



The Jewish Community of Hamelin Newsletter



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January 2012 • Tewet–Shevat 5772

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Dear members, friends and supporters,

We wish all our readers a happy and healthy 2012!

Please remember to pay your annual membership dues. The congregation depends on everyone to pay promptly so that we can continue our work.

Our congregation is a wonderful mixture of people from different backgrounds and cultures. Judaism has brought us together, each one of us adding his or her own special touch to our community. While our congregation may not be wealthy, we enjoy the riches of each other's special talents and gifts. We're at our best when the various talents join together for one goal, be it a religious service, a cultural program, or an act of Tikkun Olam.

So it was on December 16 when we invited a large group of non-Jewish guests to join us for Friday night services. It has always been our congregation's credo that our synagogue doors are open and that our synagogue is a meeting place for all people. Feeling secure in one's own identity allows an attitude of openness. Our guests were made to feel at home and visibly enjoyed the joyous and welcoming atmosphere of the service. Faina Pelts, our choir "Shalom," and Peter Wendt led a "Friday Night Live" service to the delight of all. The service was spiced with selected readings and music, music, music. One member was overheard to say, "I am so happy that I came to services tonight." The kitchen team of Elena and Liubow set a beautiful table, the Shabbat candles were aglow, and the sweet smell of homemade Challah, warm from the oven, perfumed the air. Sitting together around the Kiddush table, different languages and laughter were heard and the Shabbat food shared. The loving attention and preparations for the evening were palpable to all. It became clear that our congregation is not only here for us but to share with others, as proud Reform Jews in Germany.

Our member Peter Wendt represented our community at "Family Day," sponsored by the Hameln Mosque. Peter was warmly received and had excellent conversations and discussions with members of the Moslem community. At another interreligious event, Hanukka and Christmas, were discussed with Peter Wendt and Catholic deacon Hans-Georg Spangenberg. The open discussion took place in our synagogue to a full house.

On Sunday, December 18, we hosted a pre-Hanukka concert. Marcel Soloman and Harold Berghuis performed a musical program of Hebrew, Yiddish, Russian, Klezmer, and Jazz. The musicians mixed pieces on the guitar and clarinet with short anecdotes. There was something for everyone. We thank the Central Council of Jews of Germany for their financial support, which made the concert possible.



Congregational Hanukka Celebration

We look back at the year of our dedication and realize how many "firsts" we were privileged to experience. And so it was that we gathered to celebrate the holiday of Hanukka for the first time in our new and beautiful synagogue and sanctuary. Faina Pelts welcomed members and guests in German and Russian. She read the story of Hanukka in both languages and led the assembled in the lighting of the first candle.

After a short service, members took part in a Hanukka quiz, and the fastest thinkers were rewarded with a small gift. Everyone enjoyed the fun. Our choir Shalom prepared a Hanukka repertoire to the delight of all assembled. Our sanctuary echoed with Hanukka songs, old and new. Hanukka greetings were read to the congregation in Russian and German from congregational president Rachel Dohme, who unfortunately could not join the festivities.





Polina Pelts of new members. Our little community grows as does the light on our hanukiyot each night of Hanukka. Our congregation is truly a Hanukka miracle!

Our Internet Presence

Those of you reading this newsletter in English are reading the internet version. The newsletter is also available in print form in [German](#) and [Russian](#) for members and supporters here in Germany. Many hours and many hands and heads go into producing this monthly informational newsletter. Keeping us online is no small expense for our small community of 90 percent Russian Jewish immigrants. We recognize the importance of this media tool in connecting and informing others of our congregational efforts and developments. And this newsletter has been the most efficient and successful outreach tool in our attempts to network internationally. Many new relationships have been established and built as a result of this newsletter and we are grateful to all involved. If you would care to help us stay online, please contact Rachel Dohme at racheldohme@jghreform.org. We appreciate any and all support.



Jewish January

January 27th is international Holocaust Remembrance Day and recalls the liberation of the concentration camp in Auschwitz in 1945 by Soviet troops. At 7:00 p.m. the city of Hamelin will present a theatre piece entitled *Address Unknown*. The piece is based on a book by Kressmann Taylor. Matisek Brockhues, Tom Keller and Audrey Guittierez will offer musical accompaniment. The moving performance will certainly be a fitting way to remember the day.



New Series with Rabbi Irit Shillor

We are pleased to announce a new series to begin in January with Rabbi Irit Shillor. Rabbi Shillor would like to present us an opportunity to gain deeper understanding of our Reform roots. She will offer study sessions dealing with Shabbat, kashrut laws and relationships from a Reform perspective during her January to March visits. We hope the series will continue with new topics decided upon by the participants.

Cooperation

Our congregation has enjoyed years of cooperation with the Society of Christians and Jews. Congregational president Rachel Dohme has been a member of the board for years, and our congregation and many congregants are members in good standing. The series "Let's Talk" has helped many Hamelin citizens to gain a closer look and better understanding of our Jewish Reform religious and

cultural practices. We have often hosted or co-sponsored events of the Society. As Reform Jews we reach out to our non-Jewish friends and neighbors, meeting them with respect and tolerance, and help tear down the walls of misunderstanding. We feel our conscious interreligious and intercultural work has built bridges of understanding between our community and our local population.

On January 19 we will co-host a lecture by Professor Dr. Ursula Rudnick from Hannover. She will speak about theological changes within the Lutheran church with regard to Judaism. It is certain to be a stimulating evening and we welcome everyone to take part.

Our congregation has also been a sponsor of the Hamelin cultural series “Hamelner Forum” for many years. This year we are helping to sponsor two events. The Holocaust Remembrance Day program on January 27 and a lecture from Bernd Gelderbloom on March 22 are made in part possible by our support.

Central Council of Jews of Germany

Dieter Vogelhuber took part in a seminar offered by the Central Council in November. There is a photo and article from Faina Pelts in this month’s journal from the Central Council. Have a look on page 7. The magazines are available in the synagogue.

Russian Consul

We will host a visit from the Russian consul to benefit our members who still hold Russian passports. There will be an informational meeting on January 13th and the consul will visit on January 20th. Both meetings will take place at 12 noon.

Mazal tov — Congratulations

We congratulate Dr. Gesa Snell on the dedication of the newly renovated Hamelin Museum. We are pleased to have helped the Brown family (Kratzenstein) donate memorabilia to the new museum for its permanent exhibition, “The Jews of Hameln.” Future generations will be able to view and learn from the exhibition and these personal objects will have an honored place in the city museum.

We congratulate our sister congregation Beth Shalom in Munich on the dedication on December 11 of their new rooms.

Refu’ah Shlemah — Get Well Soon

We pray for the continued recovery of Dr. Ferdinand Dohme and all who are ill.

Tzedakah — Donations

We thank our members and friends who support our community life and the building of our synagogue with generous donations.

We thank Anja Grach, U. Niedert, Mr. Wessling, Norbert Baum, the Lutheran Church St. Marien in Lemgo, Dennis Hilker company, Elisabeth Pfeiffer, Hans Weltner, and Rachel Dohme.

May they all be blessed for their generosity.

Etz Chayim — Tree of Life

Especially during the cold and dreary winter months we will need new leaves for our tree. The tree offers our members, friends and supporters the opportunity for two mitzvot (good deeds) at once. Once can commemorate special occasions, such as births, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, weddings, Yahrzeits and special honors, and also support the maintenance of our synagogue. Please see the [Tree of Life](#) on this site. Thank you!

Todah Rabah — Thank you

We wish to thank the members of our choir “Shalom,” led by Faina Pelts. and our dance group, “Chag Sameach,” led by Boris Markaseev, for the adding to the beauty and spirituality of our Shabbat and Hanukka services.

We wish to thank Polina Pelts for everything she does quietly and competently behind the scenes, especially in these months when our congregational president has had to be absent.

We thank everyone who helped in making our holidays and cultural events very special. Our thanks go to everyone who plan and organize activities in our community.



New Yahrzeit Board

In honor of our deceased members a new Yahrzeit Board has been added and hangs in our sanctuary. We honor the memory of deceased community members and bring them in our midst will we are praying.

Condolences

The funeral of Mrs. Ira Leimunskis was held at the Jewish Cemetery in December. Services were led by Wladimir Pesok with support from Polina Pelts and Aron Kaplan.

We extend our condolences to Mr. Hans Weltner, a member of our “Friends,” on the passing of his wife, Johanna Weltner.

Yahrzeit in January

Chaja-Rahel Kruchkovitch — January 29, 2003 / 26. Schwat 5763

May her memory be for a blessing. Kaddish will be recited during our Shabbat services. Yahrzeit candles can be purchased in the office.

Shalom! — The Community Board



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Jewish Community of Hamelin

Member of the Union of Progressive Jews in Germany, the World Union of Progressive Judaism, and the Central Council of Jews of Germany

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Program for January 2012 • Tewet / Shevat 5772

Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Thursday, January 5	4:00 p.m.	Community New Year's Celebration. Tickets: 7 Euros Student rabbi Natascha Lyskovoy's visit
Friday, January 6	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services
Saturday, January 7	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit services and Torah study
Monday, January 9	12 noon	"Judaism" a course in Russian
Wednesday, January 11	11:00 a.m.	Russian Book Club with A. Konstantinova
Friday, January 13	12 noon	Informational meeting for Russian citizens
Saturday, January 14	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit services and Torah study with F. Pelts & P. Wendt Rabbi Irit Shillor's monthly visit
Thursday, January 19	3:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Rabbi's Table: "Shabbat from a Reform Perspective" Questions and answers with Rabbi Shillor In cooperation for the Society of Christians and Jews, Lecture: Professor Dr. Ursula Rudnick, Hannover "Theological changes within the church toward Judaism"
Friday, January 20	12 noon 5:30 p.m.	Visitation of the Russian consulate Friday night services with Rabbi Shillor
Saturday, January 21	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit services and Torah study with Rabbi Shillor
Sunday, January 22	3:00 p.m.	"Young and Jewish Jr." with Marysol Fischer
Friday, January 27	11:00 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	"Russian Afternoon" with M. Olvovskaja Art History class Holocaust Remembrance Day, "Address Unknown" Hameln Theater
Saturday, January 28	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit services and Torah study with F. Pelts & D. Vogelhuber