

January 2016

“As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you ...”

- the verse for the Year 2016 in the Moravian Daily Texts. (Isaiah 66:13).

When as a child I had bumped my knee – what gave me comfort in my pain? Being cuddled and stroked. And the “it’ll soon be better” promises from my mother gave me hope. But the most important thing was to know she was there to protect me.

Do we also need comfort as intercessors in the Call of the Watchmen? I believe that we do, for the state of the world also causes pain in us. But in our prayers we experience God’s presence as well as comfort and hope through his Word. And Jesus tells us: “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33). Receive this comfort and encouragement from God in your prayer times. -RS-

Prayer emergency service

Recently I noticed that women are being recruited for the voluntary fire service. Germany needs more fire fighters – in the physical and in the spiritual world. My father is a professional fireman. He therefore has his fixed times of duty. It’s the same with intercessors who have committed themselves to pray once a month for at least one hour, alone or in a prayer group, for the items in the prayer letter. There is also a possibility for additional service: the voluntary prayer emergency service. Here you receive prayer alerts by email for current happenings that need immediate prayer. And since there are many “fires” in many areas at this time, we need more intercessors for the emergency service. Your prayers make a difference! You can sign up to receive these prayer alerts on our website. (Translators note: Selected “Prayer Alerts” are sent out in English from time to time to all our international intercessors.)

Prayer:

- **For an increase in intercessors in the prayer emergency service. (John 16:23)**
- **That all, both young and old, will respond to the call to prayer duty for our land. (1 Thessalonians 5:17)**

-Magdalena Kraft, “Kraft-clip”-

Call of the Watchmen Prayer Conference in Bingen

As already announced in the last prayer letter, we are planning to hold a prayer conference for Germany on May 27-29 in the Rheintal-Kongresszentrum in Bingen. We will be supported locally by the “Felsgemeinde” (“Church on the Rock”), a service for which we are very thankful. Bingen is easily reached by train from Frankfurt Airport.

In a time of increasing unrest in our world we want to gather many intercessors to stand together for our land. We will not primarily be looking at needs, but will be searching for God’s heart for Germany. We ask for your prayers for the time of intensive preparation that lies before us. A flyer will be issued in February so that you can register early. Mark the date in your calendar and let others know about it.

Prayer:

- **For the preparations to be led by the Holy Spirit and for good communication between all those involved. (Isaiah 50:4)**
- **That many intercessors will come to the conference to stand in prayer for our land. (2 Chronicles 7:14)** -RS-

Welcome to the “European Prayer Canopy”

If ever we had the assignment to pray for the European states to work together in peace and freedom and solidarity – then it is now. Through all past crises, up to and including the handling of the financial crisis with Greece, the union has held together. With the current refugee crisis, it is in danger of falling apart. With unforeseeable consequences. For everyone. Poland, Hungary, the United Kingdom are only the beginning.

Germany as the once destroyer of Europe has become the guarantor for the advancement of Europe in peace and unity. God has also told us many times that renewed spiritual life will flow out of Germany into Europe. In 2006 the prayer initiative “European Union of Prayer” came out of Germany. This prayer group meets every six months in the country that holds the Presidency of the European Union Council and there prays for that country, for Europe and for Israel. But Europe needs more - a covering of continuous prayer over the continent. This is now beginning. Thanks be to God.

If you have Europe on your heart and you are ready to pray for Europe each week for 15 minutes or more, then you can register on the Call of the Watchmen (Wächterruf) website. You will receive a bi-weekly prayer letter of one page, written in simple English, to guide your prayers. Everyone who participates weaves his or her personal thread into the covering of prayer over our continent – the “European Prayer Canopy”.

Prayer:

- **That many intercessors from many countries will join in with this prayer cover for Europe. (Psalm 95:1-7)**
- **That the editor of the prayer letter will have much wisdom in the selection of prayer topics. (Psalm 37:30f)**
- **That God shows grace and mercy on Europe and leads us back to repentance. (Lamentations 5:21)** -OS-

New policy in relations with Turkey

For years Angela Merkel has refused the entry of Turkey into the European Union and halted all associated negotiations. She was only prepared to agree to a “privileged partnership” between the EU and Turkey. Under the pressure from the continuing influx of refugees into Germany, the Chancellor is now changing her position, even though Turkey is governed by the now increasingly authoritarian regime of Erdogan. The previous separation of state and religion in Turkey has also been extensively overruled under Erdogan. His political motives are essentially Islamic. In the election campaign he called for the conquest of Jerusalem by Islam. Human rights and the

freedom of the press are of no interest to him in his lust for power. The Kurdish minority is being suppressed.

At a recent EU Summit on refugees, Turkey was given promises, supported by Germany, that were previously unimaginable: the EU membership negotiations will be pushed forward without further delay. Visa applications from Turkey will become easier from autumn 2016. The country will receive up to three billion Euros for the improvement of the conditions of refugees from Syria.

In return Turkey will stem the stream of refugees to Europe by an effective surveillance operation on its coast line. With the refugee situation Erdogan has gained bargaining power which he is also using in connection with the issue of the "Armenian genocide". Despite bold speeches on April 24th this year, no resolution has yet been passed in our national parliament on this matter. Proposals from the various political parties were referred to the foreign affairs committee and there has been no further action. Germany is once again in a situation as it was 100 years ago, when it kept silent on the Armenian genocide in its own national interests. Is this going to happen again?

Prayer:

- **That the EU will become aware of God's solutions for the streams of refugees. (Proverbs 11:14)**
- **That Germany will not betray the interests of Israel in its negotiations with Turkey. (Genesis 12:3)**
- **That the Armenian resolution will be finally passed in parliament. (Proverbs 23:23)** -RS-

Israel and the EU Labelling Directive

The EU issued a directive in November, whereby products from areas occupied by Israel in 1967 - East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights and the West Bank – cannot be marketed as "Products of Israel" and must be labelled accordingly. This directive underlines the political stand of the EU that the areas annexed by Israel and Israeli settlements are not recognised as part of the sovereign territory of Israel. Although this is described as a measure for consumer protection, it is actually a political move within the Middle East conflict. The EU wants to put pressure on Israel with regard to the "two-state solution". The directive was supported by 16 EU states (including France and the UK). Germany voted against and did not sign the directive. However it seems that political voices in Germany are double-minded. The government recently announced under pressure from the Foreign Ministry that it would now comply with the EU Labelling Directive. The implementation of EU directives is not mandatory – but it is still not clear how Germany will respond. The Israeli government has sharply criticised the decision of the EU. The labelling is perceived as discriminatory and is very close to a boycott. As a result, Netanyahu has suspended relations with the EU institutions and no longer recognises the EU as a mediator in the Middle East peace process.

Prayer:

- **For the German government to stand against the EU Labelling Directive. (Psalm 86:11)**

- **That Germany stands on the side of Israel in the European Union and world-wide. (Isaiah 62:8)**
- **We especially bless the Israeli economy and pray for continuing strong growth. (Deuteronomy 33:13-17)**
-Alexander Schlueter, Regional Coordinator NRW-

The German army (Bundeswehr)

The German army, which is already engaged in many operations internationally, needs our prayers for many reasons, even when Christians have different opinions about these operations. In this age of globalisation and terrorism, the army is now facing completely new challenges in terms of budgets, equipment and numbers of personnel. Most operations are now linked with real life-threatening situations. Since the early 90s, when the threat from the East Block fell away, the defence spending of all the European NATO countries, including Germany, has been decreasing. The currently available equipment appears to be either out-of-date or not ready for use. New weapons systems have not been delivered on time; the costs are running out of control. The flow of information in the Ministry of Defence, with its nine departments and ten supporting offices for administration, time and time again appears to be slow and unreliable. A first attempt at rationalisation and streamlining has however already taken place under Ursula von der Leyen as Defence Minister.

The mission of the German army is to defend the country. When the Islamic State (IS) attacks European countries through terrorism (as in Paris), then it is clearly time for the army to defend us without any official "declaration of war". Now the largest deployment of the German army is about to begin in Syria. The problem as everyone knows is that terrorism cannot be defeated with "regular" military operations. This is "asymmetric warfare" where each side fights with totally different goals and tactics.

Prayer:

- **Thanks for the availability of a defence army for our land and pray for the protection of the lives of our soldiers. (Psalm 91: esp. 14-16)**
- **For competence and commitment to clarity for everyone in the Defence Ministry. (Psalm 127:1-2)**
- **Wisdom for the government in the deployment of the German army. (Psalm 46:7-11)** -RS-

"All Nations Convocation" in Jerusalem – September 2-9

The Call of the Watchmen is inviting you to join a **group tour** to Israel from Germany to take part in the "All Nations Convocation" of the "Jerusalem House Of Prayer For All Nations" in Jerusalem, September 2-9, 2016.

Details (in German only) are available on our website.

Dates for your diary

03.-06.01 MEHR Prayer Conference, Augsburg, where the Call of the Watchmen will have a display stand.

10.-17.01 German Evangelical Alliance Prayer Week

*God's blessings for 2016 from
Rosemarie Stresemann and Ortwin Schweitzer*