



Edition 160 – December 2017 / January 2018

Good News: 7,8% more births

Last year, 41,000 children were born in Berlin. This represents an increase of 7.8 percent compared to 2015 - 0.4 percent above the national average. There have not been so many babies in Berlin since the baby boom in the 60s. Let's welcome each baby as a miracle of God and congratulate the parents!

- **Thank God for the increasing courage for new life and parenthood**

Christmas – Peace on Earth?

There are mixed feelings about Christmas. For some, it is a celebration they look forward to with bright eyes and full anticipation. For others, it is a time when family tensions can no longer be evaded. And still others feel particularly excluded during the Christmas season – because they have no one with whom they can celebrate or because they are new here in Germany and do not yet know Christmas customs. We also need to pray for the protection of the Christmas markets from terror and violence. A year ago on December 19, an assassin rammed a truck into a Christmas market. 12 people died and 60 were injured.

Prayer:

- **Pray that the message "God with us" will touch many non-believing people who, whether because of tradition or curiosity, visit worship services or Christian celebrations**
- **Pray that Christians will invite lonely people to their house to celebrate together**
- **Pray that Christmas markets will be protected from terror**

New Tourism Concept

It is a gift that many people from all over the world visit our interesting city. Almost half of them come from abroad. In 2016, 12.7 million people visited Berlin; 31.1 million overnight stays were recorded. The numbers continue to rise slightly. For the residents in the districts which are particularly popular with tourists, the many visitors can also sometimes be a burden. The Berlin Senate is currently working intensively on a new tourism concept that aims, among other things, to increase the marketing of the outer

districts of the city and to provide more contact between Berliners and visitors. Electric buses and other measures should make tourism more environmentally friendly.

Prayer:

- **Pray for a smart, sustainable tourism concept**
- **Pray for good measures that combine tourism promotion and protection of local residents**
- **Pray that more tourists stay longer and discover the city and its residents**

Day of Prayer "ONE in Christ"

A prayer day for the city with this motto and the subtitle "pray together, celebrate, act", will take place for the first time on January 20, 2018. At the end of the Evangelical Alliance Week of Prayer Evangelical, and in the middle of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the Evangelical Alliance, Together for Berlin, and the Ecumenical Council Berlin-Brandenburg are inviting Christians to come together for a day of prayer. At this event, Christians from different church backgrounds, cultures, and generations will meet each other, united in Jesus Christ. The sponsors would rather have "the greatest possible diversity than the lowest common denominator". The event begins at 3:30 pm in the Evangelisch-Freikirchliche Gemeinde Schöneberg, Hauptstraße 125. We will begin together with music and songs to the glory of God and an input. We will then pray at twelve different "stations" in various forms and traditions, distributed throughout the building. A children's program will be provided. After a joint closing session, there is time to meet others over snacks and drinks. The day will close with the usual prayer concert of the youth network Berlin United, beginning at 7:00 pm.

Prayer:

- **Pray that the broad unity of Christians honours God and encourages those involved**
- **Pray for success for the complex preparations and planning**
- **Pray that the world will realize that the Father has sent the Son (John 17:23)**

Anti-Drugs-Campaign

In Germany, the use of drugs and the number of drug-related deaths continue to increase. The situation in Berlin is particularly frightening with a 15% increase in deaths in the last year, mostly due to heroin, cocaine and crystal meth in particular. But the capital is also the leader in cannabis use. The red-red-green government in Berlin wants to re-design its drug policy. This is shown, for instance, in Görlitzer Park, one of the main places for drug deals with hashish and marijuana. Following unsuccessful attempts to stop the dealing, so-called park walkers are now being used to keep the dealing at least within tolerable limits. This seems to work, because the accompanying crime has decreased. There is also a preventive offensive, which gives the Berlin specialist department 300,000 € more for prevention and education work in schools. Also, consumption rooms and so-called "drug checks" are to be created in which police and consumers can check the substances.

Prayer:

- **Pray that an effective way out of dependency can be found for drug addicts**
- **Pray especially that the prevention work among young people is fruitful**

Nursing Care Crisis

Recently there was a strike at the Berlin Charité Clinic because the schedules for surgery are too full and there are too few staff. Nationwide and also in Berlin, the problem is growing: the number of (aging) needy people is increasing, but the number of nurses is increasing only slowly. This applies to outpatient home care as well as nursing home care and hospitals. There are currently very few nurses on the job market. Politicians urgently need to counteract this problem. The topic should be an urgent part of the negotiations for a new federal government.

Prayer:

- **Pray for determined action on the part of politicians at the state and federal level**
- **Pray for strength and motivation for the care-givers**
- **Pray for more Christians in nursing jobs**

Keeping On: Crime

At Kottbuser Tor, Görlitzer Park, which is well-known for problems with drug dealers, and at the Warsaw Bridge, the number of crimes has declined compared to the previous year. There were fewer acts of violence and fewer thefts of bags or bicycles for instance. On the other hand, the drug trade increased in some cases (article above). It's not that the state is powerless, but it is limited in its resources. Politicians

of all parties did little, and the police force was neglected. Currently, nine large clans of Arab descent dominate the crime scene in Berlin. There are also rockers from various clubs, and the Russian mafia is also active.

Prayer:

- **Thank God for partial decline in crime and pray for further decrease**

On a personal note: Rosemarie Stresemann is leaving the editorial team

Rosemarie Stresemann is a well-known name in the prayer scene in Berlin and now also nationwide. After 15 years she is ending her cooperation with the Berlin prayer mail and will now concentrate entirely on the "Wächterruf", a continuous prayer chain for Germany with monthly letters and increasingly also conferences and seminars. The retired primary school teacher combines intensive and critical political research with a great passion for (often prophetic) intercession, a combination rarely found. Rosemarie has not only influenced the prayer mail, but also the prayer scene in Berlin significantly. From 2003 to 2016 she also co-headed the monthly meeting of the "Forum Prayer" by Together for Berlin together with Axel Nehlsen. She has been responsible for an infinite amount of impetus for prayer for the city and also a significant portion of the texts and prayer requests in this prayer mail. It's great to see our God sharpening the gifts and profiles of His people and using them for the coming of His kingdom. This also applies to Rosemarie's future tasks. People can express their thanks in written or verbal form, but it is God who repays in his own way and creates lasting fruit. In that sense: May God bless you, Rosemarie!

Dates

Dec. 13, 6pm Prayer for City Politicians, Rotes Rathaus

Jan. 10, 6pm Prayer for City Politicians, Rotes Rathaus

Jan. 14-21 International Week of Prayer sponsored by the Evangelical Alliance. A brochure with Berlin dates can be obtained in participating churches and online here:

<https://www.evangelische-allianz-berlin.de/aktuelles>

Jan. 20, 3:30pm Day of Prayer ONE (See article above)

Warm greetings from the editorial team (Kerstin Hack, Axel Nehlsen, Anna Wunderlich) and from the GfB-leadership team Ana Hoffmeister. We wish you all a meaningful Advent and Christmas season!