



Edition 135 – June 2015

Commemoration and Celebration of 70 Years after the End of the War

From May 8 to 10 there were a number of events commemorating 70 years after the end of the war, the liberation and the end of the holocaust. For the first time, a very moving event with a lecture, prayer and communion service took place in the T-building of the former concentration camp Sachsenhausen, which served as the central administration of all concentration camps. In addition, there were further commemorative and reconciliation services with up to 18 Holocaust survivors.

On Sunday the first "March of Life" went through the centre of Berlin, passing the centres of power during the Nazi era. Around 800 people participated in the rally in front of the Brandenburg Gate. Among others, a Holocaust survivor, who survived two death marches as a young man, spoke. He was thrilled to be able to participate in a "March of Life" for a third time. Stephan Kramer, former secretary general of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, expressed his gratitude to this movement in the middle of society, through which Jewish residents and Holocaust survivors have experienced true friendship and love. Some young people reported how deeply they have been affected by the discovery of the atrocities committed by their grandfathers. They vowed to never remain silent about anti-Semitism and hatred of Jews, and want to be friends on the side of Israel. Thus, the event significantly pointed forward to a way of living-out solidarity with the Jewish population in our country and the State of Israel.

The weather was rather cool and grey. But near the end of the event, as some Bible passages were being read (Isaiah 61:1-3 "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me..."), the sun suddenly illuminated the stage—like a "heavenly spotlight" of God's goodwill.

Prayer:

- **Thank God for these deeply spiritual and reconciliatory services which point the way to the future**
- **Pray that the hidden and public actions of Christians will result in setting people free in both society and politics**

Maccabi-Games in Berlin

The European Maccabi-Games will be held in Berlin for the first time from July 27 to August 5. This is a large Jewish sports event with 2,300 athletes from 40 countries competing in 20 sports against each other. The Maccabi-Games will be held in the Berlin Olympic Park. 70 years after the war, this is a special sign of trust. There has never been a larger and more significant Jewish event on German soil. Before World War II, the Maccabi World Union office was in Berlin. The opening ceremony will be held at the Waldbühne on July 28. Preparations are in full swing. The organizers are disappointed with the low response from the business community. Normally, major sporting events are supported by sponsors. Is fear of damaging their market and losing customers playing a role here? Berliners have the opportunity to become host families for international volunteers. You can also help as a volunteer or support the Games through donations. More information can be found at <http://www.emg2015.de/>

Prayer:

- **Pray that enough sponsors can be found for the Games**
- **Pray that many host families can be found**
- **Pray that the Games will make Jewish life in Berlin more well-known in a positive way**

New Curriculum for Schools

That which is still being hotly debated in Baden-Württemberg has long been standard teaching practice in Berlin. Since 2001, the general curricula guidelines provide space for the issue of sexual diversity. The current curricula are based on frameworks that have been in place since the school year 2006/2007. The much-discussed new curriculum for schools in Berlin and Brandenburg will be introduced a year later than previously planned. Berlin's Education Minister Sandra Scheeres and Brandenburg's Education Minister Günter Baaske explained that further discussion is still needed. Therefore, the new framework curriculum for grades one to ten will not take effect until the school year 2017/18. Sex education now belongs to the seven areas that are to be discussed with the associ-

ations. A correction of the previous master plan in favor of one more pleasing to ethically conservative Christians was suggested. However, the Lesbian and Gay Association Berlin-Brandenburg (LSVD) criticized the current draft. They feel that there are great shortcomings with regard to the consideration of sexual diversity and gender identity. "Sex education" is no longer provided as a cross-curricular topic. The perspective of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex young people was largely ignored. The role of non-heterosexual teachers as role models, unlike in the previously valid regulations, was also taken out. (Berliner Morgenpost 23.04.2015, LSVD 18.03.2015)

Prayer:

- **Pray for thorough discussions of new guidelines for sex education, including also from Christian positions**
- **Pray for respect for all sexual orientations, but that no indoctrination of students will take place**
- **Pray for God's guidance for decision-makers**

Occupational Group Pre-School Teachers

The pre-school teacher profession is very extensive and varied. Most pre-school teachers work in day-care centres (nursery and elementary group). They must know at all times what is going on and must respond empathetically to each individual child, as well as maintain good contact with the parents. Pre-school teachers need to be flexible, very patient and have wise ideas how to respond in each situation.

Every child brings a different world into the pre-school—perhaps his/her cultural background or the imprint of the family. It gives the teachers great pleasure to experience each child's development over a long period and to have a small part in it. However, many children are no longer used to integrating themselves or waiting. Many children don't have boundaries at home. Social interaction must be learned, which represents a major challenge for the teachers. A large and ongoing problem in Berlin pre-schools is the shortage of staff and also the prescribed staffing allowance which does not permit reserves (for children from 3 to 6 years: one teacher for every 10 children; for children aged 2 to 3 years: one teacher for every 6 children). It is constantly necessary to bridge staff shortages.

Many immigrant families live in Berlin, and many of them speak little German, which brings its own set of problems. For day care centres in such areas, a minimal increase in staff is allowed, but it is not really sufficient to really encourage and support these children. The overall social situation is reflected in the pre-schools—Children are growing up more and more in a

world of media; they have less and less real play-mates; they deal less with peers or siblings; adults devote little quality time to the children; urban children have little contact with nature. Of course these generalizations must be considered individually, but due to lack of ideas and high media consumption, many children no longer know how to play freely and interact naturally with other children.

Pray:

- **Pray for strong teams which exhibit confidence and love**
- **Pray that pre-school teachers will receive support from their employers and others**
- **Pray that more Christian pre-schools will be opened and that God's love will be shared there**

New BER-Manager

In an interview mid-May, Karsten Mühlenfeld, the new airport manager, expressed his expectations in more detail for the first time. At that point, 21 percent of the pending remaining work was done—According to plan, it should have been 23 percent. He wants construction to be done by the spring of 2016 and then to complete the approvals and trials within a year after that. An extension is not planned initially. With the expected increase in passenger numbers, people will have to live with temporary arrangements. He is confident that the airport can actually be opened in 2017.

Prayer:

- **Pray for wisdom, skill, and efficiency for Karsten Mühlenfeld**
- **Pray for successful further work and God's protection**

Keeping On: Protection from Terror

We are grateful to God for His protection against in the country and in Berlin. This is not to be taken for granted! In April and May two terrorist attacks that were planned in other cities were discovered. It is not only Islamists who are dangerous, but also right-wing extremists. An attack being planned by a right-wing extremist group was discovered.

Prayer:

- **Thank God for His protection**
- **Pray that attacks that are being planned can be discovered and stopped**
- **Pray that God will bless the work of the police and law-enforcement agencies**

Dates

- **June 10, 6pm, Prayer for City Politicians in front of the Rotes Rathaus**

Subscribe: Go to <http://eepurl.com/TqJSz> and enter your e-mail address into the data base. You will get a mail with a link for confirmation – subscription is free and you can opt out any time.

Permission is granted to copy and print this newsletter for your church or prayer group or friends.

Please visit <http://gebetfuerberlin.wordpress.com/english/> for our archives.