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Pray with Germany on Sunday, January 27, 2019

BY [ROSALIND GNATT](#) ON JANUARY 21, 2019

Lectionary Selection: Luke 4:14-21

Prayers for Germany:

Lord, our brother Jesus was rejected by the people who thought they knew him best – his hometown folk. They couldn't believe that one of their own could have anything of worth to say to this tiny village. Freedom from poverty, oppression, illness? What nonsense; what audacity. Seventy-four years ago, you called Germany,

decimated by the moral atrocity of the Holocaust, back into life. Clear-headed leaders who were former enemies came together to create a democracy with a socially just mandate. Now, though only a fraction of the size of the United States, Germany's just society is unraveling as increasingly fewer people take over

the resources of the land. Fear of and hatred for the stranger is on the rise. The numbers of children and elderly living in poverty increase yearly. We call on you, God, to help this nation restore its mandate of justice for all. Help us to take seriously our responsibility for each other's welfare, knowing that in you, there are no national borders; that we are all one in your eyes. Help us, as US citizens and witnesses to the same ills in our own land, to be sisters and brothers together in the work of creating a just world for all; help us to be servants in building up the kingdom of heaven on earth. Amen.

Mission Stewardship Moment from Germany:

Yesterday was Epiphany Sunday – the sermon text was the three wise men, Herod and Joseph's little family fleeing violence. What would Jesus want us to do with his story? I don't think he would want us to stop at romanticizing it. I think he would want us to see this story as the story of every family fleeing violence, of every innocent in danger, and to do our part to protect our children.

The State of Hessen is among the most prosperous in Germany. And yet, a 7-minute walk from the center of Wiesbaden, the state capital, 40% of the children live below the poverty line; that 7-minute walk brings us here, to the Bergkirche quarter. Over the last decade, Germany's place in the world in terms of quality of life has gone from number 4 to number 14, while the US has gone from number one to number 17. The refugees aren't bringing the quality of life down in the US and in Germany; the 45 richest households now possess half of its wealth. In the US, it's just 3 people. The Bible tells us that too much wealth is soul-killing. Economists say it kills the system. Amassed wealth is like a black hole,



it literally sucks more and more to itself, making it ultimately impossible for the economy to function in a healthy way.

The Bergkirche daycare/kindergarten (KITA) serves 120+ children from 19 nations, ages 18 months to 6 years, with after-school care for children up to age 12. Every Monday morning, a number of children arrive hungry, sometimes without shoes, or with shoes too small and worn to do anything but hurt their young feet. Our little congregation has agreed to use our worship collection to help the KITA supply shoes and other necessities for these children. We will need your help to do this work.

Our small congregation is beginning its 5th year. The first three years were financed by an outreach fund of the EKHN Ecumenical Center. The 4th year, we raised the required €15,000 mostly from the congregation, but also through the contributions of congregation friends in Germany and the US. We are deeply grateful to Global Ministries for its financial and spiritual support. Our budget pays for a ¼ pastoral salary, music ministry and our community outreach activities.

Our UCC-EKHN Partnership team hosted our first American-style Thanksgiving for the Wiesbaden community in November. I've shared photos here of the happy event.



(Prayer and Mission Moment by Rosalind Gnatt)

Global Ministries Mission Co-worker in Germany:

Rosalind Gnatt serves with the Evangelical Church of Hesse-Nassau, Germany. Her appointment is made possible by your gifts to Disciples Mission Fund, Our Church's Wider Mission, WOC, OGHS, and your special gifts.

More information on Germany:

<https://www.globalministries.org/germany>



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Germany

Germany is located in Central Europe, bordering the Baltic Sea and the North Sea, between the Netherlands and Poland, south of Denmark.

Our partner church, the Union of Evangelical Churches (UEK) is a united church joining Reformed and Lutheran traditions. Like all churches in Germany, it has experienced major changes in recent years, with the collapse of communism in 1989 and unification of Germany bringing new freedoms and opportunities, but also new problems. For the churches, as well as for the larger society, structural unification did not readily yield unity of attitude and cooperative action. Four decades of separate history and experience in communist East Germany and democratic West Germany resulted in tensions which remain unresolved. Unification and other factors have produced economic problems for the society and a reduction in resources for the churches, to which those in the former West are totally unaccustomed. Still, the UEK maintains its ecumenical outlook and commitment to progressive witness in the new situations in both East and West. In these circumstances, the value of our role as a long-term partner becomes all the more important as we continue to share mutually enriching experiences and perspectives in a variety of ways.

Pray for: UEK pastors, as they face ever increasing workloads, in helping their congregations to respond to unfamiliar problems.

The German churches' outreach to youth who have become alienated and disoriented.

The many partnerships which exist between our churches and UEK congregations and regional churches, that they may be the means of deepening the commitment of both partners to faithful service in their respective societies.

Population (2014 est) – 80,996,685

Area – 221,800 mi

Capital – Berlin

Ethnic Background

German – 91.5%

Turkish – 2.4%

Other – 6.1% (made up largely of Greek, Italian, Polish, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish)

Exports – motor vehicles, machinery, chemicals, computer and electronic products, electrical equipment, pharmaceuticals, metals, transport equipment, foodstuffs, textiles, and rubber and plastic products

Imports – machinery, data processing equipment, vehicles, chemicals, oil and gas, metals, electric equipment, pharmaceuticals, foodstuffs, agricultural products

Life Expectancy (2014 est) – M 78 years, F 83 years

Infant Mortality (2014 est) – 3.46 deaths/1,000 live births

Adult Illiteracy Rate – 1%