

In Christ – experiencing the reality of his continuous presence

We are seated with Christ. He lives in us. You cannot be closer to Him than this! (John 17:26; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:6). And at the same time, we are drawn by the deep love between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and their complete unity. No longer is there any meaningful life for us apart from Christ – no life without Him. By not only saying yes to this in our minds, but by knowing, feeling and experiencing this in our hearts, our lives will once again be transformed. This is so important at this time.

The Irish monk Patrick summed it up like this: Christ my strength, Christ my peace. Christ with me and Christ in me. Christ in front of me and Christ behind me. Christ below me and Christ above me. Christ on the right and Christ on the left. Christ where I lie down and Christ where I stand up. Christ where I sit and Christ where I walk. Christ in the depths and Christ on the heights. Christ near and far. Let us daily breathe in and breathe out these words of reality in our lives, so that they become our secure foundation!

Being seated with Christ means being in a place of peace and assurance. Also a place of authority. Deep peace is the unmistakable sign that we are close to our God in heaven and correctly "tuned-in". We only get connected to heaven through the medium of our hearts. Let our hearts take the lead. This is not achieved by having the right knowledge and understanding, but by allowing our hearts to guide us into a deeper relationship with God and with each other and by this make a difference in this world.

Alexander Schlueter (AS)

Thanksgiving and answered prayer

In times of crisis we need eyes to see what God is doing in our country and hearts that are filled with gratitude. Gratitude increases awareness of blessing and takes us from thinking only about what we do not have to an awareness of the abundance of God's provision. Let us thank God for:

- 32 years of German unification (East Germany and West Germany since 1990 on October 3rd)
- For rain over all our land after a dry summer
- The supply of agricultural produce from the land by our farmers (October 2nd is Harvest Thanksgiving Day)
- Germany's clear acceptance of responsibility for the terror attack on Israeli athletes at the 1972 Olympics in Munich and for bringing healing and reconciliation with the families who lost their loved ones.
- The joint youth work that Germany and Israel have decided to establish and pursue.

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Ukraine War: Soldiers and their families

This month we want to pray for the soldiers, reservists and fighting civilians involved in the war in Ukraine. Tens of thousands have died since Russia invaded Ukraine. There are also the numerous traumatic experiences that war leaves in the lives of so many. In addition, behind every man and woman on the front lines and in the contested areas is a family – there are fathers and mothers, wives and husbands, brothers and sisters, children and grandchildren.

In Germany we have experienced, and are still experiencing, the lasting effects and influence of war on the human soul, mind and spirit and how they continue to have an effect on the lives of those involved and their offspring for generations. Jesus loves every single soldier and he knows their life story. In his heart there is room for everyone - whether he/she is fighting on the side of Ukraine or Russia. In the midst of war, Jesus wants to meet them and speak into their hearts. Can we begin to feel their fear and pain and pray for God's intervention in their lives? Also pray that God will protect them from getting involved in harmful or distressing behaviour to themselves, families or others, or in committing unlawful or violent acts.

Let us speak God's future purposes and plans into their lives. Even if a political solution and an end to the war seem humanly impossible at present and far away, we ask God for his peace to come soon!

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Energy crisis and the German economy

There is much to be thankful for in regard to the German economy after the Second World War. In terms of gross domestic product, our economy is the largest in Europe and the fourth largest in the world. Nevertheless, everything now indicates that the energy crisis will have drastic effects on our economy. More and more companies are closing down or reducing their production in Germany due to the sharp rise in energy prices. Our energy-intensive economy is particularly affected. Almost two-thirds of industrial companies see high electricity and gas prices as a threat to their competitiveness. As a result, the mainly industrial based economy of Germany is under attack. The very existence of the medium-sized sectors, such as the catering and hotel industry and bakeries, is threatened because the rising energy prices will hardly make continued economic operation possible. Entrepreneurs complain that politicians have forgotten them. While the welfare state intervenes when it comes to supporting single parents, pensioners and civil servants, entrepreneurs do not feel that they are being sufficiently supported, even though the crisis is hitting them in a particularly hard way. Politicians and the Federal Minister of Economics need ideas for making solid, forward-looking decisions so that they do not fail to adequately address the problems.

Let us listen to what God wants to say to us in this crisis. The questions about the energy supply offer a great opportunity for our country to become aware once again of our God in heaven who will help us move to a new level of confidence in His provision. Where our attitude is characterized by resentment and concern, looking only to our own interests, we want to learn to have open minds and seek new ways of working together. Fear and lethargy often still seem to paralyse Germany's will to innovate. Let us look at the current extremely difficult situation from the perspective of the loving heart of the Father and ask for his blessings and help.

Prayer:

- **“Lord, speak, your servant is listening!” Holy Spirit, we invite you into our economy to inspire and lead it anew. (1 Samuel 3:10)**
- **We put this country under your protection in times of crisis! (Psalm 91:1-2)**
- **For God's guidance in times of crisis and that no one will despair but receive timely help. (Hebrews 4:16)**

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Prepared for a crisis

The danger of a longer “blackout” in the coming winter is increasing, also because of an artificial tightening of supply due to speculation on the electricity market. The last three German nuclear power plants are to be shut down at the end of the year and only two are to be held in emergency reserve. Speculations on the gas market began as early as mid-2021, along with the CO₂ (Carbon Dioxide) tax imposed in 2022, and the sanctions against Russia. The proposal for the sharing of costs for the supply of gas that was recently agreed by the German government is now to be replaced by a price cap for users. Fuel and wheat prices also currently reflect neither oil prices nor supply and demand. While the government has once again decided on financial subsidies as compensation for the socially disadvantaged, the rising energy prices are eating into the income and reserves of the middle class in particular. Politicians and the media advise citizens to be prepared for a crisis.

Prayer:

- **For wisdom for our government concerning the management of the financial system which is currently driving the economy, especially in relation to the proper enactment of legislation.**
- **For the Lord to wisely provide for us, spiritually, financially and materially. (Malachi 3:10)**
- **For grace and heavenly provision in the coming winter. (Matthew 6:24-34)**

Karin Heepen (KH)

Prostitution and human dignity

In July, the 3-year evaluation of the Prostitute Protection Act, which came into force in Germany in 2017, began. The Prostitute Protection Act contains measures to protect prostitutes and legalizes prostitution as a recognised “business model”. At the end of 2020, almost 25,000 people in Germany were registered under the Prostitute Protection Act. However, according to experts, there are between 200,000 and 700,000 people involved in prostitution. Police circles assume that at least 90 percent of them are forced into prostitution. The Prostitute Protection Act seems to bypass the brutal misery and the lives, void of any regard to human dignity, of these people forced into prostitution and does not address the real problem. An honest evaluation is necessary.

The law is one thing. The social view on this issue, and above all the social view of all the people who are caught up in it, is another. This is where we are personally challenged and must speak out to bring about a change in our society and land. How do we deal with the fact that in our land hundreds of thousands of mostly women are robbed of their human dignity, the right to sexual self-determination and the right to be treated as a human being like everyone else, by being sexually assaulted, abused and exploited on a legal basis? What perspective and what values are we passing on to the next generation, who, at their parties and other social gatherings with their friends, and in part through the media, are exposed to a massive trivialization and joking about prostitution, especially under such a law? We have a responsibility towards these enslaved people in our land, but also towards our future gener-

ations and our country, where human dignity must be anchored in our Basic Law/Constitution and is absolutely inviolable – invincible, unassailable.

Prayer:

- **For an honest, critical and thorough evaluation of the Prostitute Protection Act, taking into account respect for and protection of human dignity. (Psalm 10:15; Psalm 43:3)**
- **For those enslaved and humiliated in prostitution. (Psalm 147:3; Isaiah 61:1-3)**
- **For our positioning of this issue as the body of Jesus and as individual members of society. (Deuteronomy 16:20)**

Tanja Frank (TF)

Iran Nuclear Deal – Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)

The 2015 nuclear deal (JCPOA) with Iran, signed by the United States, China, Russia, France, Britain and Germany, was intended to establish international supervision and close monitoring of Iran’s civilian nuclear program. Meanwhile, the nuclear military program of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps has continued unhindered since 1984. Due to open and covert violations of the agreed upper limits on uranium enrichment and production by Iran, the USA withdrew from the agreement in 2018 and reinstated sanctions against Iran. Since then, Tehran has denied the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) access to its nuclear facilities and forged ahead with its nuclear program. Negotiations on reinstating the agreement after Biden took office in the USA were interrupted at the beginning of March this year due to unacceptable demands from Iran. The new government under President Raisi thus delayed the negotiations and in July removed 27 surveillance cameras installed by the IAEA in their nuclear facilities. According to the IAEA, the Iranian regime now has centrifuges and so much enriched nuclear material, so that they can now produce enough weapons-grade uranium for a nuclear bomb within a few weeks. Nevertheless, EU Foreign Policy Chief, Josep Borrell, said in August that a new agreement had been negotiated. In mid-September, Israel’s Prime Minister, Yair Lapid, once again warned Chancellor Scholz about agreeing to a new nuclear deal, as Iran is primarily aiming just to have sanctions suspended. As with the 2015 agreement, for the European partners, the lifting of US sanctions is a major and central motivation for a new agreement because of their economic interests in Iran.

Prayer:

- **Let us turn the new agreement over to the Lord. He is the Judge. (Psalm 2)**
- **That Germany does not sacrifice the security of the State of Israel and Israel’s own economic interests. (Matthew 25:31-34)**
- **Angelic protection over Iran and Israel from all plans for deadly annihilation with nuclear weapons. (Psalm 91)**

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God’s blessings for your times in prayer,

Alexander Schlüter and team

English translation by Phil and Margaret Daniell