



Edition 134 – May 2015

Good News: Truth breaks through

On March 28 in the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Memorial-Church, TOGETHER FOR BERLIN participated in an ecumenical penitential liturgy concerning Germany's complicity in the genocide of Armenians. The guilt was named, and the Armenian Archbishop responded with forgiveness.

In the past, the issue of German complicity had not been addressed, and politicians did not use the term "genocide".

In the weeks following the service, the situation changed from day to day. Newspapers reported in detail and the federal government experienced pressure through the clear position of the President. In the Berliner Dom on April 23, Gauck clearly spoke about Germany's co-responsibility in the genocide, and the members of the Bundestag ultimately decided to no longer suppress the issue.

70 years after the end of the war

By the time the unconditional surrender was signed on May 8, 1945, more than 60 million people were dead. From April 16 to May 2, 1945, the final battle for Berlin was bitterly fought. The fighting took more than 170,000 lives, wounded 500,000 soldiers, and also caused the deaths of tens of thousands of civilians.



Berlin was completely destroyed. Only one fourth of all housing was undamaged. The Allies wanted to give up and let Berlin be rebuilt at another location. However, the inhabitants of Berlin prevented that from happening—especially the so-called

"rubble women", who so resolutely made it possible that something new could be constructed from the rubble.

Those who visit our bustling city today cannot imagine how large the destruction once was.

Therefore, today, 70 years after the end of the war, we have lots of reasons to thank God for the grace he has shown this country. From May 8-10, Christians will be commemorating past events and gratefully looking forward to the future.

Special events begin on Friday, May 8 with a thanksgiving and remembrance worship service. On May 9, an event will take place in the so-called "T-building" Sachsenhausen Memorial. All concentration camps of Europe were administered from this building. On Sunday, May 10, a march of life will take place to remember, to reconcile, and to take a stand against anti-Semitism.

The march will end with a public event called "70 years – gratefully going forward" in front of the Brandenburg Gate. A conference offering new

blessing experiences with David Herzog called "A new day for Germany -- Experiencing the glory of God" will begin on May 11.

Prayer:

- Thank God for all the grace and help that Berlin has experienced in the last 70 years
 - Pray for protection and blessing on all the commemorative events
- Pray that God's Spirit will continue to fill our city with life

Integration ministry of Josua church in Spandau

In the district of Spandau, this church has begun to meet the needs of refugees in practical ways.

There is a large reception center in the Mordardstrasse for many refugees waiting for their asylum procedure. As more and more Christians with a migration background began to meet in the Josua church in Spandau, the idea was born to offer an integration course called "Home in Germany".

On six evenings, after eating dinner together, Germans and immigrants first listened to input about culture, regulations and politics in Germany and then discussed these topics in small groups.

Following the course, the "Café of the Cultures" opened. From Wednesdays to Saturdays, the Café in the Josua Church is still open for people of all nationalities from 4 to 7pm. People meet to exchange ideas and get to know each other over a coffee, cake and snacks.

Volunteers provide the community not only with German language lessons, but also help with homework, administrative procedures, translations, and in the search for living accommodations, which is often difficult.

The guests come from countries such as Egypt, Morocco, Kenya, Togo, Syria, Iran and Iraq.

Conversation usually takes place in German in order to give guests the opportunity to become better integrated in Germany and to orient themselves to our country.

"The goal is to bring different cultures together so that refugees feel welcome in our country and thus feel at home," says Pastor Jörg Gerasch.

On Saturdays there is a service for Arab Christians integrated into the café. So far, it is the only worship service for Protestant Arabic Christians in Berlin (further information: office@josuagemeinde.de).

Prayer:

- **Thank God for this initiative which is allowing the culturally unlimited power of the gospel to be experienced in practical ways**
- **Pray that the good experiences encourage other churches to open themselves to Christians from other cultures**
- **Pray that God will bless these and other creative initiatives that help refugees and make them feel welcome**

Dangerous Alexanderplatz

Unfortunately, the Alexanderplatz is one of the most dangerous places in the city.

Once again in April, there was a violent crime committed on the Alexanderplatz, in which a 20 year old man from Pakistan was seriously injured in a fight at the train station.

On Easter Sunday, the disfigured corpse of an Israeli was found in the ruins of the Franciscan monastery not far from the Alexanderplatz. He had also been the victim of a violent crime.

The noticeable accumulation of violent crime that often ends in death on and around the Alexanderplatz is cause for great concern. For several months, the police have had a police car stationed outside the train station as a kind of mobile police station. However, the officials seem to be overwhelmed with the challenges of the area. Efforts to deploy additional staff have failed so far.

Prayer:

- **Pray that God's peace would settle on the Alexanderplatz**
- **Pray that this place will become a place of life**
- **Pray for blessing and success for the work of the police on site**

Dates

- **May 8, 7pm Thanksgiving and Remembrance Worship Service**, Conclusion of 100 Days of Prayer, Lukasgemeinde, Kurfürstenstr.133
- **May 9, 11:00 Commemoration Event** in the "T-Building" of the Memorial Site Sachsenhausen; Place: Heinrich-Grüber-Platz 3, 16515 Oranienburg
- **May 9, 7pm, Worship Service: „70 Years after the End of the War – Gratefully going forward“**; Place: C-Campus Berlin, Waidmannsluster Damm 7c-e
- **May 10 March of Life: 3pm** March begins at Anhalter Bahnhof (Stresemannstr./Anhalter Str. in Berlin-Mitte); **4pm Demonstration** in front of the Brandenburger Tor **"70 Years after the end of the war"**
- **May 11-13 Conference "Experiencing God's glory"** (Registration at: <http://dbb-j.de/>)

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