



# The Jewish Community of Hamelin Newsletter



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March 2012 • Adar–Nisan 5772

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Dear members, friends and supporters,

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

The month of February brought icy temperatures outside our synagogue doors. The wind blew and the snow fell. The cold outside was replaced by spiritual warmth as student rabbi Natascha Lyskovoy led Shabbat services the first weekend in the month. A special warm glow was shed by honored guests, Rabbi Dr. Tovia Ben Chorin and his lovely wife Adina, who were present to assess Natascha's work.

Rachel Dohme greeted the congregation and invited everyone to a special birthday and anniversary celebration on February 17th with Rabbi Shillor and our synagogue choir, "Shalom."

Natascha began the service by asking Feana to light the Shabbat candles in honor of her birthday. Faina Pelts accompanied the liturgical pieces on the piano. Natascha did a fine job and members lingered at the beautiful prepared Kiddush table, enjoying the food and good conversation.

We thank the Berhowski family for showing warm Jewish hospitality and welcoming the Ben Chorins to their home for Shabbat afternoon.



With a freezing Siberian front blowing outside, we gathered together on February 8th to celebrate our traditional Tu B'Shevat Seder. The long Kiddush table needed to be extended to seat all in attendance. Liubow and Elena created a Garden of Eden Seder table, which pleased the eye as well as the palate. Rachel Dohme led the relaxed and joyful service. We collected money for JNF in order to plant trees in Israel. The warm family atmosphere around the table was felt by all. This being the first service Rachel had led during her husband's illness, everyone was happy to see her, greeting her with hugs and kind and supportive words. She thanked everyone and began the Seder by saying, "I feel the love in this room."

An especially beautiful piece was read, which was translated from English into German and Russian. Thanks to Lior Bar-Ami and Wladimir Pesok for the translations. Here the original:

### Trees in the Field

*Listen to the words of the Kabbalah about Tu B'Shevat:*

*Each person is like a Tree in the Field.*



In a forest of trees, each tree lives among the other trees. The trees benefit from each other in many ways. They share water, nutrients, sunlight and shade. Trees work together to prevent harmful weeds from attacking them. Trees support one another's growth with the help of insects cross pollinating from one tree to the next, enabling the growth of more fruit. Older, sturdier and stronger trees support the younger, weaker, less-stable trees during windstorms and severe weather. Trees that grow alone and separate from the field do not have the added benefit and support from the trees in the forest.

In a human community, each of us lives in the presence of others. Like trees, people benefit from the support and stability of a strong community. Communities in which the people work together

for the benefit of the community and not for the benefit of one individual grow and thrive in both tough times and good. Helping others grow adds to our own personal growth—whether it be spiritually, intellectually or physically. When communities grow together, everyone benefits.

Inspiring and moving moments continued as we celebrated our congregation's 15th birthday and 1st anniversary of our new synagogue's dedication. Rachel Dohme spoke words of greeting to the filled sanctuary. She recalled our past, naming the 18 founders who established the first post-Shoah Jewish congregation in Hamelin with her in 1997 and described our accomplishments in building the first newly constructed Reform synagogue in Germany in 2011. Rabbi Irit Shillor led the festive service, beautifully framed by our synagogue choir, "Shalom." Among the guests was the president of the Bad Pymont Reform Synagogue, Klara Behnke, members of the synagogue Foundation, as well as local citizens. Our member Svetlana Banschukova was overheard to say, "I wish "Shalom" would sing every week!" That's a very good idea!

Members and guests sat side by side, happily welcoming Shabbat with prayer and song. At the Oneg, everyone enjoyed one another's company and the delicious home-made vegetarian foods which covered the festive table.

Lasting thoughts were provided by Rabbi Shillor's sermon. Words that are well worth being repeated here:

On this Shabbat Shekalim let us remember that it is not only the ½ shekel that helps the community—it is not only money that we need, but all the other things that we can bring to our community. They may be big or small things, but all of them are a vital part of our community life.

Above all we bring the love and friendship that bind us all together, that enabled us to reach this day and say:

*Baruch ata Adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam,  
shebecheyanu vekiyemanu vehigi'anu lazman hazeh."*

Then and now, we can all say a resounding AMEN!



## **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](mailto:racheldohme@jghreform.org). We appreciate any and all support.

## **Jewish March**

We will celebrate Purim on Friday, March 9th with Rabbi Irit Shillor. Rabbi Shillor travels to us from her home in England once a month and we enjoy her visits and the services she leads. This time she has something special in her suitcase. On Erev Shabbat and Shushan Purim she will present our congregation with a Megillah Esther. We thank her for this generous gift and look forward to hearing the Book of Esther being read from it.

On Wednesday, March 7th, Polina Pelts' German class will turn our kitchen into a Hamentashen Bakery and she invites additional bakers to join the fun.

The Jewish tradition of preparing food baskets (Schlachmones) for homebound members will be carried on. Please let Polina know if you're willing to help deliver a basket.



## **International Women's Day**

We will celebrate International Women's Day this year with a special "Jewish touch". What perfect timing that Purim falls on the same day. Our theatre group, led by Valerij Bogachick, will perform the Purimspiel, "Esther". The piece will be performed in Russian but language will not hinder anyone from enjoying this piece.

## **Annual Membership Meeting**

Members have received an invitation to our annual membership meeting, including a proxy voting form with last month's newsletter. We have elections this year and hope for a good turnout. Make your voice heard!

## **State Board of Jewish Congregations**

Board elections were held during this year's annual membership meeting in Hannover. Katarina Seidler was re-elected as president, as were vice-presidents Rachel Dohme and Harold Jüttner. The officers will serve for another three years. Mazel Tov and good luck!

## **L'hitraot Natascha**

We will be saying goodbye to our rabbinical student, Natascha Lyskovoy on Shabbat Vayikra, March 23rd-24th. We have enjoyed each of her visits during her internship with us and wish her continued success in her studies at Abraham Geiger College. Please join us to bid Natascha farewell. Beginning in April, Adrian Schell will visit our congregation on a monthly basis.

## **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 the Hamelin Society of Christians and Jews, Mr. Wolfgang Fischer, Mrs. Tatjana Meschede, Mr. Adrian and Dr. Chayim Schell, Mrs. Larisa and Mr. Matvej Dvortsis, Mrs. L. Dorries, Mr. Dieter Vogelhuber, the Wendt family,

Mr. Lior Bar-Ami, Mrs. Spangenberg and her 11th grade class, Mrs. Dr. Schmidt and her 11th grade class, Pastor Lonkwitz and her 11th grade class, Herr Hans Weltner and Rachel Dohme.

We especially wish to thank the Rubanov family, Rimma, Oleg, Anna and Miriam for the generous contribution they made in honor of our 15th birthday and 1st synagogue dedication anniversary.

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. Thank you!

New leaves have been ordered from:

Larisa and Matvej Dvortsis: In memory of our parents

Adrian and Chayim Schell: Gilad Shalit is free!

### **Mazel Tov**

We congratulate our sister congregation in Unna to their first Sefer Torah.

### **Todah Rabah — Thank you**

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.

Thank you to everyone who helped organized the visit of the Russian consulate. We are pleased to help our Russian members and other Russians living in Hameln, who we hope will become members soon.



### **Condolences**

Heartfelt condolences to the Lazer family on the death of their beloved father and grandfather, Michael Lazer. The funeral was held on February 19th and led by Rachel Dohme and Wladimir Pesok.

Heartfelt condolences to the family of Rabbi Dr. Walter Rothschild on the death of his beloved father.

### **Yahrzeit in March**

Riva Slavinska — March 18, 2005 / 8. Adar II 5765

Gersch Kogan — March 19, 2009 / 23. Adar 5769

Polina Khazanova — March 19, 2011 / 13. Adar II 5771

May their memory be for a blessing. Kaddish will be recited during our Shabbat services. Yahrzeit candles can be bought at the community.

### **Shalom! — The Community Board**

#### **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 March 2012 • Adar–Nisan 5772

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

Saturday, March 3	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit services and Torah study with F. Pelts & R. Dohme
Monday, March 5	12 noon	“Judaism” a course in Russian
Tuesday, March 6	1:00 p.m.	Monthly board meeting
Wednesday, March 7	10:00 a.m.	Hamentashen Bakery with P. Pelts
Thursday, March 8	4:00 p.m.	International Women’s Day, Theater group presents: “Esther” Refreshments will be served
<b>Rabbi Irit Shillor’s monthly visit</b>		
Friday, March 9	4:00 p.m.	Bar Mitzvah class
	5.30 p.m.	Friday night services and Purim with Megillah reading, Rabbi Shillor Festive Kiddush with Hamentashen
Saturday, March 10	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit services and Torah study with Rabbi Irit Shillor
Monday, March 12	7:00 p.m.	In cooperation with the Society of Christians and Jews Movie night and discussion: “Just an ordinary Jew”
Wednesday, March 14	11:00 a.m.	Russian Book Club with A. Konstantinova
Saturday, March 17	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit services and Torah study with F.Pelts & R. Dohme
Sunday, March 18	3:00 p.m.	Annual membership meeting
<b>Student rabbi Natasha Lykovoy’s visit</b>		
Friday, March 23	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services with student rabbi Natascha Lyskovoy
Saturday, March 24	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit services and Torah study with student rabbi Natascha Lyskovoy
Sunday, March 25	3:00 p.m.	“Young and Jewish Jr.” with Marysol Fischer
Tuesday, March 27	11:00 a.m.	“Russian Afternoon” with M. Olvovskaja Art History class
Saturday, March 31	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit services and Torah study with F.Pelts & R. Dohme
<b>Activities outside the community</b>		
Sunday, March 11	2:00–5:00 p.m.	UPJ Netzer Family Purim Party in Bielefeld Register with Youth Director A. Schell
Saturday, March 3	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit services and Torah study with F.Pelts & R. Dohme
Wednesday, March 21	7:00 p.m.	Annual membership meeting Society of Christians and Jews St. Augustinus Church, Hamelin
Thursday, March 22	7:00 p.m.	In cooperation with Hamelner Forum, Lecture with B. Gelderblom Lalu Hefehof, Hameln, 7 Euros/ 5 Euros

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