

CALL OF THE WATCHMEN

March 2022

Chosen by God with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

(Ephesians 1:3,4)

Our prayers need a strong foundation within our whole person – in our innermost core being. For it is here is where we experience a real and deep sense of bonding with God and also with each other as we pray. Over many years we have learned to pray with knowledge and understanding of the issues that concern us. This is an ability that we do not want to lose, and yet we must not remain "earthly-minded". God has instructed us and gives us all the ability "to set our hearts and minds on things above", and to seek guidance from the supernatural world "where Christ is seated at the right hand of God". (Colossians 3:1). In this way God sharpens our spiritual awareness and focus on how we should be praying, as he shares with us his creative thoughts and solutions for this time. He speaks to us in every way possible - through our thinking, our feelings, our intuition and how we decide to respond.

How can we grow in spiritual awareness?

By taking the time to get to know our God better and to increase our understanding of what he can do for us, to be more aware of his presence in our everyday life, and to make room in our hearts and minds for new thoughts and ways. The beauty of creation is clear evidence for the presence of God in our world. If we do not sense his presence, then we only see the problem areas and lose hope. Creation has a message for us: that God is all-powerful and ever-present in the world. God wants us to live life to the full and for us to be filled with his deep peace and joy. We certainly need this at this time.

The kingdom of God is within us

Actually, we are not called to "build" God's kingdom around us, but rather to welcome it in our inner-being. The kingdom of God then comes out from within us. (Luke 17:21). When we are fully the person we were created to be, when the presence of God in us is visible, then something resonates and shines within us - then in sound and light the kingdom of God comes through us into the world, and from within us streams of living water will flow. (John 7:38).

In many circumstances our intercession is marked by fear, by an inner restlessness in not being able to cope with the increasing problems in the world. We lose sight of the sovereignty of God and of our commission as sons of God. But God's kingdom is not born out of fear, but out of a bond and trust - out of the knowledge that we cannot fail because God will not fail! In this way we become the birthplace for heavenly things, for the works of God which he has prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:10). Isn't that awesome!

And to do HIS WORKS we commit the Call of the Watchman again and again, calling out together:

"We are your workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, to do good works through our intercession, which you have prepared so that we may walk in them!" Hallelujah! -AS-

Knowing that you have received the Spirit of sonship

With no other person are we so closely connected as with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the breath of God that has taken up residence within us. The Holy Spirit is constantly seeking to bring us into new experiences with the Father.

In Romans 8:15 we read: *"For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father!'"*

Let us first together be aware of the Spirit of God in us. He is there with every breath we take. "I always say 'yes' to you," he whispers to you, "I am with you - we do everything together." The Holy Spirit is the presence of God in this world. Can you feel his mighty arms holding you firmly, along with the entire world? And do you sense the calling of the Spirit of sonship within you? What is he calling you to do? And what does this mean for your prayer as you talk face to face with the Father about the world? Take a few minutes to think about this personally and then talk about it together in your prayer group. -AS-

Danger of war in the Ukraine

Since the spring of 2021, Russia has been stationing up to 150,000 soldiers around the borders of the Ukraine. The West fears an invasion of the country, which Russian President Putin has denied (at the time of writing this prayer letter). Russia wants to prevent the Ukraine from joining NATO and to see the withdrawal of NATO bases from Eastern Europe. After the end of the Cold War, a new European security structure was to be set up together with Russia, and both military alliances – NATO and the Warsaw Pact – were to be replaced by a European peace organisation. Instead, Russia was increasingly side-lined from any peace negotiations and eventually excluded and, contrary to promises by the West, NATO was expanded eastwards towards the Russian border.

Thirty years after the end of the Cold War, both sides are now rearming. Peace in Europe can only be achieved along with Russia, which wants to be considered as a fully-fledged partner within Europe. With the blockade of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline project and other sanctions, Germany is cutting itself off from the supply of Russian gas and is exacerbating the energy crisis. We, as intercessors, have a love for Russia and its people and do not want another confrontation, but a solution for the restoration of the relationship between East and West.

The Christians in the Ukraine have matured over the years of fighting for freedom for their country and are not expecting help from Europe or the USA, but from God. We have heard prophecies that we must expect danger to return from the East, but also spiritual revival. In Russia, revival is already growing despite much pressure from state authorities.

In the last century the spread of the Azusa Street revival in California was curtailed by World War I. Now we pray that the Spirit of God will have victory over the plans for evil in Europe.

Prayer:

- **Thanks for 75 years of peace and prosperity in Europe. (Psalm 115)**
- **Repentance for the arrogance of Western superiority after the Cold War and for NATO's eastward expansion, contrary to promises made to Russia. (Amos 6:1-3)**
- **For the protection of God over the Ukraine and against cyber-attacks by Russia on Europe. (Revelation 3:7) -KH-**

Shaking in the house of God

In large parts of the church in Germany we are clearly experiencing the shaking. We have understood - across all denominations - that we belong together as the body of Christ.

The crisis with its many contributing factors (increasing irrelevance, loss of credibility in particular for the abuse of power) affects us all and is very distressing. Over 400,000 people resign from church membership each year. In many places, church buildings are ready for demolition because of poor attendance and therefore are financially unsustainable. This concerns us deeply, since church towers have been the central attraction in villages and towns for centuries and so symbolize the honour we have attributed to God in the past. We are in times of shaking. Everything must be shaken so that we are founded solely on that which endures forever and cannot be shaken. (Hebrews 12:27). We want to affirm that we need God's cleansing, even though it hurts. Together we want to bow before God, confessing our guilt, to take refuge in Christ and entrust ourselves completely to him. (1 Peter 4:17-19). -AS-

Prepared for crises – an energy plan for Germany

God wants to prepare us for times of crisis. As the body of Christ, we now need a high level of readiness for change, which begins in our way of thinking, which is often still shaped by past experience. With God there is no shortage of creative ideas and solutions for this time. This requires much flexibility from us, because we can no longer just draw from what we already know and can do. We need courage to get ourselves involved in a new era. It is in fact a process of becoming more mature, not fearing the unknown, and gaining greater confidence in God's guidance and purposes, even if we do not yet understand them. We cannot prevent or overcome every crisis through prayer alone. However, like Joseph, Daniel and Esther, we want to be a part of the answer in times of crisis and to help prepare for them as the Holy Spirit shows each one of us.

In the last year, the energy prices for electricity, heating oil, petrol and gas have risen drastically. Along with this, rental costs are rising. The inflation rates are currently at record high levels. This is a wake-up call for politicians, say Prime Ministers Söder (Bavaria) and Wüst (North-Rhine Westphalia), and call for an energy plan for Germany and relief for industry and citizens.

Prayer:

- **For willingness to change and the necessary process of becoming more mature within the body of Christ. (Romans 12:2)**
- **That we, as the body of Christ and individually, become places of refuge and support in crises and sources of creative ideas and solutions at this time. (Genesis 41:38)**
- **For God's wisdom and ways in government and politics in dealing with the energy crisis. (Proverbs 8:1-5) -AS-**

The right for abortion in the European Union Charter

French President Macron recently asked the European Parliament for the right for abortion to be included in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. In his speech, Macron expressed his desire to strengthen Europe's fundamental values. But is this not achieved much more by ensuring the protection of life rather than granting the right to an abortion? The Charter of Fundamental Rights has been legally binding since 2009, and EU citizens can claim their fundamental rights on this basis. The charter brings together all the civil, political, economic and social rights of European citizens.

How is it that we can no longer properly measure the value of life? And how do we find the way back not only to reverence for life, but also to treasuring the joy in new life? Do we still marvel

at the miracle of human life and that God gave us the responsibility for it? Let us not only pray at the political and legislation level, but also for a turning back to the value of life within our society in general. Pregnant women and their husbands should always feel God's 'yes' to their lives together and that he wants to bless and enrich their lives with new life!

Prayer:

- **That the discussion about the right for abortion will be overtaken by a newly discovered joy in the beauty of life. (Psalm 16:11; John 10:10)**
- **That Europe reaffirms that its basic values have not changed and that the right for abortion is not included in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. (Proverbs 14:34)**
- **For the life and calling of a new generation of children in Europe. (Joel 2:28) -AS-**

Unity within the body of Jesus Christ in Israel

Being only around two percent of the population, (no more than 180,000), Christians (believers in Jesus Christ/Yeshua the Messiah) in Israel constitute a small minority. Arab Christians make up around three quarters of them. The proportion of Jewish-Messianic believers is around 17 percent, (about 31,000), and they are divided into almost 300 congregations with different styles of worship and tend to have rather loose relationships with each other. Some of these gather under the Hebrew Speaking Leaders Conference (HSLC). Members/member congregations subscribe to the HSLC's "Official Principles of Faith of the National Conference of Elders". These serve to give the Messianic congregations a theological framework that ensures mutual acceptance and at the same time gives freedom for different forms of expression and orientations. The Jewish-Messianic movement within the HSLC has been threatened with a split in recent years. The reason for this was some questionable teaching of Tikkun, one of the member communities with several congregations in the country, which enjoys great respect both among Messianic Jews in Israel and among Christians worldwide. After nearly four years of discussions, accusations and hearings, the schism was averted by an HSLC vote affirming that Tikkun did not operate outside of their "principles of faith". The process itself is however an example of how challenged and fragile unity is within the Jewish-Messianic movement, and indeed in the body of Jesus in general - but also, that it is possible to find a way to maintain unity and brotherly love and thus also to strengthen the effectiveness of their testimony.

Prayer:

- **For the strengthening of the Jewish-Messianic movement and its testimony in Israel. (John 17:22,23)**
- **For unity within the body of Jesus (Yeshua) in Israel: for reconciliation and becoming one with the Arab Christians and other Christian denominations in the country. (Psalm 133; Ephesians 2:13-16) -TF-**

*Wishing you all God's blessings for your prayer time,
Alexander Schlueter and Team*