

CALL OF THE WATCHMEN

June 2020

Welcome, Holy Spirit!

This month we want to be especially aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit in us and in our land and say welcome to all his work amongst us.

(1) The Holy Spirit fills open hearts: When we come to complete peace within our hearts, we will be aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit in us. He is actually here ... on the earth and within us (Acts 2:17)! The Holy Spirit loves to fill open hearts which are seeking genuine intimacy with him. Whenever our hearts are open and we are ready to let go of our own thoughts, our worries, our personal opinions and judgments, he speaks to us in a new way.

(2) The Holy Spirit transforms our hearts: The Holy Spirit convicts and transforms hearts and draws people to Jesus (John 16:5ff). Our hearts cannot be transformed for good unless the Holy Spirit does it. He can and will lead cities and nations to turn back to God (Jonah 3). Everything is possible, for the Holy Spirit is never limited in his power to act. Are we really going to entrust this Holy Spirit to transform the hearts in our land which have become hardened to God?

(3) The Holy Spirit makes our land "fruitful": He is the "Spirit in creation" - he was there when the world was created (Genesis 1:1), when man was created, and is there when we are "born again" and become a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). All life and all new life come from him. He wants our land to be fruitful (spiritually). For this he pours himself out like water over completely dry land and transforms it. The Holy Spirit is the source of all the creativity, inspiration and innovation that our land needs.

Welcome, Holy Spirit, to Germany and Europe!

World-wide there are a number of initiatives which are bringing together intercessors from all nations, churches and denominations around this time of Pentecost.

We as the Call of the Watchmen have actively supported and participated in two events in particular:

"Together before Pentecost" on May 28th – German only

– <https://gemeinsamvorpfeingsten.org/>

"Shavuot Global Prayer Day" May 28th-29th – English +

translation into several languages – <https://gpd2020.com/>

One before God's throne

As intercessors we often see and evaluate things in different ways. This can bring tension in and between us that we have to overcome. We need to discover that even though we are very closely tied to one another in Christ, our unity is not dependent on a similar or shared perception, recognition or judgment of what is happening around us. In a society which is becoming increasingly polarised, the Body of Christ comes together in true unity of heart as we sense the oneness in being attached to the true vine (Jesus). Sincere appreciation of one another as well as gentleness, humility and being conscious of our need to learn from one another play an essential role in maintaining a sense of oneness in our relationships. And so we want to come together before the throne of grace and **first of all thank our God for all his help in the past months with all our hearts!** -AS-

Opposition as the corona restrictions are withdrawn

Out of fear of an uncontrolled outbreak of the SARA-CoV-2-Virus (COVID-19) our population was generally in full agreement with the protective measures at the beginning. But with the start of the easing of restrictions many questions have been raised: Why only 800 square meters sales area? Why football games and not also play-grounds and church services? Along with a continuing broad acceptance within society of an exceptional situation becoming an extended "normality", there were protest demos in many of our big cities. Although people with very different issues were protesting together, the press and other media outlets made the mistake of putting them all in the same pot and to defame them all as conspirators, corona-deniers, right-wing extremists and opponents to vaccination. Here it is necessary to make a differentiation between the various groups. But the danger of a takeover by an experienced radical group is still there.

As always with political issues, so here the people of God have differing opinions. For some the instructions from the government are "provisional measures for an emergency situation", for others they are "unacceptable repression". We can however be salt and light when we break through all fear and depression to a new confidence that our life is neither in the hands of the virus nor of a government, but in the hands of Almighty God (Isaiah 51:12ff).

Prayer:

- **For an end to the pandemic, for an early discovery of a vaccine and wisdom for the authorities in easing restrictions. (Numbers 6:24-26)**
- **For an end to hateful remarks and contempt on both sides and for those with differing views to listen to each other especially amongst Christians.**
- **That Jesus as Saviour will be experienced for each and every need. (1 Timothy 2:3-4)** -OS-

Help for the economy during the corona crisis

Despite massive financial help to the economy, many self-employed and independent business owners are threatened with insolvency. Nearly all businesses from gastronomy and tourism to electrical and automobile industries, as well as various Christian ministries, are affected. We need wisdom as to what extent the state should be involved in the economy, considering special cases, but also with innovation and making our economy fit for the future, as well as offering better treatment for mental health, and new hope and ideas for all who are in need. (Jeremiah 29:11-12) -AS-

Art and culture

The shutdown affects self-employed and free-lance artists in particular. Theatre and concert halls remain closed, large gatherings and events are forbidden until the end of August. Beyond the immediate existential threat, many are losing their audiences, supporters and customers. Art is an expression of creativity from God which in many ways is

however misrepresented and abused. For thousands of years art was above all a medium to capture the beauty of heaven and earth. The universe does not only run itself perfectly – the domain of the natural scientist – but has exceptional beauty – the domain of the artist. But in the 20th century art was increasingly dominated by the brokenness of mankind and was also a medium for evil.

During this time of shutdown, the voices in music and entertainment that call upon and worship evil have been silenced. At the same time altars for the worship of God are springing up in many places and transforming the atmosphere. Artists have a sensitivity to the supernatural. Let us pray that in the clarity of the atmosphere at this time many will sense the Spirit of God and bring forth a new presentation of beauty which draws people to God. Art is a powerful medium in which God can work.

Prayer:

- **For many artists to meet God in this time of isolation. (Psalm 50:15)**
- **For a blessed and holy creativity in art, culture and the media. (Genesis 1:1-27)**
- **For supernatural care and provision for Christian artists who are in need. (Luke 11:3).** -KH-

Prohibition of conversion therapy – how to pray further

On May 7th the German parliament passed the law to extensively prohibit so-called conversion therapy. However, it does not do justice to the questions and needs of people who live with conflicts between their sexuality and gender when they are earnestly seeking help and advice. This will be clear in a particularly tragic way as therapists may not even try to ascertain why young girls and boys wish to change their gender. In future, therapeutic guidance has to be primarily “affirmative” and in no way open-ended. Young people however actually need some time to develop a proper understanding of themselves and their feelings.

As the Body of Christ, we have often not reached out to men, women and young people (also in our own community), who have a problem with their sexuality and gender. We have many times closed our hearts because of lack of knowledge, prejudice or indifference, but also from fear that we may compromise on Biblical teaching. We have certainly not taken seriously enough the suffering of homosexual people in the Nazi period in the form of betrayal, imprisonment and even death, and then for decades afterwards. We need forgiveness, love and once again the power of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer:

- **We repent for our indifference and lack of love and bring our guilt before God! (Psalm 79:9)**
- **We pray for the power of the Holy Spirit for those seeking help to discover their true (God-given) sexual identity and to experience love and acceptance. (1 Corinthians 2:4)**
- **For children and young people who suffer in their search for sexual and gender identity. (Psalm 59:4)**
- **For a correction to the law, such that many different approaches to therapeutic treatment are possible in the future.** -AS-

Legislation on prostitution – an opportunity for change?

The corona lockdown also affects brothels and other places offering prostitution. In an official letter, 16 well-known national parliamentarians from the Union and SPD parties are requesting the prime ministers of the German states, not only to extend the lockdown because of the risk of infection, but also to close brothels in general. In this way they are bringing attention to the inhumane, corruptive and misogynous (anti-female) conditions under which the majority of women, who are employed involuntarily, have to suffer and who are abducted from east Europe and Africa and then exploited in Germany.

The lockdown threw light on the inadequate social provision for these women who mostly have neither health insurance nor their own home, are not officially registered and must give almost all of their income to pimps and brothel owners. Instead of reopening these establishments, the signatories to this letter are making a plea to launch “exit-programmes” and a change of policy in Germany towards the so-called “Northern Model” that includes penalties for pimps and customers, and complete decriminalisation for prostitutes themselves and advice on ways to escape from prostitution. Countries (like Sweden) in which this model has been introduced are recording positive results as well as a change in awareness of the issue among the population.

Prayer:

- **For a new awareness among our population with regard to prostitution in Germany. (Ecclesiastes 4:1)**
- **For favourable decision making within our state governments. (Isaiah 1:17)**
- **Real help for all those who involuntarily have to work in prostitution. (Psalm 72:11; John 3:16)** -TF-

The call of Jerusalem

The history of Jerusalem is closely bound up with the Jewish people. We so often read in the Bible about God’s call and plans for Jerusalem. Jesus, our Jewish Messiah, loves this city (Luke 19:41ff). On May 22nd Jerusalem Day was once again celebrated, in remembrance of the reunification of the city after the Six-Day-War in the summer of 1967. It was then that the eastern part of Jerusalem was taken over by Israel after 19 years of occupation by Jordan. Since then Jews once again have access to the holy sites in the old city. The Bible requires us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem and links this with many promises if we make it a priority in our lives. Even now in these days, when the political, religious and thereby the spiritual future of Jerusalem is contested, let us pray that God’s call and plans for this city will continue to be fulfilled.

Prayer:

- **For peace and the fulfilment of God’s plans for Jerusalem amid all the political struggles. (Psalm 122:6-9; Psalm 137:5-6)**
- **For the call of Jerusalem to be a place of worship and a house of prayer for all nations. (Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 3:17; Micha 4:2)** -AS-

*For a new Pentecost in Germany and Europe
Alexander Schlueter and Team*