



Edition 137 – September 2015

Good News

People who have found a new home after fleeing their homeland need a variety of support. But they also have something to give. The old and new Berliners have come up with something to help people from other countries when they arrive, but also to make their skills available to others.

Among the exciting projects are cooking classes from *über dem Tellerrand*, a hotel with jobs for refugees, and an upcycling Café run by refugees and Germans.

Some examples: <http://tinyurl.com/ooklwj5>

Prayer:

- Thank God for these many initiatives

God in the Neighbourhood - Move In

In Berlin there are neighbourhoods where very few Christians live, for instance, the neighbourhood around the Kottbusser Tor or the neighbourhood at Ahrensfelder Berg in Marzahn. The lack of Christians in a particular area is often made evident by the fact that there are no worship services held anywhere in the neighbourhood.

"Move In" is an attempt to answer this challenge. Founded just 6 years ago in Toronto, Canada, this idea has become a movement that has now spread to other continents.

"Move In" is not a program-oriented initiative, but rather an organic movement of Christians who want to make Jesus Christ and his love tangible to others. They move together deliberately as a team into a disadvantaged, "unreached" neighbourhood in the city.

Through prayer, personal commitment, and living life with their neighbours in the immediate vicinity, the love of Christ becomes visible and contagious. Team members only have to be willing to meet with each other once a week to share and to pray and to spend time with their neighbours and build relationships with them.

In Berlin there are now 4 "Move In" teams: Kottbusser Tor, Marzahn North, Neukölln – Böhmisches Dorf, and Neukölln - Reuterkiez. These teams would be happy for further support

and would also be happy to assist you in finding accommodation in their neighbourhood.

Plans are being made for more districts. You can find more information here:

<http://www.gfberlin.de/wer-wir-sind/foren>. A network meeting will take place on Oct. 5.

Prayer:

- Thank God and pray for His blessing on all those who are already in Move-In teams
- Pray that this initiative will spread across Berlin
- Pray for good contacts with the neighbours

March for Life September 19

Contrary to the trend, more and more babies are being born in Berlin. Already in 2013 there was a surplus of 2246 births, and in 2014 6.6% more babies were born. Thus, the capital city is at the top in regards to number of births!

By contrast, in 2014 there were more than 8,000 abortions - proportionately more than the national average.

Today it is very difficult for a mother who wants to deliver a child who potentially might be handicapped. Both physicians and society advise having an abortion in such cases, and increasingly also in case of children who will be born with so-called "Down's Syndrome". Society is increasingly less likely to say that an unborn child also has a right to life.

Therefore it is of utmost importance that this pressing problem is kept in the minds of the public and politicians. This is the purpose of the "March for Life" conducted annually in Berlin by Christian pro-life groups. Participation has been steadily increasing for several years and has now become an eyesore for radical abortion advocates.

It can no longer be overlooked that people are actively campaigning for the right to life. This bothers the opponents. The Left Party is now calling for nationwide opposition to this march, which they say spreads "medieval slogans".

In recent years, the participants of the march have experienced first-hand what this "opposi-

tion" looks like. Participants were showered with hate speech, assaulted, and shouted down. The rooms of a right-to-life association were trashed. Therefore, Christians want to be surrounded by more prayer this year. A preparatory prayer event will take place. Those wishing to participate must register at info@rundumdieuhr.org. The March of Life will begin at 1pm with a rally in front of the Bundeskanzleramt and end with an ecumenical worship service.

Prayer:

- **Pray for courage to carry babies full-term, for competent consultation and help for women (and men!) experiencing conflict of choice**
- **Pray that the march can be successfully prepared and carried out with positive resonance among the public**
- **Pray that counter-demonstrations will not be violent**

"Giving thanks, Celebrating, Praying" on October 3rd

The 25th anniversary of German unity will once again be celebrated interculturally and ecumenically. The main topic this year is the issue of refugees and their fates. Former refugees from former East Germany and current refugees will share about their lives.

The event will begin at 3pm with an ecumenical worship service and interviews at the Kapelle der Versöhnung, Bernauer Strasse, followed by a prayer walk with stations along the former border. From 5pm on: Panel discussion with refugees and those who are taking care of them, among others, Lissy Eichert, from St. Christopher Catholic church.

Location: Christus Kirche, Anklamer Str. 31, Mitte.

The day ends with time to meet and talk with each other with food and drinks in the courtyard of the church.

Prayer:

- **Pray that hearts will be touched to help refugees**
- **Pray that thanksgiving for God's grace will be heard more and more in our country**
- **Pray for good preparation, many participants, and also for passers-by along the site of the Wall**

Refugees

By mid-August, 18,500 asylum-seekers had already arrived this year in Berlin, and by the end

of the month, it could be 40,000. By comparison: in 2014 a total of 12,227 asylum-seekers arrived in Berlin. New refugee shelters were hurriedly opened in various districts. After the situation in the main offices of the State Office of Health and Welfare (LAGESO) in Moabit escalated, and the refugees had to wait for days to get registered, the Senate agreed upon a new refugee concept with a holistic approach to dealing with the influx of refugees.

The new concept attempts to organize registration and accommodation better. Administration office staff and aid agencies, as well as police and firefighters, will gather in a round-table.

It is wonderful that many Berliners are very willing to help, and that they have tried on their own to provide for the refugees in front of the LAGESO. In the meantime this willingness to help is now being coordinated. There is clear information about how to help, for instance, on the website: www.berlin-hilft-lageso.de

There is also a hotline to help place helpers where they are needed - Tel. 39088399

Prayer:

- **Thank God for the many Berliners who desire to help. Pray for increased inspiration for creative help**
- **Pray for God's strength and help for all those working in administration and in the refugee housing units**
- **Pray for politicians and others in responsible positions for wisdom in mobilizing and using resources**

Recommended Reading Notice: Willkommenskultur

In cooperation between Together for Berlin and the Down to Earth Publishing Company a booklet will be published (ready probably in October) with the title "Willkommenskultur" (Welcoming Culture). It will give lots of practical suggestions on how to help people who are arriving here. 5 Euro (10 for 45 Euro). Pre-order at: shop@down-to-earth.de

Dates

- Sept. 9, 6pm **Prayer for city politicians** at the Rote Rathaus
- Sept. 12, 2-9pm, **Berlin Festival of Churches** (Fest der Kirchen) on the Alexanderplatz
- Sept. 19, 1-5pm, **March for Life**
- Oct. 10, beginning 3pm **Thanking, Celebrating, and Praying** – 25 years of German unity, the fate of refugees back then and now, Kapelle der Versöhnung, Bernauer Straße