



The Jewish Community of Hamelin Newsletter

March 2014 • Adar I–Adar II 5774

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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 to enable us to continue our work.

We've been spared the horrific snow storms, frigid temperatures and flooding that winter has brought other parts of the world. The temperatures in northern Germany have been mild, and we've hardly had any snow or ice. The crocuses and daffodils are up, the trees and shrubs are in bud, and it's beginning to smell like spring. Spring renews our hope in new life and good things to come. Everything inside and outside our synagogue walls is growing, developing and blooming.

Let's have a peek back at February's events.

Our Senior's Café, led by Polina Pelts, enjoyed an afternoon of Israeli dancing with "Chag Sameach," our dance group, led by Boris Markhaseev.

Rabbi Adrian Schell offered a new course, "Judaism from A to Z" an hour before Friday night services. Everyone is welcome. We never stop learning. The first class was a success and will be continued on March 14.



On Friday, February 21, we celebrated our new synagogue's third birthday with our Rabbi Irit Shillor. The service was lovely, Rabbi Shillor's sermon, thought-provoking, and the food, scrumptious.

We never tire from feeling amazed at having built the first newly constructed Reform synagogue in post-war Germany. What a beautiful house of worship and community center it is. So many people, minds and hands help create it—Jew and non-Jew alike. What a beautiful symbol—people of all faiths working together to re-establish Jewish life in our city of Hamelin. What a privilege it is, to call it "our house" Beitenu!



Almost every Shabbat morning we hold services and a Torah study session. On the Saturday mornings when neither Rabbi Shillor nor Rabbi Schell is with us, members lead the services and prepare the Torah study sessions. The lively discussions give those in attendance a source of spiritual strength for the coming week and offer the opportunity to reflect on themes of Jewish ethics.



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.

International Women's Day

We will celebrate International Women's Day on Sunday afternoon, March 9, with a concert performed by students of the school orchestra of Viktoria-Luise high school. The Viktoria-Luise high school is known as the "musical" high school in Hamelin, and we are fortunate that these young people wish to make International Women's Day especially pleasant for us. It is certainly to be a concert everyone will want to attend. We hope to see you there. Make sure to arrive early to assure a good seat.

As is our tradition, all the women will receive a flower in honor of the day, and after the concert a sweet table will beckon everyone to linger a while longer.

Harold Brown, from Sydney to Hamelin

We are excited that Harold Brown will spend a week with us in March. Due to health concerns his wife, Eva, will not be able to accompany him this time. Harold is the husband of Eva Kratzenstein Brown, the granddaughter of Dr. Siegmund Kratzenstein of Hamelin. Dr. Kratzenstein was the last president of the Jewish Congregation of Hamelin up until the Nazis came to power and destroyed the synagogue and community. Dr. Kratzenstein was arrested, imprisoned and tortured by the Nazis. He died a few days after being released in November 1938 and was secretly buried in the old Jewish cemetery. Our congregation was involved in locating his grave, thanks to the help of Joseph Speckmann, the man who prepared the gravesite so many years ago. In 2006, after months of planning, Harold Brown and his son, Dr. David Brown traveled from their home in Australia to Hameln for the stone setting ceremony, led by Rabbi Irit Shillor. This amazing story came full circle, and 68 years after his tragic death, Dr. Kratzenstein received his due honor.



Harold Brown has spent years chronicling the life of his wife's grandfather. He himself has led an eventful life and on this, his third visit to Hamelin, we want to hear his story. On Wednesday, March 5, he will meet with students of the 11th grade of the HLA, the business high school of Hamelin. On Thursday morning, the mayor of Hamelin will receive him in her chambers and in the evening at 7:00 p.m., Harold Brown will be interviewed by members of the Society of Christians and Jews, Daria Leuthier and Niklas Delp, in our synagogue. An encounter with this fascinating octogenarian is not to be missed and is open to all!

Jewish March

March is not only the month which ushers in spring but also in this year's Jewish calendar the month that ushers in Purim. We will celebrate the Festival of Esther on Saturday afternoon, Erev Purim, March 15. Come in costume, come with a mask or come with noisemakers but do come! Rabbi Adrian Schell will lead us in reading from our 100-year-old scroll of Esther, the Megillah, and we will join him in the reading from our booklets. We thank Rabbi Shillor for both the gift of the scroll of Esther and the tri-lingual Purim service booklets.



But what would Purim be without Hamantaschen from "Polina's Bakery"? Who would like to learn her secret recipe and help her make the sweet three-corned, poppyseed cookies? The baking begins on Friday morning at 10:00 a.m. in our kitchen. Bring an apron!



Pesach is not too far off and we've put in our Passover order. Wine, Matzah and more will be available soon. Stop by and stock up on your Passover needs.

Rabbis for Hamelin

Our Rabbi Irit Shillor has served our congregation with monthly visits since 2001. She has helped us create the congregation we have today. We are pleased she will continue coming to us, leading services, giving lectures and continuing to work on improving our religious texts, making them accessible to all our members.

We are pleased to announce that Rabbi Adrian Michael Schell will also serve us with monthly visits. He will lead us through services and the High Holidays, offer courses and seminars and work with our youth.

The conscious decision to have rabbinical guidance and presence every two weeks ensures our place as a viable Reform congregation.

Financially this will be no easy task and we appeal to you, dear readers, to help us achieve this goal through your generous contributions.

Youth Group

Rabbi Adrian prepared a fun day for Netzer Hameln last month. Here is an SMS from one of the children:

“Dear Rabbi Adrian,

Thank you for such a fun day. My sister and I enjoyed it and are very happy. Thank you!”

The March meeting will be fun packed too. Rabbi Adrian will assist Patrizia Berhowski and her plans to offer the youngsters a fabulous Purim Costume Party. After the party, the youth will join the congregation in the sanctuary for the reading of the Megillah and tasting the sweet Hamantashen, certain to be piled high on the buffet tables.

Interreligious Dialogue

Our congregation prides itself on living the Reform principles of community outreach and interreligious dialogue. We work regularly with the House of World Religions, the Society of Christians and Jews and the Interreligious Women’s Group, to name a few.

In January our congregation took part in two events, both attesting to true tolerance.

The Interreligious Women’s Group continues with Part II of this year’s series dedicated to the theme on Food and Religion—what we eat, when and why. It is our turn to host the group on March 11th and we look forward to Ioulia Berhowski explaining the laws of Kashrut and Rachel Dohme taking a culinary journey through the Jewish year.

The series “Let’s Talk,” in cooperation with our synagogue and the Society of Christians and Jews, has asked Rabbi Adrian Schell to speak on “Purim and Carnival—Differences and Similarities” at this year’s annual membership meeting of the Society. We look forward yet another opportunity to open our synagogue doors to Jews and non-Jews alike who have an earnest interest in learning and tolerance.

Annual Membership Meeting on Sunday, March 23

Our annual membership meeting will begin at 3:00 p.m. Please attend and share your thoughts with your synagogue board, listen to the board’s annual report and express your ideas how we can improve our congregational life. See you there!

Computer Course for All Ages

We are happy to offer our members a computer course for beginners. The course will be a day seminar or a two-day block seminar and is open to those from 6 years old and up. Laptops will be provided for the course. We need a minimum of six participants. There is no charge for the course. Sign up now!

New Members

We are pleased to welcome our newest members, the Vayman family. Mrs. Vayman was a physician and Mr. Vayman a mechanical engineer. Their hobbies are reading and the performing arts. Please make an effort to make them feel welcome.

Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to our congregation on our beautiful new synagogue’s 3rd birthday!

Do you have *Naches* to share? Let us know and we’ll print it in next month’s newsletter for all to see!

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 the following for their contributions to our congregation or our synagogue fund: Mr. Mark Schwartz, Pastor Karl-Heinz Schnell, Mrs. Edelgard Schlagmann, Mr. Bautz and the 6th grade of Schiller high school, Pastor Limmer, Salzhemmendorf, Mr. Köhlmann and the 6th grade of Albert Einstein Gymnasium, the 10th grade classes of Viktoria-Luise high school and their teachers, M. Wagner, Ms. Gottschalk, Ms. Linke and Ms. Walthemathe, Mrs. Scärer-Brunkow and the 4th grade of the Emmenthal elementary school, Mrs. Spangenberger and the 11th grade class of the business high school, Mrs. Heidi Braun, Mrs. Sabine Demuth, Mr. Wolfgang Schultner and Mr. Adolf Späth.



We thank Mr. Hans Weltner, Mrs. Rachel Dohme and Mrs. Uta Gibas for their monthly contributions.

We thank Mrs. Lynn-Magid Lazar, former president of the Women of Reform Judaism, for her generous gift. We will use it to help pay for rabbinical visits.

May you all be blessed for your generosity.

Etz Chayim — Tree of Life

Our Tree of Life is perhaps the only tree that grows leaves in winter. Please do your part and help a few more grow! 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.

A new leaf was donated from: "Thank you Harold Brown, HLA, 11th grade, 2014"

Thank you — Todah Rabah

We wish to thank the following people: Ms. Irina Sheinberg for an informational meeting about changes in passports for Ukrainian citizens, to Mr. Florian Faehndrich, for entrusting us with a parchment from a Torah scroll. The piece is in our ark, and our rabbis will decide what we should do with it. We thank Mr. Dieter Schulz once again for helping our custodian, Mr. Moos, care for our wooden floors.

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

Yahrzeit in March

Riva Slavinska	March 18, 2005 / 8 th Adar II 5765
Gersch Kogan	March 19, 2009 / 23 rd Adar 5769
Polina Khazanova	March 19, 2011 / 13 th Adar II 5771
Elena Grabovska	March 28, 2012 / 5 th Nisan 5772
Alla Drejzer	March 2, 2013 / 20 th Adar 5773
Oksana Kozlova	March 11, 2013 / 29 th Adar 5773

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



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 2014 • Adar I–Adar II 5774

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

Saturday, March 1	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with F. Pelts & R. Dohme
Monday, March 3	12 noon	“Judaism” a course in Russian with W. Pesok
Tuesday, March 4	2:00 p.m.	Monthly Board Meeting

Visit of honored guest Harold Brown, Sydney, Australia

Wednesday, March 5	10:00 a.m.	Harold Brown and students of the 11 th grade, HLA high school meet
Thursday, March 6	7:00 p.m.	In cooperation with the Society of Christians and Jews “Harold Brown, an eventful Jewish Life,” an Interview with our guest
Saturday, March 8	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with F. Pelts & H. Braun
Sunday, March 9	3:00 p.m.	International Women’s Day. Concert: Viktoria-Luise High School orchestra
Tuesday, March 11	5:00 p.m.	Interreligious Women’s Group: What we eat, when and why—Jewish foods, I. Berhowski & R. Dohme

Rabbi Adrian Schell’s monthly visit

Thursday, March 13	7:00 p.m.	Annual membership meeting Society of Christians and Jews Speaker: Rabbi Schell: “Purim and Carnival”
Friday, March 14	10:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m. 5:30 p.m.	Polina’s Hamantashen Bakery: Who can help? NEW! Judaism from A to Z with Rabbi Adrian Friday night services with Rabbi Adrian
Saturday, March 15	2:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m.	Netzer Purim Party for kids with Patrizia & Rabbi Adrian Congregational Purim service with Rabbi Adrian, Purimspiel with V. Bogatchyk
Tuesday, March 18	11:00 a.m.	Russian Book Club with A. Konstantinova

Rabbi Irit Shillor’s monthly visit

Friday, March 21	4:00 p.m. 5:30 p.m.	NEW! Let’s study Talmud Friday night services with Rabbi Irit Shillor
Saturday, March 22	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with Rabbi Irit
Sunday, March 23	3:00 p.m.	Congregational Annual Membership Meeting
Saturday, March 29	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with F. Pelts & S. Koudinov

Outside the Congregation

Tuesday, March 11	7:00 p.m.	Hameln Forum, “Germany—A New Home,” Elke Reichart, Munich, Lalu in Hefehof, Tickets: 7.50 Euros/ 5 Euros
Thursday, March 20	7:00 p.m.	Hameln Forum, “Welcoming Immigration,” Prof. Dr. Klaus J. Bade, Berlin, Lalu in Hefehof, Tickets: 7.50 Euros/ 5 Euros
Tuesday, March 25	7:00 p.m.	In cooperation with the Society of Christians and Jews, “Jewish history in Lage-Lippe,” Pastor Martin Hankemeier, Lutheran Reformed Church, Hameln
Monday, March 31	7:00 p.m.	In cooperation with the Society of Christians and Jews: “The Aroma of the Bible,” G & P Worner, St. Augustinus Community Center, Hameln