



Edition 220 – December 2023 / January 2024

## ***Good News: More Funding in the 2024 Budget for Problem Areas***

More money for anti-Semitism prevention, youth work and clinics - that's what Berlin is planning for the next two years. In November, the Berlin coalition presented the double budget for 2024/2025. An additional 42 million euros are to flow into youth work and youth leisure facilities. In the health sector, Berlin's coalition also wants to invest an additional 42 million euros in hospitals. The state also wants to support projects to prevent anti-Semitism with an additional 25 million euros.

**Prayer: Thank God for more money for Berlin's young people, financial help for Berlin's health system and investments in projects to prevent anti-Semitism - especially with a view to the escalation in the Middle East**

## ***Christmas in Times of War***

It's not directly with us here, but it is quite close to us: the war in Ukraine and in Israel/Gaza. How do we deal with it when it's "peace on earth" again at Christmas? We have less peace at present than for quite some time. In February 2022, the Chancellor spoke of a turning point. But the birth of the Saviour in Bethlehem was also a turning point: God comes to us as a human being on earth. Since then, everything has been different. There is hope for the most hopeless cases. There is peace with God. There is reconciliation even for enemies. That's why, despite all the setbacks and the long war against Ukraine, it's worth praying for peace. That's why it's worth shouting the message of reconciliation with God and subsequently between people loudly into the ears and hearts of the Berlin population at Christmas 2023. Where else could we find personal peace and comfort but with Jesus, the child in the manger, the Saviour on the cross and the living Lord?

**Prayer:**

- **Pray that peace would come soon in Ukraine and between Israel and Gaza**
- **Pray that the Christmas message would be preached in a powerful and credible way in churches**
- **Pray that Berliners will find Jesus as their Lord**

## ***Problems Feared on New Year's Eve***

Senator for Economic Affairs Franziska Giffey expressed her fears of renewed New Year's Eve riots to the "Tagesspiegel". The conflicts of this world also play out on our streets and schoolyards. But Berlin is better prepared for it this year. The situation should be defused by a larger number of firecrackers ban zones.

**Prayer:**

- **Pray for sensible regulations that can also be implemented**
- **Pray for protection for police and rescue workers from firecrackers and rockets**
- **Pray for protection against injuries in general and against aggressive riots**

## ***Prayer for the Districts: Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg***

**The Evangelical Alliance Berlin and Together for Berlin are praying for a specific district each month in 2023. In December it is Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg's turn.**

The double district is colorful, loud and crowded: 293,231 people live here in an area of just 20.34 km<sup>2</sup>. This makes it the district with the highest population density and the lowest average age. It is known as a hotspot for the creative scene and for its intercultural diversity. In the last few decades there has been a profound structural change in the form of gentrification. Demand now far exceeds supply on the housing market. The few available apartments in many neighbourhoods are advertised at such high prices that they are only affordable for the upper middle and upper classes. A few blocks away (e.g., around the Kottbusser Tor) two thirds of the families live dependent on state benefits. The district is struggling with a variety of social problems: Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg had the most drug-related deaths in Berlin in 2022 (41; in 2021 there were 24). Homelessness is also a problem in the district, for example there have been tent camps on the Landwehr Canal for years. Clara Herrmann from the Greens has been the district mayor since December 2021. Other city councilors are Oliver Nöll (Left Party, Work & Social Affairs), Annika Gerold (Green Party, Transport & Environment), Florian Schmidt (Green Party, Building) Andy Hehmke (SPD, School & Sport) and Max Kindler (CDU, Youth & Family).

**Prayer:**

- **Pray for wisdom for politicians to address social problems and ensure balance between different groups**
- **Pray for good coexistence between cultures, especially in view of the current Middle East conflict; Pray for protection for Jewish life**
- **Pray for powerful cooperation between churches in order to build the Kingdom of God together; Pray that youth work will be strengthened**

***The New Senate Members: Senator for Science, Health and Home Care, Dr. Ina Czyborra, SPD***

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

Ina Czyborra has been Ulrike Gote's successor since April 27, 2023. She is 57 years old, married and has three children. She studied archeology and worked in various museums and excavation projects. So, she is very new to her current area of responsibility. She is being supported by State Secretaries Ellen Haußdörfer and Dr. Henry Marx. Major challenges lie in the shortage of skilled workers in nursing. She would like to recognize foreign qualifications more quickly and advance the planned training camp for nursing professions at the Wenckebach Clinic in Tempelhof. The Berlin home visits pilot project has been running in seven districts together with the Maltesers since 2021.

**Prayer:**

- **Pray for wisdom and good advisors in the diverse new challenges of this office**
- **Pray for successful plans to overcome the shortage of skilled workers in nursing and home care**

***Evangelical Alliance Week of Prayer and EINS Day of Prayer***

The International Week of Prayer of the Evangelical Alliance will take place again from January 14th to 21st, also with many prayer meetings in Berlin. The theme for the German-speaking area is "JOY – SO THAT MY JOY FULLY FILLS YOU". "What a reassurance from God and what a signal in the midst of these challenging times. Joy shines where worry would like to spread. God himself is the source of joy and whoever meets this God is gripped by joy." This is what it says on the website of the Berlin Evangelical Alliance. All dates in the districts can be found here: <https://www.evangelische-allianz-berlin.de/>

On January 20th it's that time again: At the end of the Alliance Prayer Week and the start of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the EINS (ONE) Day of Prayer will take place for the seventh time, this time in the Equipppers Church in Lichtenberg, Landsberger Allee 225. After a joint start at 3 p.m. there will again be at least 17 different prayer stations where you can discover the diversity and beauty of Berlin's churches and pray together for the city. Be there! All information on <https://www.einsfuerberlin.de/>

**Prayer:**

- **Pray for successful preparation of the week of prayer and the EINS day of prayer**
- **Pray that God answers the prayers of many**
- **Pray that the unity of the Body of Christ will be strengthened**

***Keeping On Nr. 1: Accomodation for Asylum Seekers***

The accommodation situation for asylum seekers remains very tense. Therefore, a special representative for refugee affairs has been appointed.

**Let us continue to pray that quick and safe solutions will be found to accommodate the refugees. Let us bless the election of the new special representative.**

***Keeping On Nr. 2: Anti-Semitism***

Berlin is the sad leader of places with anti-Semitic attacks. For example, houses and apartment doors, behind which Jewish families were thought to be living were painted with Stars of David.

**Let us continue to pray that Israelis and Jews can live safe and secure in our city and that hatred of Israelis and Palestinians does not continue to grow.**

***Dates***

**Dec. 11, Nie wieder ist jetzt!** (Never again is now!) Rally at the Hanukkah Menora against anti-Semitism, 7 p.m., Pariser Platz <https://fb.me/e/1B4ChUoBd>  
**Dec. 13 and Jan. 10.:** **Prayer for City Politics**, 6-7 pm, Rotes Rathaus, in front of the main entrance  
**Jan. 14-21: Evangelical Alliance Week of Prayer**, Dates: <https://www.evangelische-allianz-berlin.de/>  
**Jan. 20, 3-9 pm Day of Prayer EINS: Equipppers Gemeinde Hohenschönhausen** (see article), <https://www.einsfuerberlin.de/>