

AMP 5-31-15 | 9:00 - 9:30am

Today's Service

- That God would draw unsaved people to our service, and into his kingdom.
- That Pastor Jon would preach in God's power as he finishes 1 Corinthians.
- That God's presence would be palpable and that all in attendance would be changed by the goodness, power, and love of God.

RPC Outreach

- That we the people of RPC would desire to be a word and deed church.
- That God would open up great and lasting opportunities of community service for RPC.

Regional Church

- Pray for the other churches of our presbytery: Westminster Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Jonathan Holst (Hamden, CT); Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Bohemia, Meindert Ploegman (Bohemia, NY); Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Franklin Square, William Shishko (Franklin Square, NY), Trinity Church, Ben Miller (Syosset, NY), Westchester Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Dan Osborne (Mt. Vernon, NY).

Germany | Basic Country Facts:



Operation World Denomination Statistics

Christians	Deno ms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	153	31.55	25,891,000	-0.3%
Independent	70	0.80	654,000	0.3%
Anglican	1	0.04	29,000	0.0%
Catholic	1	30.63	25,130,000	2.1%
Orthodox	12	1.05	660,000	1.1%
Marginal	42	0.50	407,000	-0.5%
Doubly Affiliated		-1.17	-960,000	0.0%

Ethnic Breakdown: Germanic 88.3%. Other European 5.9%: Slavic 2.6%; Italian 1.0%; Greek 0.7%; many European minorities. All Other 5.8%: Turk 3.0%; Gypsy/Romani 0.6%; more than 30 others.

Major Languages: German (official) Note: Lower Sorbian, North Frisian, Sater Frisian, and Upper Sorbian are recognized as regional languages under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

Religion: Protestant 34%, Roman Catholic 34%, Muslim 3.7%, unaffiliated or other 28.3%

Population: 80,996,685 (July 2014 est.)

Life Expectancy: male: 78.15 years female: 82.86 years (2014 est.)

Government: Federal republic.

Economic Conditions: The German economy - the fifth largest economy in the world in PPP terms and Europe's largest - is a leading exporter of machinery, vehicles, chemicals, and household equipment and benefits from a highly skilled labor force. Like its Western European neighbors, Germany faces significant demographic challenges to sustained long-term growth. Low fertility rates and declining net immigration are increasing pressure on the country's social welfare system and necessitate structural reforms.

GDP Per Capita: \$44,700 (2014 est.)

GDP - composition, by sector of origin: agriculture: 0.9% industry: 30.8% services: 68.4% (2014 est.)

Education: Optional kindergarten education is provided for all children between three and six years old, after which school attendance is compulsory for at least nine years. Primary education usually lasts for four to six years and public schools are not stratified by academic ability at this stage. Secondary education includes three traditional types of schools focused on different academic levels: the Gymnasium enrolls the most gifted children and prepares students for university studies; the Realschule for intermediate students lasts six years and the Hauptschule prepares pupils for vocational education. The Gesamtschule (comprehensive school) unifies all secondary education.

A system of apprenticeship called Duale Ausbildung (dual education) which does not lead to an academic degree but allows students in vocational training to learn in a company as well as in a state-run vocational school.

Most of the German universities are public institutions, and students have traditionally studied without fee payment.

In the Academic Ranking of World Universities 2008, six of the top 100 universities in the world are in Germany, and 18 of the top 200.

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State of the Church: The Catholic and Lutheran Churches are established churches but not formally state churches as such. They collaborate with the government in religious education, media and such and benefit from state-levied taxation on their behalf. The high Christian numbers below are often those only nominally affiliated and who have not opted out of this taxation system. There is increased awareness of other religious options but also increasing suspicion of much of organized religion. Post-9/11, there is a great public interest in the Christian way as an alternative and counterbalance to Islam. Evangelicals are much more prominent than ever before in media and politics. (OW)

The national constitutions of 1919 and 1949 guarantee freedom of faith and religion; earlier, these freedoms were mentioned only in state constitutions. The modern constitution of 1949 also states that no one may be discriminated against due to their faith or religious opinions. A state church does not exist in Germany.

Religious communities that are of considerable size and stability and are loyal to the constitution can be recognised as "Körperschaften öffentlichen Rechtes" (statutory corporation). This gives them certain privileges, for example being able to give religious instruction in state schools (as enshrined in the German constitution, though some states are exempt from this) and having membership fees collected (for a fee) by the German revenue department as Church tax. It is a surcharge amounting to between 8 or 9% of the income tax. The status mainly applies to the Roman Catholic Church, the Mainline Protestant EKD, a number of Evangelical Free churches and Jewish communities. There have been numerous discussions of allowing other religious groups like Muslims into this system as well. The Muslim efforts were hampered by the Muslims' own disorganised state in Germany, with many small rivalling organisations and no central leadership, which does not fit well into a legal frame that was originally created with well-organized, large Christian churches in mind.

Prayer Points:

- Germany's wealth, influence and strategic location in the EU and Europe could be of inestimable value for the Kingdom of God. For this, a strong, courageous leadership based on Christian values is needed – a fact recognized by many in the nation. Sadly, the past decade witnessed significant erosion of the ethical platform on which such leaders need to stand. Pray for God to raise up leaders who will hold fast to righteousness and strong moral values despite opposition and temptation to compromise. (OW 1)
- The exodus from organized Christianity continues into the 21st Century, yet at a slower rate than in the 1990s. West Germany was 97% Christian in 1960, but Germany is now 63% Christian, a percentage that declines with each passing year. In northeastern Germany, possibly only 0.5% are evangelicals. Church attendance is down across the board, falling to near 11% for Catholics, 4% for Lutherans. Thousands are formally disaffiliating in order to avoid the church tax of 8-9% of their income tax, and many churches are closing. Churches seem paralyzed, having lost much of their identity, purpose and income. Germany needs another reformation as deep and lasting as the one sparked by Luther nearly 500 years ago. Some would argue that a more radical revolution, fuelled by altogether new structures, such as house churches, is needed. (OW 4)
- Theological education was a major cause of decline in the national Protestant Church, because the unchallenged monopoly of state-endorsed academic training and the continued influence of higher criticism undermined confidence in God's Word. For decades, liberal, neo-orthodox and other non-biblical theologians monopolized the degree-granting universities for the EKD, and evangelicals were marginalized. This is now changing as several strong evangelicals hold positions at prominent state faculties. Pray for more professors who openly proclaim the Truth in these institutions, and pray for greater numbers of evangelical students in what used to be spiritual morgues. Pray also for the many other Bible colleges, seminaries and training institutions that retain a closer adherence to biblical truth; pray that effective and practical ministry training might occur. Changes in European education policies now mean that evangelical institutions can get academic accreditation from the government; several have already done so. (OW 9)