



# The Jewish Community of Hamelin Newsletter

January 2015 • Tevet–Shvat 5775

[JGH Home](#) [Program](#)

Dear members, friends and supporters,

We wish everyone a happy and healthy 2015!

Please remember to pay your annual membership dues. The congregation depends on everyone to pay promptly to enable us to continue our work.

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Before we can greet 2015 we want to look back and remember the services and activities which brought our congregational calendar to an end in 2014.

Our synagogue is not just a House of Prayer, but it is also a House of Learning. We were pleased to welcome Rabbi Adrian Schell back for a day-long seminar on Shabbat Vayashev on December 13th. Rabbi Adrian offered our members and friends from our sister community in Bad Pymont a fascinating and educational day dedicated to “Our prayers—origins and meaning.” We examined the structure, history and development of our forms of prayer. The air was peppered with lively discussion, and at times one question chased another. Such opportunities are vital for the intellectual development of our community and to enrich all our lives.

We enjoyed a hearty and delicious luncheon that allowed us to work throughout the day, which began at 10:00 a.m. and ended at 4:00 p.m.

It was a happy reunion with our former rabbi, and we hope to repeat it at least once a year when he is visiting family in Germany. Thank you Adrian! The Johannesburg Reform Congregation is lucky to have you.



Hanukka in our congregation is always memorable, but this year was really special. Of course, we lit another candle in our Hanukkiot, we said the blessings, we sang Hanukkah songs, we retold the Hanukkah story and we enjoyed delicious dishes made in oil and exchanged Hanukkah presents.

The congregational Hanukkah festivities began on Friday, December 19th at 5:30 p.m. Peter and Borys read Hanukka texts, and Faina lit the fourth candle and recited the blessings, playing Maoz Tzur on the piano. We heard Shabbat thoughts from Heidi and Wladimir, and Rebekka lit the Shabbat candles and led us in singing Kiddush.

Olga had prepared Hanukka bags for the children, filled with sweets, a Hanukkia and a box of candles.

The Hanukkah surprise for the youngsters and the young at heart followed as Rachel welcomed Shlomit Tulgan’s puppet theater “ Bubales. The story “Shlomo’s

“Magic Hanukka Lamp” came to life and charmed everyone in the overfilled sanctuary. Ms. Tulgan and her puppets come to us from Berlin, and her performance is sponsored by the Central Council of Jews of Germany’s cultural program for small congregations.

Our Shabbat and Hanukka celebrations were also the topic of a short film for NDR TV. The film was shown on December 22nd on national television! Here are just a few pictures from the evening.



### **Thank you to all our volunteers**

Years ago, Rabbi Dr. Henry Brandt visited to our congregation. He said, “Who is the congregation? YOU are the congregation!” As usual, he was right.

We are blessed with so many gifted and talented people in our congregation who do so much good for others, never asking or expecting thanks in return. We do want to begin 2015 by saying thank you to them and encourage others to join their groups or approach the board about a new initiative.

Helping each other to become competent in German has always been an important key to integration and self-reliance. German class is offered weekly from Polina Pelts and Dieter Vogerhuber. In addition, one can learn Hebrew with Israel Edelstein. If members want to become physically fit, they can join Emma Lebedinska’s Yoga class or Petro Schurupov’s Nordic Walking group. Is Israeli dancing something you’ve always wanted to learn? Boris Markhaseev would love to have you join his troupe, “Chag Sameach.” All of these groups are open to all our members.

Would you like to work with Svetlana Bantschukova in visiting the elderly or ill? She’d love to hear from you.

Do you feel you would like to help keep our cemetery orderly or perform the highest Mitzvah and join the Chevrah Kaddisha? Please speak to Aron Kaplan if you do. These acts of loving kindness are so rewarding.

Our music groups are not currently auditioning but represent our community in an important way, sharing our cultural heritage with others. We also wish to acknowledge them and say thank you. The groups are “Shalom,” led by Petr Chrastina; “Benkschaft,” led by Uwe Wolandowitsch; and “Duo Melody,” led by Faina Pelts.

As we come to the close of the secular year, we also look back to the wonderful activities organized by Polina Pelts’s project with “Aktion Mensch,” Aktion Mensch supports social projects and is funded by profits from the national lottery system. Polina enriched the lives of our seniors this past year with no fewer than seventeen activities. She offered them concerts, outings and lectures and opportunities to help others. The final event, a Hanukka breakfast took place on December 23rd, the eighth candle. We wish to thank Aktion Mensch and Polina for a project that truly made a difference in people’s lives.

Our thanks to all our wonderful members! Who is the congregation? WE are the congregation!

### **Blessed with rabbis**

Our congregation has always considered it a priority to have regular rabbinical support. Our congregation would not be what it is today without the dedicated work of our Rabbi Irit Shillor. We are happy that she will continue to serve us this year.

We are pleased that Rabbi Alexander Lyskovoy will join her in her work with our community. Many of our members have had the opportunity to have met Rabbi Lyskovoy and know what a contribution this well-respected Moscow Reform rabbi can make in our congregation. Let’s give him an especially warm welcome on Shabbat Shemot, January 9th and 10th.

Rabbinical student Dr. Ulrike Offenberg will also continue this year, and we can look forward to her visits throughout the year.



## Jewish January

Our congregation is a religious one, but what is the source of our identity as Jews? What do our Christian friends and neighbors consider to be their beginnings? We will identify and discuss these questions on January 22nd in an evening with the Society of Christians and Jews. Our Rabbi Irit Shillor and Catholic Deacon Hans-Georg Spangenberg welcome all inquisitive minds to spend an hour with them delving into our history. Join us for a fascinating evening as we begin the journey with Abraham up until the construction of the first Temple



Gesellschaft für  
Christlich-Jüdische  
Zusammenarbeit  
Hameln e.V.

January 27th is Holocaust Remembrance Day and recalls the Liberation by Soviet troops in 1945 of the concentration camp Auschwitz. The day of remembrance was instituted in Germany in 1966 by Chancellor Roman Herzog. A presentation by Daria Leuthier and Niklas Delp dedicated to Jewish composers who fled the Nazi regime and lived in exile will be held in the Market Church at 6:00 p.m. on January 27th. Using texts and musical selections, we will honor and remember these victims of the Holocaust. The evening is hosted by the city of Hamelin, our congregation and Hamelin's churches.

## In the News

We feel honored that the media takes an avid interest in our congregation and our members. Regular articles describing our religious activities appear in our local daily newspaper as well as reports on the local radio station. Recently an interview about Bikkur Cholim highlighted Svetlana Bantschukova's work visiting the elderly and ill. The interview could be heard on national German radio and in written form in the monthly newspaper issued by the Central Council of Jews in Germany. A film team from NDR TV attended our Shabbat and Hanukka service and party on December 19th. The film was shown on December 22nd.

Why is this important? Because it causes non-Jews in Hamelin and in Germany to broaden their perception as to what a multicultural society Germany has become. Judaism in Germany is anything but normal and mainstream. There is still much healing to be done. The more often that modern Judaism is represented in the media, the greater the chance that this relationship can develop into a healthy and productive one. We are pleased to be doing our part.

## New Year's Party in January

The congregation's New Year Reception will be held on Sunday, January 4th. Many people are involved in the planning, organization and rehearsals. Special thanks to Svetlana Bantshukova and Polina Pelts for organizing the teams. Once again, it will be a very special evening from our members for our members.

## 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, and we are grateful to all involved. If you would like to help us stay online, please contact Rachel Dohme at [racheldohme@jghreform.org](mailto:racheldohme@jghreform.org). We appreciate any and all support.

## Refu'ah shlemah

We pray for the complete recovery of all who are ill and everyone who is going through difficult times. We will recite Misheberach for them during services. Please join us.



## Donations — Tzedakah

We thank all those who donated to either the congregation or the synagogue foundation: Thank you the women's group from St. Aegidien church in Holtensen, Mrs. Renate Cramer, Dr. Ivo and Kerstin Schwartzkopff, Dr. Gesa Snell, Mrs. Ioulia Berhovski, Mr. Hans Weltner, Mrs. Rachel Dohme and Mrs. Ute Gibas.

Special thanks to Dr. Oleg and Anna Rubanov for their contribution in honor of their daughter Valentina.

May you all be blessed for your generosity.



## Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to the Rubanov family on the birth of their second daughter Valentina! The happy parents are Dr. Oleg and Anna Rubanov, along with big sister Maria Miriam and grandmother Rimma Rubanova.

Mazel Tov to Rebekka Dohme and Amitai Schlair on their engagement and to the Dohme and Schlair families!

## Etz Chayim — Tree of Life

Brrrrr—it's winter! How lucky that our tree lives indoors and regardless of the season permanently grows new leaves. The tree offers our members, friends and supporters the opportunity for two mitzvot (good deeds) at once. One can commemorate special occasions such as births, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, weddings, Yahrzeits and special honors, and also support the maintenance of our synagogue.

Newly added: "In memory of Edith Shapiro," the Dohme family

## Thank you — Todah Rabah

We thank everyone who help in making our holiday and cultural events very special. Our thanks go to everyone who plans and organizes activities in our community.

## Yahrzeit in January

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

Larisa Shapiro — January 4, 2013 / 22. Tevet 5773

We have added a name plate in memory of Olekseï Bogdanov to our Yahrzeit memorial.

May the memory of our loved ones be for a blessing. Please join family members during Sabbath services as we recite Kaddish. Yahrzeit candles are available in the office



**We wish everyone a healthy 2015!**

**The Congregation Board**

## [Newsletter Archives](#)

### **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 2015 • Tevet–Shvat 5775

**Office hours: Monday, Wednesday & Friday: 10:00 a.m.— 1:00 p.m.; Tuesday & Thursday: 10.00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.**

Sunday, January 4	4:00 p.m.	Congregational New Year's Reception
Monday, January 5	12 noon	"Judaism," a course in Russian with W. Pesok
<b>Rabbi Sascha Lyskovoy's visit</b>		
Friday, January 9	4:00 p.m.	Conversion class
	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services with Rabbi Lyskovoy
Saturday, January 10	8:30 a.m.	Netzer Hameln with Patrizia — Trip to the Hannover Liberal Synagogue JCC. Meeting point: Hamelin train station
	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with Rabbi Lyskovoy
Sunday, January 11	12.00 noon	Monthly Board Meeting
	3:00 p.m.	Membership meeting
Wednesday, January 14	11:00 a.m.	Informational meeting with F. Pelts: "Legal Changes"
Saturday, January 17	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with H. Braun
Tuesday, January 20	11:00 a.m.	Senior's Breakfast Club with P. Pelts. We're decorating pots for Tu BiShevat.
<b>Rabbi Irit Shillor's monthly visit</b>		
Thursday, January 22	7:00 p.m.	In Cooperation with the Society of Christians and Jews: Discussion: "From Abraham to the First Temple—A Historical Journey," Rabbi Irit Shillor and Deacon Hans-Georg Spangenberg
Friday, January 23	4:00 p.m.	Conversion class
	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services with Rabbi Shillor
Saturday, January 24	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with Rabbi Shillor
Friday, January 30	TBA	Russian Consul's visit
Saturday, January 31	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with S. Kudinov
<b>Outside the Community</b>		
Sunday, January 25	8:00 p.m.	Holocaust Remembrance Day Concert, Andor Izsák and the European Synagoge Choir. Bad Münden, Martin-Schmidt Concert Hall, free admission
Tuesday, January 27	6:00 p.m.	In cooperation with "Hamelin Forum" and the city of Hamelin: Holocaust Remembrance Day, reading: D. Leuthier and N. Delp, "Composers in Exile," free admission