

## Protestant Christians in Berlin-Brandenburg-Silesian Upper Lusatia

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Christians, including both men and women, constitute the biggest religious community in Berlin-Brandenburg-Silesian Upper Lusatia with approximately one million Protestants and 540.000 Roman Catholics.

In addition to the major world religions, it is estimated that there are currently also more than 250 other, smaller groups with various religious beliefs and world views. Several clubs, programs and initiatives work closely together to create successful dialogs and cooperation between people of different faiths. The Protestant church is among those actively seeking an interreligious dialog with others.

The Refugee Church in Berlin Kreuzberg is open to all people regardless of their origin, religious belief, sexual orientation, language, legal status and age. The Refugee Church offers refugees free advice and help, German language classes, special courses and get-togethers for women, as well as health consultations.

Church services, peace prayers and other spiritual offerings at the Refugee Church are open to all people of all denominations and religious beliefs, including non-believers. Mobile teams of the refugee church are deployed in Brandenburg.

In many parishes you will find special offers for refugees too. Numerous churches are open during the day, where every person is welcome: to pray, to have a moment of silence or to visit the church.

## Any questions?

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Please call us or contact us by email with any questions you might have.

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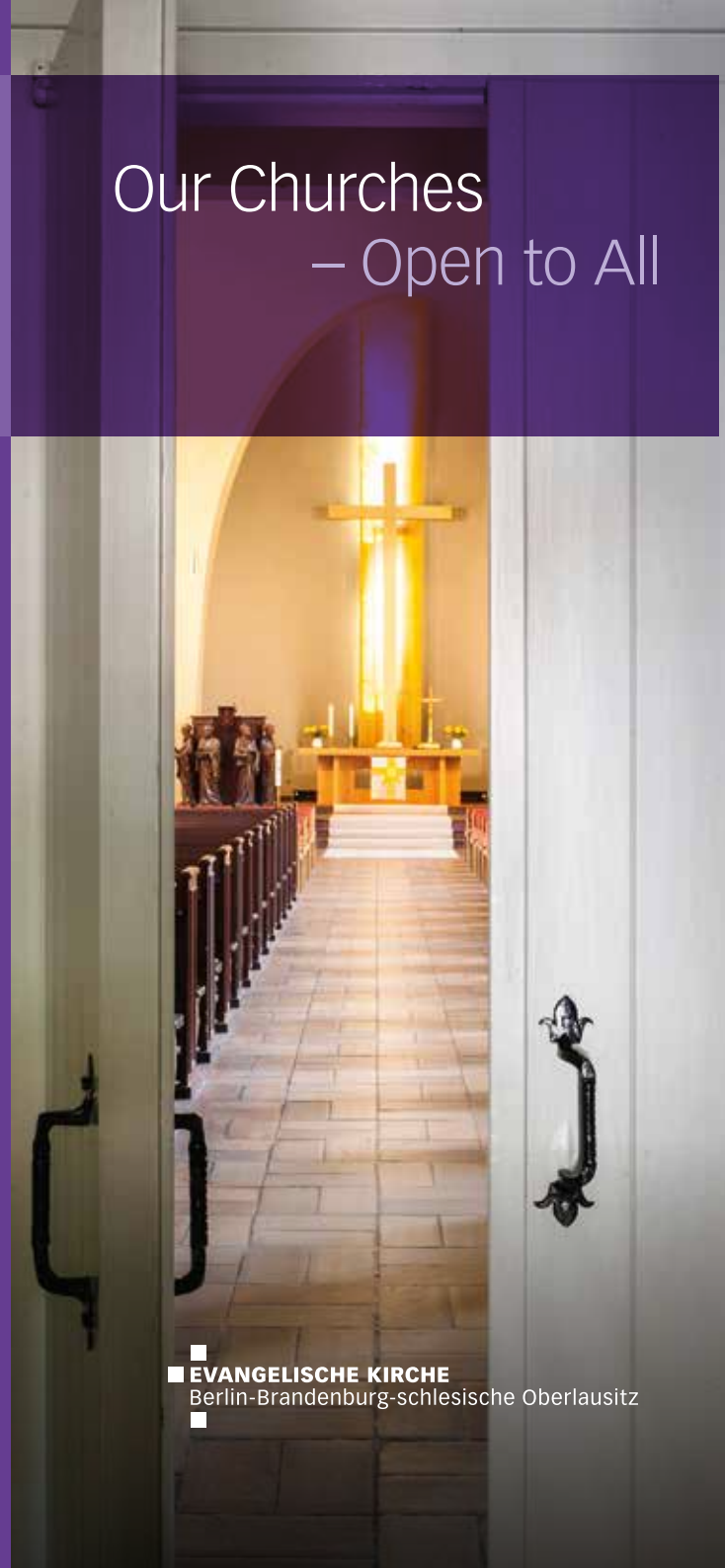


### Refugee Church

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There are many other congregations in Berlin offering services to refugees, too. Many churches are open during the day for people seeking to pray, reflect and find moments of silence, or simply for making them accessible for sightseeing.

## Our Churches – Open to All



■ **EVANGELISCHE KIRCHE**  
Berlin-Brandenburg-schlesische Oberlausitz  
■

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## Our Service

### Parish

A parish is made up of members of the congregation in a particular locality. They attend church services, meet in small groups to discuss matters of personal faith and to help people in need.

### Singing

During church service, the congregation sings together to praise, call on and to plead with God – similar to the practice of prayer. In order for everyone to join in the singing, hymn-books with musical scores and lyrics are handed out at the beginning of each service.

### Praying

At various stages of the service, the congregation and/or the pastor will pray. Many times, the pastor will lead the prayer and the congregation will follow. The congregation will affirm the prayer with proclaiming »Amen«. The best known and oldest prayer is the Lord's Prayer that refers back to words used by Jesus Christ. The Lord's Prayer is a common prayer by all.

### Sermon

During church service, passages from the bible will be read out loud. In addition, there will be an exegesis of a bible passage. At times, the sermon will be given from a raised position in the church, the pulpit. The pastor will provide an interpretation of a particular passage, elaborating on what it means for everyday life.

### Holy Communion

The congregation will gather at the altar in order to receive the Holy Communion. As the communion of baptized individuals, parishioners will commonly share bread and wine or juice. The Holy Communion is a reminder of Jesus' last supper that he enjoyed together with his disciples in the evening leading up to his death. This is a moment of special nearness to God because God acts as the communion's host.

### Blessing

At the end of each service, the pastor will extend God's blessings to the congregation. It symbolizes God's life-affirming power that will help the parishioners in their day-to-day life.

## Our Churches



The **cross** is the sign and symbol of Christianity. It is a reminder of Jesus Christ, who died on the cross. For Christians, the cross is a sign of hope as it refers to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. During Sunday service, baptism, confirmation and weddings, parishioners will be blessed with the sign of the cross, indicating that they belong to Jesus Christ.



The **altar** is God's table. It is often decorated with flowers and candles; it will also hold a bible. It is the place where the Holy Communion is prepared and handed out. Parishioners gather in front of the altar or around it in order to receive it.



The **organ** and music play important roles in church services. The organ is used to accompany the congregation during singing. Due to its sonority, it is also called the »Queen of instruments.«



**Church bells** are used to call the congregation to gather in prayer. This is why church bells chime prior to church service. The bells will also ring at the time of the Lord's Prayer and during baptismal services, weddings, funerals and similar events.



The **bible** is Christianity's sacred book. It consists of two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament. It contains various sets of writings, dating back to different times. These writings are accounts of people's experiences with God. The bible's writings serve as a guideline for people intending to live as Christians.



The church service is performed by the **pastor**. He or she is responsible for the entire church parish. As a member of the congregation one can address the pastor with personal matters and problems. The protestant church allows for women to be ordained as pastors as it believes that every human being should spread the word of God. Both male and female pastors may marry, be it to a man or a woman, and to have children.



The **baptismal font** is the place where children, as well as adults, are baptized by pouring water on their heads three times. This act symbolizes acceptance into the Christian congregation. Baptism is a unique act and can not be repeated. Baptismal fonts are often old and very precious.