



Edition 217 – September 2023

Good News: More Rain

Nowhere in Germany was July as hot as in Berlin. But in the second half of the month and at the beginning of August, it rained a lot and for a long time in our region. Too bad for vacationers, but a blessing for the vegetation! And an answered prayer because in previous months we called for prayer for rain because of the severe drought! The exceptional drought in the upper layers of soil has come to an end. Plants and agriculture in particular benefit from this. But that hardly changes anything about the low groundwater level.

Prayer:

- **Thank God for answering prayer for more rain in the last few months**
- **Pray for more rain in autumn to replenish the water table**

Prayer for the Districts: Tempelhof-Schöneberg

The Evangelical Alliance Berlin and Together for Berlin are praying for one district each month in 2023. It's Tempelhof-Schöneberg's turn in September.

With 353,913 inhabitants, Tempelhof-Schöneberg is the second largest district in Berlin. The Mercedes-Benz plant in the south of the district is one of the largest private employers in the city of Berlin. With the EUREF district, a centre for the energy industry has been established at the Südkreuz train station. The district is known for the Tempelhofer Feld (former Tempelhof Airport) as a local recreation area and for the district of Schöneberg with its homosexual scene in the so-called rainbow district. In the last election, the CDU received 10% more votes, making it the strongest force in the district parliament. Nevertheless, the previous mayor of Bündnis 90/Die Grünen remained in office: Jörn Oltmann. "Loneliness is the creeping crisis of our time. It's there and often overlooked," he says. Three other city councillors are provided by the CDU: Matthias Steuckardt, Eva Majewski and Tobias Dollase. Saskia Ellenbeck comes from Bündnis 90/Die Grünen and Oliver Schworck from the SPD. Unfortunately, there is no active Evangelical Alliance group in the district.

Prayer:

- **Pray for good ideas to combat loneliness**
- **Pray for an economy that is sustainable and creates jobs for people**
- **Pray for good traffic route concepts**
- **Pray for a new initiative by churches and their leaders, who come together to pray for the district and act as links to politicians**

Vacancies in the Judiciary

A number of positions are vacant in Berlin's judiciary. The public prosecutor's office, the Supreme Court and the prisons are particularly adversely affected. As of June 30, there were 47 vacancies in the public prosecutor's office. There were 60 vacancies at the Superior Court. A total of 217 positions were vacant in the Berlin prisons. In the prisons, the times for inmates to be outside of their cells will be reduced. As a result, the prisoners have less time to move freely within the prison. This can jeopardize their rehabilitation. In addition, the lack of staff also increases the risk of overwork for the employees. The situation is becoming even more serious because a wave of retirements is approaching the Berlin judiciary. Justice Senator Badenberg (independent, for the CDU) recently announced 20 additional public prosecutor posts for the fight against organized crime.

Prayer:

- **Pray for fast and thorough measures by the Senate to solve the problem of vacancies**
- **Pray for the protection of staff against excessive demands, illness and burnout**
- **Pray for more success in fighting organized crime**

Finance Senator and Mayor, Stefan Evers, CDU

We are presenting the new Senate members of the CDU-SPD coalition in a series.

Stefan Evers, born in Herdecke/Ruhr in 1979, studied law at the University of Potsdam. He has lived in Berlin since 1999 and is married to a man.

From 2018 to April 27, 2023, he was parliamentary manager of the CDU parliamentary group in Berlin. Since 2015, the finance department has a common mission statement "Together - For Each Other - For Berlin", which can be read on the Senate website. The decisive role of the tax and finance administration during the Nazi dictatorship is well worked out and can also be read. When he took office as a senator, Evers said that his most important task was to be the driving force behind administrative reform in Berlin. He advertises for young people for the tax offices. The work is complicated and sometimes dry, but it is a public interest task. He describes the younger generation as Berlin's enablers or the "hidden champions". Around 7,000 employees work in the tax offices, but due to the wave of retirements, the number of training and places at the university must now be increased. Lateral entry has also been possible since 2019. In some areas there has been a 25% drop in applicants. Stefan Evers will give up his position as CDU general secretary, which he has held since 2016. According to RBB, Ottilie Klein, a member of the Bundestag, is being discussed as a successor.

Prayer:

- **Pray for success in finding enough suitable junior staff**
- **Pray for success in advancing administrative reform, especially in digitization**
- **Pray for practical implementation of the mission statement in everyday life**

Jewish Life and Anti-Semitism

According to the latest RIAS report, there are an average of two to three anti-Semitic incidents a day (!) in Berlin. Anti-Semitism draws on old prejudices against "the Jews" and updates them. We put others in boxes that are difficult for them to get out of. Such prejudices and clichés have an enormous influence on how we think and act. One way to question your own evaluations and judgments is to get to know Jewish life. There are many opportunities to do so in September: The Jewish high holidays are coming up: Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year – Sept. 15-17), Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement – Sept. 24) and Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles – Sept. 29-Oct. 6). The Jewish community in Berlin is organizing the Jewish Culture Days in Berlin from September 5th to 14th (<https://www.juedische-kulturtage.org/>). The website says: "Because Jewish history is also a history of persecution, the visual arts, music and literature developed as a means of overcoming and processing personal and collective tragedies. This is particularly

evident in the famous Jewish humour, which is characterized, among other things, by self-mockery and disrespect."

Prayer:

- **Pray for protection for synagogues, Jewish institutions, for Berliners of the Jewish faith, for Israelis**
- **Pray for a revelation of God's love for the Jewish people**
- **Pray for repentance of unconfessed anti-Semitism**
- **Pray that the culture days are used by many to get to know Jewish life in Berlin**

Discussion About Deportation of Clan Members

At the beginning of August, the Federal Ministry of the Interior, led by Nancy Faeser (SPD), proposed deporting clan members when they had a criminal record. Members of various parties have massively criticized this proposal. Berlin's Senator for the Interior, Iris Spranger (SPD), emphasized that a decision on a person's deportation cannot be made solely on the basis of family affiliation. A spokeswoman for Spranger also pointed out that the proposal by the Federal Ministry of the Interior is about "membership" and not about a family relationship. A ministry spokesman stressed that criminal activities were decisive for a deportation. Being part of a family is not enough.

Prayer:

- **Pray for successful prevention work so that young people do not slip into criminal structures**
- **Pray for sensible police measures against clan crime**
- **Pray that clan members meet Jesus and are changed by him**

Keeping On: Refugees

The situation regarding the accommodation of refugees in Berlin remains tense. The Senate task force is still urgently looking for more living space, for example in (former) hotels and hostels. The situation is exacerbated by the general extreme housing shortage in Berlin. **Let's keep praying for a quicker resolution of this issue.**

Dates

Sept. 13: Prayer for City Politics, 6-7pm, Rotes Rathaus, in front of the main entrance