

CALL OF THE WATCHMEN

February 2016

Holding on to the promises

The Call of the Watchmen is now 16 years old! For 16 years we have kept watch day and night and prayed for the revelation of God's glory in our land. Key Bible verses are Isaiah 62:6-7 and Isaiah 60:1-2. With all the problems that we are now facing, many Christians ask themselves: can we really claim these promises for our land? Are we living in the light of the Lord or still living in the darkness?

So often in the Bible, problems, hardships and difficulties of all kinds are associated with God's promises. Joseph had dreams and landed up in prison. Moses acted on God's promise that he was going to deliver the people of Israel from slavery. Then came one problem after another. There were even greater threats to their existence and complaining from all sides. The opposition did not cease once they had escaped from Egypt, nor when they were entering the Promised Land.

God's promises are always contested and can only be fulfilled in our lives through constant unwavering faith. Believe in God, never give up! Now more than ever: hold on to the promises with prayer and fasting! -RS-

Answers to prayer and thanks

In past years we have often prayed for an increase in the birth rate in Germany. In the last three years the birth rate has been steadily rising, but in 2014 there was a noticeable jump. There were almost 5% more births than in 2013!

We also thank God that again in 2015 we were protected from terrorist attacks despite several security alerts.

Let's keep praying! -RS-

Call of the Watchmen Prayer Conference in Bingen

At this prayer conference, May 27 to 29 in Bingen-on-the-Rhine, we want to call upon God and seek him with all our hearts as in Jeremiah 29:12-13. A comprehensive flyer with further information (in German) will be available in February. As this is a holiday weekend and Bingen is a popular resort, some hotels are already fully booked and we have therefore reserved some hotel rooms in advance – see the conference website: www.gebetstkonferenz.de for details. We recommend that you make a booking soon.

Prayer:

- **That God will prepare our hearts so that we will really be able to seek him with all our hearts during this conference. (Jeremiah 29:12-13)** -RS-

New Year's Eve – a call to repentance

On January 13, God spoke to an intercessor in a dream. She was met by a person who spoke to her about the sexual assaults on women on New Year's Eve in Cologne and other cities by men from North African Muslim countries and interpreted what had happened as follows:

“Sex tourism has been booming in your country for many years. In many other countries you are known by insiders as the “Brothel of Europe”. Young girls and women and more recently young boys and men are smuggled into your country from their home countries and enslaved as prostitutes in the most brutal ways. And your men use them

to satisfy their lustful desires. What you have now seen and heard about sexual assaults in public areas is nothing compared to what these for the most part deeply traumatised women have endured and what takes place daily in brothels and “escort” bedrooms in your cities and towns. Repent and change your ways! Here lies a dark abyss and you are reaping the harvest of your concealed sinful behaviour. Sin will haunt you like a plague. Many are shocked and appalled by the events but many are themselves bound by thoughts and images of sexual assault on young women, girls, boys and young men. You need to deeply repent and be delivered from this bondage. The dirt is coming to the surface. Don't point your finger at foreigners. Point first to yourselves and purify your hearts! There is always room for grace leading to repentance. As when Jesus encountered the woman caught in adultery.”

Prayer:

- **Pray according to Psalm 51 for Christians and non-Christians to be open to repent and to ask for forgiveness for all self-righteousness. (John 8:7)**
- **Pray for help and comfort for the all victims of sexual abuse. (Isaiah 66:13)**
- **That the revised law on prostitution will provide more effective protection for victims of the sex trade.** -RS-

Freedom to speak

Since the massacre in Paris, the assaults in Cologne and the attack in Istanbul, feelings of unease, even of fear, have intensified. Along with this we now know that certain information was purposely withheld by official sources to avoid causing civil unrest. And this happened recently in Cologne where the truth only came to light through the statements of individual unnamed police officers. Other police officers revealed that there was a “gag order” in force on the release of information about crimes committed by migrants. One could also detect a certain one-sided reporting strategy by the media and politicians to steer the public into feeling that they were being kept fully informed. But the “public” is now so well informed from other sources that they could see through the veil of silence and the propaganda campaign and felt deceived and betrayed. Their protests were expressed with anger, even violently. Many said nothing so as not to be accused of being right-wing extremists. But here is an opportunity for us Christians. We do not have a spirit of fear (timidity), but of power and confidence. With “confidence” we can come before God (Hebrews 10:19); this word also means “freedom to speak”. Whoever is confident also speaks freely, without giving into fear before God and mankind. We Christians should be salt and light for the world, tell it like it is, and give guidance and direction, just like the prophets in the Bible who often pointed to things that were clearly not right in the leadership and in society and called for repentance. But truth must always be expressed in love.

Prayer:

- **That Christians will speak out confidently about what they believe without the fear of man. (Matthew 10:26-33; Acts 4:29)**
- **That Christians do not keep quiet when things go wrong but bring them into the light and give advice and direction with divine wisdom. (Matthew 5:13-16; Ezekiel 2:3-10)**
- **That journalists and politicians are not reluctant to report the true facts so that the best solutions can be found.**

-Johannes Blum-

The role of the police and internal security

Around 240,000 police men and women take care of the internal security of Germany day in, day out. As the law enforcement agency they uphold public order and play an important role in maintaining the trust of our citizens in the rule of law in the land and making them feel safe and secure. The influx of such large numbers of refugees also presents a huge challenge for the police and calls for much sensitivity and intuition. The police very quickly come under criticism and seldom get any recognition for their service. Police officers are exposed daily to attacks and are themselves frequently victims of crime. And then there is an increasing lack of respect from the public. Criticising the state and complaining about officials is now perfectly acceptable in social circles. Because of the shortage of personnel the police cannot always adequately respond to demands. And so in our big cities the danger is now rising that crime goes unpunished and a state of lawlessness takes over. To handle every incident with such careful attention that the public feels secure and that the law is upheld is a major challenge. Every loss of control leads to public unease - after all, the police are supposed to be the "strong arm of the law". So let us all pronounce blessings on the men and women in our police force!

Prayer:

- **That respect for the police and their work will be restored. (2 Peter 2:9-10)**
- **More support for the police in both political actions and judicial decisions in our land.**
- **Protection of the police from attacks and for a wise and skilful approach in all situations. (Psalm 20:2)**

-Alexander Schlueter-

Federal state parliamentary elections in 2016

2016 is a year of elections which will be decisive for future political developments in Germany. On March 13 the parliaments in Rhineland-Pfalz, Baden-Wuerttemberg and Saxony-Anhalt will be elected. Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Berlin follow in September. It is expected that the election campaigns will be dominated by the refugee issue. In Baden-Wuerttemberg the controversy over the new education policy will certainly also play a role. The "Demo-for-all" movement, which stands for the family, for the protection of children and against "gender ideology", is steadily gaining support. At the moment the AfD party (Alternative for Germany) is gaining ground from all other parties mainly because of the refugee situation, seizing on

the public unrest over the unresolved issues and proposing to set limits on the intake of refugees.

Even though these are "only" state elections, a strong gain in votes for the AfD party could reflect general public opinion on how much support there really is for the current national policy. Consequently these elections will be setting the course for the national election campaigns in 2017.

A strong showing of the AfD in the state parliaments could lead to the break-up of the Red-Green coalition in Rhineland-Pfalz and the Green-Red coalition in Baden-Wuerttemberg. As a result, a grand coalition of SPD and CDU would then be possible for these state parliaments. Grand coalitions however actually weaken democracy because there is then no strong opposition. But this would be a significant development if it could overcome the growing public fatigue over the democratic process which is clear from the recent poor turnout at elections.

Prayer:

- **For a good turnout at the elections.**
- **For the election of many humble and God-fearing candidates who are ready to serve. (Luke 1:51-52)**
- **For God's good will to be done in these elections. (Psalm 103:19; Matthew 6:10,33)**

-RS-

Israel and Europe

At the beginning of December the EU Commission appointed for the first time a coordinator for combating anti-Semitism: **Katharina von Schnurbein** – a Christian believer! Only two days later, she spoke at a "European Coalition for Israel" (ECI) symposium in Brussels about the threat to Jewish life in Europe and the need to establish an early warning system. Her new office will be responsible for developing strategies to combat anti-Semitism in Europe and be the contact point in the EU for anyone who witnesses or is subject to anti-Semitic incidents. She will report directly to the First Vice-President of the EU Commission **Frans Timmermans**.

Although all the speakers at the symposium were in agreement that Europe is a richer place with flourishing Jewish communities and friendly relations with the State of Israel, there were clearly differences of opinion on whether Israel is being treated fairly by the EU, such as with the "EU Labelling Directive" for Israeli products from the so-called "occupied" territories. In any case the setting up of this office by the EU Commission is worthy of special note.

Prayer:

- **Wisdom and grace for Katharina von Schnurbein. (Esther 4:14b)**
- **Protection for Jews all over Europe. (Psalm 91:1-2)**

-OS-

Last but not least...

We are very grateful for every financial contribution to the Call of the Watchmen on the occasion of our anniversary and we would like to express our sincere thanks.

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