

PROTESTANT CITY CHURCH ST. MARIEN - BAPTISMAL CHURCH OF PAUL GERHARDT

At Kirchplatz in Gräfenhainichen the Protestant City Church St. Marien is located, at its core a medieval structure, whose origins presumably go back to the Romanesque period. The oldest parts of the today's church date from the Gothic period. A church from field stones was built around 1300. It was carried out cross shaped and covered flat.

Destroyed in the 30-years war is the today's appearance of the church determined by a baroque reconstruction from 1658 until 1666. The 57 m high square neo-gothic brick tower was erected in 1866/67.

The baroque interior fittings include a high altar from the year 1666, a wooden pulpit, an elaborately designed horse shoe gallery, a council box and a box with a separate entrance intended for the lords of the castle Strohwalde.

The organ, built by the master organ builder Rühlmann from Zörbig, dates back to 1905. Since 1982 the church houses a winged altar, which dates from the second half of the 15th century. It comes from the church of the village Gremmin, that falls victim to lignite mining in Golpa-North.

It is assumed, that Paul Gerhardt was baptized in the church of his home town as usual at his time one day after his birth. All baptismal documents are burned during the almost complete destruction of the city in the 30-year war.

Protestant (Evangelical) Parish Gräfenhainichen

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THE PAUL-GERHARDT-HOUSE

The Paul-Gerhardt-House in Karl-Liebnecht-Straße was built as a Christian clubhouse in 1907–1909 to commemorate the 300th birthday of the great son of our city. The funds were raised by collections throughout Germany initiated by pastor Brockes at the time.

The Paul-Gerhardt-Monument is a creation of the famous Berlin sculptor Johann Friedrich Pfannschmidt from 1911. For decades a kindergarten was there in the house. Today it is used as a parish hall for the protestant (evangelical) parish.



THE PAUL-GERHARDT- SCULPTURE

A lifesize sculpture of Paul Gerhardt, standing right next to the Town Church, was made by the Thuringien artist Dieter Krüger. He created it with a chainsaw from an oak trunk and it was ceremoniously unveiled in April 2017.

The sculpture is a present of a citizen from Gräfenhainichen.

PAUL-GERHARDT-HIGH SCHOOL

In May 1995 the High School of Gräfenhainichen got the honorary name "Paul-Gerhardt-High School". Origin and meaning of the protestant hymn poet were the reason for this naming.



CITY TOUR

We heartly invite you to take a city tour "On the tracks of Paul Gerhardt". If you are interested in a city tour please contact the Tourist-Information Gräfenhainichen. Sightseeing destinations and duration can be set individually.

We are looking forward to your visit.

Tourist-Information Gräfenhainichen

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GRÄFENHAINICHEN BIRTHPLACE OF PAUL GERHARDT



„Command your ways...“

The town Gräfenhainichen, located on the edge of the Düben Heath, is worth a visit. Paul Gerhardt was next to Martin Luther the greatest songwriter of protestant (evangelical) church hymns of all time. He was born on 12th March 1607 in the today's Paul-Gerhardt-Straße 7. His birthplace was completely destroyed in the 30-years war 1637. Memorial plaques commemorate the city's son.

Paul Gerhardt grew up as son of a farmer and innkeeper, who later became a major. He visited the civic school in his hometown. As a 15-year old boy Paul Gerhardt went to the Princely school in Grimma after the death of his parents. Later he took up a degree in theology at the University Wittenberg. Further stations, like Berlin and Mittenwalde, followed. His last years of life Paul Gerhardt spent as a pastor in Lübben/Saxon. There he died on 27th March 1676.

Already during his lifetime Paul Gerhardt stood in high regard as a poet. 139 songs and poems came from his pen, which gave consolation, courage and confidence to the people. After his death the poems of Paul Gerhardt found their way into the Collection of Christian church songs worldwide in the course of centuries.

Every year in March is thought of Paul Gerhardt on the occasion of his birthday with a Cultural and Adventure Night. Pupils of the town remember the day of his death by singing his songs in May every year.



The town Gräfenhainichen honored Paul Gerhardt with the classical Paul-Gerhardt-Chapel, which was erected 1830– 1844 by donations of the population. King Friedrich Wilhelm IV th donated a lifesize painting of Paul Gerhardt to furnish the chapel, a carpet, an altar cloth and altar candelabras. You can admire the cloth and candelabras in a permanent exhibition. The painting is located now in the Paul-Gerhardt-Community-House.

A special feature of the chapel are muntin windows, raised on all 4 sides of the chapel. 4 slim pillars characterize the interior, arranged left and right. The memorial homes in addition to an extensive permanent exhibition about living and working of the great poet a Paul-Gerhardt-Library.

A special eye-catcher of the exhibition is the big Paul-Gerhardt-portrait of the Belarusian painter Wassili Jeremejew.

The stylish ambience of the chapel also offers changing exhibitions on the gallery and various cultural events a special flair.

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Guided tours on request.



- 12.03.1607** Paul Gerhardt's birth in Gräfenhainichen
- 1619** Death of his father Christian Gerhardt
- 1621** Death of his mother Dorothea, born Starcke
- 1622** School entry to the Princely School of Grimma
- 1627** Graduation at the end of the year in Grimma
- 02. 01.1628** Matriculation for Theology studies in Wittenberg
- From 1634 on** Tutor in the house of the archdeacon Fleischhauer in Wittenberg
- From 1642 on** Paul Gerhardt lives in Berlin – activity as tutor in the house of the court advocate Andreas Berthold, whose daughter later becomes his wife.
- Sept.1643** Paul Gerhardt's first verifiable poem is printed, created on the occasion of a wedding.
- 1647** 18 spiritual songs of Paul Gerhardt appear in Johann Crüger's Songbook "Praxis Pietatis Melica" in Berlin
- 18.11.1651** The ordination to the parish office takes place. There is a written commitment to the Lutheran confessions.
- 30.11.1651** Introduction as pastor and rehearsal in Mittenwalde
- 1653** Appearance of the 5th edition of "Crüger's Songbook" with 64 new songs of Paul Gerhardt (a part of them was perhaps already printed before the today lost 3rd and 4th edition)
- 11. 02.1655** Wedding with Anna Maria Berthold in Berlin
- 19.05.1656** Daughter Maria Elisabeth born (died on 14th Januar 1657)
- May 1657** Appointment to a parish position at the church Nikolai church and moving and assumption of the post there by Berlin magistrate

- 15.01.1658** birth of daughter Anna Katharina (dies on 25th March 1659)
- 30.11.1660** birth of son Andreas, dies soon
- 1661** Johann Crüger's Songbook "Praxis Pietatis Melica" appears in 10th edition with a total of 90 songs written by Gerhardt
- 1662** A so called "Edict of tolerance" of the Elector Friedrich Wilhelm appears, that continued to tighten the church policy of the reformed Princem which was directed to a restriction of the Lutheran denomination.
- 15.08.1662** birth of son Paul Friedrich, dies in 1716
- 1662/63** In the unsuccessful religious discussions, which take place on the Electoral Palace, Gerhardt plays an important role on the Lutheran side
- 16. 09.1664** The Elector issued a stricter about "Church Tolerance" with a following request for signature.
- Febr.1665** birth of son Andreas Christian (dies in the same year)
- Febr. 1666** Impeachment of Paul Gerhardt because of refusal his signature under the "Church Tolerance" edict
- 1666/67** Johann Georg Ebeling, Crüger's successor in the cantorate of the Nikolai-Church, issues a complete edition of 120 songs of Gerhardt.
- 1667** A resumption of an official activity is to take place – Gerhardt refuses for reasons of faith and conscience
- 05.03.1668** Gerhardt's wife Anna Maria dies
- Okt. 1668** Appointment to Lübben
- 16.06.1669** Inauguration in Lübben
- 1676** Paul Gerhardt writes his will for son Paul Friedrich
- 27. 05.1676** Paul Gerhardt dies in Lübben
- 07.06.1676** Burial in the church of Lübben