



# The Jewish Community of Hamelin Newsletter

February 2016 • Shevat–Adar I 5776

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## Dear members, friends and supporters,

We wish everyone a happy and healthy 2016! Please remember to pay your annual membership dues. The congregation depends on everyone to pay promptly to enable us to continue our work.

Please note our new bank information: Sparkasse Weserbergland  
IBAN: DE47 2545 0110 0031 030380 BIC: NOLADE21SWB



Last month began with gemilut hasadim, acts of loving kindness. Polina Pelts and team honored our oldest and founding member, Mrs. Suya Varschavska, with a birthday party to celebrate her 90th birthday. Surrounded by neighbors and friends, Suya was moved to tears of gratitude. The birthday table creaked under the weight of a homemade, beautifully decorated, three-tier birthday cake, sporting a colorful candle with the number 90! Another member had decorated the room with a poster of Suya in her youth, and the congregation presented her with flowers and a certificate. There was singing and poems and Suya remarked, “I feel a blanket of love.”

The congregation greeted the new civil year 2016 on January 7th with a New Year’s reception. We wish to thank everyone who helped organize the evening, especially the Bogatchyk family. It was extra special because our members prepared and performed for each other. As is often the case in a small congregation, it had the feel of a family party. You can get a feel for both celebrations from the photo collage on page 2.

Religiously, we enjoyed the first two Shabbat weekend visits and Tu BiShevat Seder this year from Rabbi Sascha Lyskovoy. Our Russian-speaking members were definitely at an advantage, enjoying the philosophical and spiritual depth of his words and thoughts. Naturally, translation was available for German-speakers. We are a Jewish congregation in Germany with a majority of Russian-speaking members. Most of our members can speak and understand German, but our rule has always been if one person doesn’t understand—translate! It is a powerful lesson, after translating German into Russian for so many years, to be on the other side and be dependent on the translation going the other way.

We look forward to Rabbi Sascha’s February visit, his insights and perspective.

Polina Pelts’ project, “Aktion Mensch,” offered members and friends a concert of Jewish music from our choir “Shalom” under the direction of Petr Chrastina. It was gratifying to see how our traditional and liturgical melodies drew so many into the sanctuary. Thank you to “Shalom” for all their hard work and dedication to our culture. The audience agreed and showered our choir of eight with thundering applause.

## Youth Activities

Our wonderful Madricha, Patrizia Berhovski is spending a year in Israel in the Netzer Olami Schnat program. She is still shy of the funds needed. Please contact Rachel Dohme at [racheldohme@jghreform.org](mailto:racheldohme@jghreform.org) if you can contribute to her year.

We and the children miss her and are thrilled that she is participating in this program. Her lively, happy personality is certainly an asset to the World Union of Progressive Judaism’s Schnat Israel program.

Faina is offering our youngsters an afternoon of Jewish learning fun each month and Ioulia is offering regular family outings. We ask parents and grandparents to instill in their children the importance of their Jewish identity and take part in these activities.

## 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 like to help us stay online, please contact Rachel Dohme at [racheldohme@jghreform.org](mailto:racheldohme@jghreform.org). We appreciate any and all support!





## **Jewish February**

We are looking forward to Rabbi Alexander Lyskovoy's third weekend visit, which will begin the second month of the year. Our Russian-speaking members were captivated with Rabbi Sascha's Shabbat services, Torah study and celebration of Tu BiShevat and Seder with us.

We enjoyed the "New Year of the Trees" together, sampling the fruits, nuts, wines and juices symbolizing the first fruits and blossoms in Eretz Yisrael. Rabbi Sascha's commentaries were enjoyed by our members, and we had to add a second row of chairs around the beautifully dressed table. Look for photos of our joyous family festival in next month's newsletter.

It's hard to believe, but we celebrate our fifth year in our beautiful synagogue. This is a day for rejoicing and of course, our rabbi, Irit Shillor, will be with us for special Shabbat services to mark the occasion. The anniversary weekend will include Shabbat Tetzaveh services, and the weekend will be rounded off by a Sunday concert featuring Faina Pelts and Larissa Bellgardt. Celebrate the miracle!

## **"Aktion Mensch"**

We extend an open invitation to members and friends on Valentine's Day, Sunday, February 14th at 3:00 p.m. A Senior's Café with a surprise guest is in store. It is certain to be an amusing afternoon!

## **Interreligious Women's Group**

Please join us for the first of three meetings of our women's interreligious group. Our three-part theme this year is "Our holy texts—their meaning and importance." We will begin in the DITIB Mosque, Thiewall Street. Our friends will meet and greet us there on February 23rd at 3p.m. for a fascinating afternoon.

## **February "Save the Date"**

Members please note that our annual membership meeting will be held on March 13.

## **New Members**

With the more than 1,000 new Syrian refugees in Hamelin, suitable apartments have become harder to find. If you know of an available apartment, please inform us in the synagogue office.

## **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.



## **Donations — Tzedakah**

We thank all those who donated to either the congregation, for the Youth Fund or the synagogue foundation:

We acknowledge and thank our own members for donating a "leaf" in memory of Dr. Leo Hepner, of beloved memory. In addition generous donations were made by Dr. Brigitte Löwe, Mrs. Renate Cramer, Dr. Gesa Snell, the Bartrup High school 8th and 11th grade classes, Hameln Hospice Society, Mrs. Spangenberg and her 11th grade class, Mr. Norbert Baum, Mrs. Dora Vinnyska, Mrs. Ute Gibas and Rachel Dohme.

We thank the Catholic Youth and the Spangenberg family for their generous contributions for Patrizia Berhovski's Schnat year in Israel.

We thank Mrs. Lynn Magid Lazar, Mrs. Connie Creshtool, Mr. Josh Herz and Mrs. Ruth Fried from the USA for generous donations. We thank the WUPJ for their contribution.

May you all be blessed for your generosity.

## **Mazel Tov**

Mazel Tov to our member Suya Varschavskaia on her 90th birthday! May you live to be 120!

## **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.

## **Etz Chayim — Tree of Life**

Winter has arrived and even with our surprising mild temperatures, our tree will sprout a new leaf or two. 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 ordered:

Dora Vinnytska: “May our congregation be blessed”

New additions:

The Jewish Congregation of Hamelin: “In honor of Dr. Leo Hepner”

The Hessisch Oldendorf High School: “6th grade”

## **Yahrzeit in February**

Anna Raik	Feb.12, 2000 / 6. Adar I 5760
Vladimir Legkov	Feb. 7, 2003 / 6. Adar I 5763
David Saks	Feb. 6, 2008 / 30. Shevat 5768
Michael Lazer	Feb. 5, 2012 / 12. Shevat 5772

The names of our recently deceased members, Jakovs Judelsohns and Michael Timonim, have been added to the Yahrzeit Board in our sanctuary.

Please read the following letter of gratitude from Mrs. Rimma Kopirovskaja:

“Dear members and friends,

I wish to thank everyone who supported me in my darkest hour. I wish to thank the Jewish Congregation of Hamelin for organizing the funeral and religious services for my husband, Michael Timonim. The many heartfelt words were a comfort to me and my family.”

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.

## **Shalom**

### **The Congregation Board**



## Program for February 2016 • Shevat–Adar I 5776

Office hours: Monday, Wednesday & Friday: 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.; Tuesday & Thursday: 10.00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

### Rabbi Alexander Lyskovoy

Friday, February 5	4:00 p.m.	Rabbi's Table — Open learning session
	5:00 p.m.	Friday night services with Rabbi Lyskovoy
Saturday, February 6	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with Rabbi Lyskovoy
	2:00 p.m.	Family Seminar with Rabbi Lyskovoy
Saturday, February 13	10.00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with Rachel Dohme
Sunday, February 14	10:00 a.m.	Annual meeting of our state boards of Jewish congregations in Hannover
	3:00 p.m.	Senior's Café, led by Polina Pelts. Guest: Dr. Hill With friendly support of Aktion Mensch

### Rabbi Irit Shillor

Thursday, February 18	7:00 p.m.	In cooperation with the Society of Christians and Jews, Discussion with Deacon Hans-Georg Spangenberg and our rabbi: "Refugees of the Bible"
Friday, February 19	4:00 p.m.	Rabbi's Table — Open learning session
	5:00 p.m.	Friday night services with Rabbi Shillor 5 <sup>th</sup> anniversary Shabbat with a special Oneg Shabbat
Saturday, February 20	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with Rabbi Shillor
Sunday, February 21	5:00 p.m.	5 <sup>th</sup> anniversary concert with Faina Pelts & L. Bellgardt With friendly support from Aktion Mensch
Saturday, February 27	10.00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with Peter Wendt

### Outside activities

Tuesday, February 23	3–5:00 p.m.	Interreligious Women's Club, "Our Holy Books", Part I DITIB Mosque, Thiewall 7, Hameln
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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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