

CALL OF THE WATCHMEN

January 2022

Fixing our eyes on Jesus in 2022

"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me." (Revelation 3:20)

This word from the letters to the seven churches is addressed directly to us as his church. Jesus is standing at our door - in person - waiting for us to open it so that he can eat and spend time with us. As a prayer network, we want to be more aware of Jesus' desire to be with us and be open to an intimate and sincere encounter with him. What would that mean for our prayer times?

- For those who wait and hope on the Lord there are many promises (Isaiah 40:31). God acts when we become still and appear to be doing nothing. There is a secret in this. Times of silence during prayer and intercession can be the most rewarding: "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power." (1 Corinthians 4:20).
- It is only in an encounter with Jesus that something changes within us that will remain – it is not in increasing our theological knowledge about him, but in our regular prayer times, as we experience him personally.
- Jesus is the bread of life and he came to give life to all those who believe in him (John 6:33ff; Matthew 26:26). In fellowship with him we also become like him as bread which when shared will give life to our lost world. This includes experiences of suffering and glory in equal measure.
- The Holy Spirit wants to us to fix our eyes on Jesus and see the spiritual world more clearly. Jesus should be at the centre in all we are involved in and we must not allow our eyes to be captured and distracted from him by the bad things that are happening around us. We need to increase our ability to discern spiritually, in that we see what is actually taking place in heaven and what God's purposes are for our land right now.
- We need to be delivered from uncertainty and insecurity within ourselves. For this our prayers have to be filled in a completely new way by the peace which only comes from God. We would do well to plan times when we cut ourselves off from the many distractions in our lives (especially world news and social media such as Facebook) in order to strengthen our trust in God (Isaiah 26: 3-4).

-AS-

Anointing for a new year of prayer

Many thanks to all our intercessors for staying with us in this new year of 2022! We are amazed that God has kept us united in prayer for our land for so many years. Each one of us adds a unique value and plays an important part in our network. Let us each ask God for a renewed calling and anointing for prayer for Germany in the coming year.

-AS-

Prayer for the new Chancellor (with reference to John 13)

How can we pray in love and with commitment for the new German Chancellor? Jesus loved his disciples and it touched them deeply when he washed their feet. We also want to do this through our prayers for Federal Chancellor Scholz - by "washing his feet" - for Jesus himself wants to meet and bless him as we are doing this. So, we first take off our outer garments (pride

and judgement), kneel down and take a linen cloth, symbolising a pure motive, for we want to pray without anger and malice in our hearts. Then we take a bowl of water. The water is the word of God – for repentance, purification and for new life. We remember that Jesus said that if one disciple (Simon Peter) did not allow himself to be touched by him in this way, he would have no part or fellowship with him. Therefore we also want to pray that Chancellor Scholz will have fellowship with Jesus and that through our prayer, Jesus can serve him in a personal way. What blessings do you want to speak out over him and his life? And if we have prayed for the Chancellor like this, would we not want to do the same for all members of his Cabinet? With this prayer letter you will receive an overview of their names and responsibilities (in German – see below for English equivalents). Let the Holy Spirit encourage you to stand by and pray for one of the ministers for a while and thus help set the future direction for our country.

Special note: The Evangelical Alliance Germany (EAD) is organising "100 Days of Prayer for the Government" which will run from January 3rd until April 13th, 2022. For details, see www.ead.de "100 Tage Gebet für die Regierung". -AS-

A new policy in foreign affairs

The new Federal Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock and Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz have made their inaugural visits to Paris, Brussels and Warsaw. So far, foreign policy has been guided by Germany's economic interests but Baerbock now wants it to be based on its values. Above all, international partners expect continuity in the execution of German foreign policy by the new administration, a policy which Scholz also advocates and he has the authority to issue the guidelines. Isolating China would cost Germany dearly economically. The confrontation with Russia has already brought about the energy crisis. The new Foreign Minister does not want to approve the "Nord-Stream-2" Baltic Sea pipeline, whereas the Chancellor wants to put it into operation. Diplomacy in "climate protection issues" is now in the hands of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In Warsaw, Baerbock was faced with opposition to the plans of the new "traffic-light" (SPDred/FDPyellow/Green) German government coalition to develop the European Union into a Federal State. Especially with regard to our neighbouring country of Poland, Germany has a duty not to isolate Poland any further, but rather to support the country in any way it can. In the refugee crisis on the border with Belarus, the European Union depends on Poland's cooperation and vice-versa.

In the current attempt to revive the failed nuclear deal with Iran, German economic interests are central. However, by not supporting the maintenance of sanctions against Tehran, Germany is jeopardizing Israel's very existence. Human rights violations by Iran do not seem to play a role here, and religious freedom and the persecution of Christians do not appear as issues to be addressed in the new coalition agreement.

Foreign policy will now primarily be about crisis management, in which Germany should serve other nations on the basis of the strengths and values entrusted to us.

Prayer:

- **Thanks for the new foreign minister and for God's help for her to know the Lord's plans and purposes for Germany and the nations. (Psalm 33: 8-12)**

- **For Germany to stand firm on the side of Israel and as an important connecting link between Poland and France. (Joel 3: 12-16)**
- **That German foreign policy recognises the needs of other nations more than just the economic interests and values of Germany itself. (Matthew 20: 25-28)** -KH-

Healing the broken-hearted (Isaiah 61:1-3)

Most people do not primarily need help in the form of good advice. They long much more to be seen and be understood and for meaningful relationships with other people. Only then can they gain confidence in themselves and realise their full potential. Many people suffer from loneliness because they have no close friends in whom they can trust. The corona crisis is bringing tension in so many different ways, magnifying longstanding problems and shortfalls in our society. The key to bringing healing to our land is not primarily in our ability to bring the crisis under control and "put things back to normal", but in how much we are willing to stir our hearts to encourage and care for our people. We need to serve them and help them to overcome barriers, to tear down walls of misunderstanding, to build bridges and work together with those with differing points of view, to live reconciled with others and to make close friends. As the body of Christ, we are called to be a guide and role model for how to be reconciled and live in unity with one another. The nature of God and the virtues of the kingdom of God are to be demonstrated through us in our land (1 Peter 2:9). It cannot come from anywhere else. We are anointed, in the Spirit of Jesus, to "clothe" those in a spirit of despair with a "garment of praise", to give them "a crown of beauty instead of ashes", to set them free instead of passing judgment upon them. The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on us to heal the broken-hearted! Let us keep Isaiah 61:1-3 in our hearts as we pray for our land.

Prayer:

- **Father, let us feel the pain that many are experiencing as they long for meaningful relationships and acceptance!**
- **We stand in the gap with open hearts to serve where there is tension and division in our society in these days. Lord, have mercy!**
- **We want to be vessels from which your mercy, kindness and grace flow out all who are in need.** -AS-

Consequences of Corona for children and young people

Under the headline: "Doctors treating children and adolescents are sounding the alarm", several newspapers and magazines in December reported on the significant increase in the number of young patients receiving psychiatric treatment. The number of emergency calls have risen by leaps and bounds due to the corona pandemic and places in youth psychiatric clinics are fully occupied. Anxiety, worries about the future, depression and even thoughts of suicide are the clear consequences of irregular school attendance with much time spent alone at home, and a lack of leisure activities and opportunities to meet with friends in the past months. In addition, parents are stressed by these circumstances and there has been increase in domestic violence. Let us pray for the protection of the smaller and weaker members of our society and bless the families in our land with peace and love. Let us also stand in prayer for workers in schools and health care and all those involved in youth development, training and counselling professions.

Prayer:

- **Let us take on the responsibility as intercessors to bring the children and young people of our land to Jesus so that he may bless them. (Mark 10:14).**
- **For healthy family structures and fathers and mothers who are strong and take their responsibilities seriously to raise, train and guide their children. (Malachi 4:6)**
- **For the anointing of people in educational and counselling professions with the wisdom and knowledge of God, our real doctor and counsellor who gives generously to those who ask. (James 1:5; Exodus 15:26)**

-FL-

Aliyah – going home to the promised land

One of the greatest miracles that we are witnessing at this time is the moving of large numbers of Jews back to Israel. This home-coming to the land that God gave them in ancient times is called "Aliyah", the Hebrew word for "going up".

God himself is in the process of bringing the Jewish people back to the land of Israel from all over the world and is thus fulfilling the many prophetic scriptures in the Old Testament in which he promises to gather the Jewish people together for the sake of his holy name (Ezekiel 36:22ff). His heart's desire is not only to gather them geographically, but to "plant" them – "with all his heart and soul", "never again to be uprooted" - (Amos 9:15; Jeremiah 32:41) in their (spiritual) inheritance, to purify them and to affirm them as "his people" once again.

The first great "Aliyah wave" took place at the end of the 19th century, when many Jewish communities were being expelled from Russia, and at a time when the land was known as Syria-Palestine and ruled under the Ottoman Empire. But since the State of Israel was founded in 1948, more than 3.3 million people with a Jewish heritage have settled in Israel, many having lost land, home and family in mainland Europe during WW2 and the Holocaust, and more and more Jews are now making Aliyah, continuing the home-coming movement to their land of promise. Numerous organisations, as well as the State of Israel itself, are offering practical help to make immigration possible and to facilitate the start of a new life in the country. Nevertheless, a significant number of new immigrants leave Israel after a while, partly because their hope for a better life has not been fulfilled as expected and the challenges of migration, integration and of the loss of old roots and having to establish new roots are overwhelming them.

Prayer:

- **That the new Jewish immigrants will see the vision of God coming alive within his people and that he will meet them at the moment of their decision to uproot and make Aliyah. (Deuteronomy 7: 6-8; Jeremiah 29:11)**
- **For a return of Jewish immigrants to the God of their fathers (Ezekiel 36:28ff) and to their Messiah Yeshua. (Luke 24: 44,45; Romans 1:16)**
- **For the ministries and organisations that support Aliyah, especially those in Germany. (Isaiah 49:22)** -TF-

Wishing you a joyful and richly blessed new year !

Alexander Schlueter and Team

The German Government 2021 – Cabinet Members and Responsibilities – in English

1. Olaf Scholz (SPD) - Federal Chancellor
2. Robert Habeck (Greens) - Deputy Chancellor / Economy and Climate Protection
3. Christian Lindner (FDP) – Ministry of Finance
4. Nancy Faeser (SPD) – Ministry of the Interior and Home Office
5. Annalena Baerbock (Greens) – Ministry of Foreign Affairs
6. Marco Buschmann (FDP) – Ministry of Justice
7. Hubertus Heil (SPD) – Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
8. Christine Lambrecht (SPD) - Ministry of Defence
9. Cem Özdemir (Greens) - Ministry of Food and Agriculture
10. Anne Spiegel (Greens) - Ministry for Family, Seniors, Women and Youth
11. Karl Lauterbach (SPD) - Ministry of Health
12. Volker Wissing (FDP) – Ministry of Information Technology and Transport
13. Steffi Lemke (Greens) - Ministry for the Environment, Nature Protection, Nuclear Security and Consumer Protection
14. Bettina Stark-Watzinger (FDP) – Ministry of Education and Research
15. Svenja Schulze (SPD) – Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
16. Klara Geywitz (SPD) – Ministry of Housing, Urban Development and Construction
17. Wolfgang Schmitt (SPD) – Special Assignments and Chief of Federal Chancellery
18. Claudia Roth (Greens) - Minister of State for Culture and Media
19. Reem Alabali-Radovan (SPD) – Minister of State for Migration, Refugees and Integration

SPD – Socialist-Democratic-Party

FDP – Free-Democratic-Party (Liberal)

Bündnis 90/Die Grünen – Greens Alliance Party