never-ending topic of the construction of the BER airport continues to need prayer.

Dates

- **April 30, 8pm until May 2, 10pm Gebetskeller on Kotti, Adalbertstr. 97: Continual praise and worship;** organized by the Initiative BURN with music groups from many churches. Entrance at the top of the hour.
- **May 1, 4-5pm and 8-9 pm: Prayer for a peaceful May 1.** Following the first prayer time (5pm) prayer onsite:
Tour 1: Topic—Refugees on the Oranienplatz
Tour 2: Topic—Drugs in Görlitzer Park
Tour 3: Accompanying the May 1 demonstration
- **May 14, 6pm Prayer for city politicians,** meeting place -- in front of the Rote Rathaus