



The Jewish Community of Hamelin Newsletter

March 2015 • Adar–Nisan 5775

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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.

**Our bank contacts: Commerzbank Hameln
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The wintry month of February's cold winds, chilly temperatures and snow flurries were held at bay as spring sprung in our sanctuary, and members greeted one another for the happy holiday of Tu BiShevat. The table was laden with the prescribed first fruits, nuts, seeds, wine and juices needed for the Seder, led by Peter Benjamin Wendt. The holiday speaks to our feelings of solidarity with Israel, where the first blossoms and fruits awaken from their winter's sleep. Our emotional connection to Israel is strong, and it seemed more than fitting in light of the recent political situation and was especially poignant to lift our voices in the singing of "Hatikvah" at the Seder's conclusion. The holiday also emphasizes our feelings of Tikkun Olam and our responsibility as Jews and citizens to protect and care for our environment. We wish to thank the kitchen team for ushering spring and Tu BiShevat into our synagogue so beautifully.

Our congregation celebrated our building's 4th birthday over the weekend of February 20th and 21st. We never cease to be amazed at the miracle of the rebirth of Jewish life in Hamelin, crowned with our beautiful synagogue. Our rooms buzz with activity day by day. Members come and go, greeting friends and neighbors at services and catching up on family news at Kiddush, hearing lectures, meeting for classes and groups, borrowing books from the library, receiving help from the office and encountering visitors wishing to learn more about Reform Judaism. Rabbi Irit Shillor led us through the weekend's festivities and had these remarks during her Friday night sermon:

Our synagogue was dedicated four years ago. "Beitenu—Our House" is a holy space in which we can encounter God. In our synagogue, here and now, we can encounter God's presence in us. This space was created to encourage God's presence to dwell among us, but also for each and every one of us. God lives with us and so also in us. We sang this evening about the Shabbat angels and when we open the door symbolically at the conclusion of the song, "Lecha Dodi," we imagine the presence of the "Shechina," which if we allow, enter our hearts and souls and gives us strength. With intention, we attempt to reach a level of holiness through our prayers, meditations and deeds and create change in our world as this "Mishkan" evolves to a "Mikdash"—a holy space. May we all take this holiness with us when we go out and when we come in, when we lie down and when we rise up, and may we channel it into the world.





As Shabbat ended on Saturday, our musical groups presented an impressive concert. Performing were the groups “Benkshaft,” “Schalom” and “Melody,” Every seat was taken and everyone was in awe of the wide spectrum of musical talent in our congregation. It was of note that several of the musicians and singers took part in more than one ensemble. In good Jewish tradition, the pieces offered a menu of both joyous and melancholic music. The performers were thanked with rousing applause and bouquets of spring flowers. We thank all our wonderful musicians for this gala concert in honor of our 4th birthday. Rabbi Shillor dimmed the lights and a sweet hush filled the sanctuary as she led the Havdallah ceremony. Walking home in the chilly night air, filled with gratitude, the first star could be seen in the evening sky.

Our congregation wishes to thank everyone who has helped and supported us since the establishment of our congregation in 1996. Our congregation and our new synagogue are a vital and integral part of the Hamelin community.

We were happy to introduce Borys Utchitel as a full member of our congregation during Friday night services. Rabbi Shillor’s instruction prepared him well for his appointment with the Bet Din in Berlin. Congratulating him afterwards at Kiddush, board member Peter Benjamin Wendt said, “Dear Borys, it feels as if we have all received an additional birthday present through you. We honor your effort and welcome you into our Jewish family and community. May you be a blessing to your people.”

Unveiling

Rabbi Irit Shillor performed an unveiling service for family and friends of Lev Vinnyska, of blessed memory. The gravestone was dedicated on the morning of February 20th.

Jewish March

We are pleased that Rabbi Sascha Lyskovoy will join us once again in March. He will be with us for the Purim weekend. We recall the story of the Jews of the city of Susa, the foiled plans of evil Haman and the courage of Queen Esther, as told in Megillat Esther. We will read from the Scroll of Esther and retell the story as we do every year in Hebrew, German and Russian. Purim is a festive and joyous holiday, especially for the children. Join us for this holiday celebration and come in costume or pick something out of our costume box. The graggers, noisemakers, will sound; we’ll sing and dance and enjoy sweet and sticky homemade Hamentaschen and Chag Purim!



International Women’s Day

The congregation invites everyone to attend International Women’s Day on Sunday, March 8th at 3:00 p.m. We will honor the women of the congregation with spring flowers, delicious sweets, sparkling champagne and enjoyable musical performances.

Annual Membership Meeting

The annual membership meeting will be held on Sunday, March 15th at 3:00 p.m. All members were sent formal invitations with a protocol in January. We will hold elections so please be sure to attend.

Pesach Orders

Pesach will be here soon and as every year, kosher products will be available for purchase through the office. Check the order and information poster for your Passover needs.

Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to Borys Utchitel on his acceptance as a full member of our community. We are so pleased to have him!

Refuah Shlamah

May all those feeling ill at home, in hospital or in care facilities feel better. We will include them in our prayers for a full and complete recovery.



Contributions

We wish to thank all the generous people who made contributions this past month.

We thank Mrs. Sabine Berger, School of Teacher Education in Lower Saxony, Mrs. Schlagmann, the Kuntzag family, Mr. Schultner, Mr. Hans Weltner, Mrs. Rachel Dohme and Mrs. Ute Gibas.

Tree of Life

Who will order the next “leaf” on our Tree of Life? Leaves can be ordered through our synagogue office or through this Web site. Leaves can be inscribed for special events such as birth, Bar or Bat Mitzvah, weddings or as a gesture of thanks, in memory of a loved one or a Yahrzeit or in honor of someone. After the expenses of the inscription are paid, the money goes toward our building fund.

Todah Rabah

We wish to thank all those people who help prepare and organize our activities, religious services and holiday and cultural celebrations. We honor all those who selflessly give of their time and energy for the good of the congregation. We appreciate the many groups, initiated and led on a volunteer basis by members for members. Your dedication is recognized and appreciated.

Yahrzeit in March

Riva Slavinska	March 18, 2005 / 7th Adar II 5765
Gersch Kogan	March 19, 2009 / 23rd Adar 5769
Polina Khazanova	March 19, 2011 / 13th Adar II 5771
Elena Grabovska	March 28, 2012 / 5th Nisan 5772
Alla Drejzer	March 2, 2013 / 20th Adar 5773
Oksana Kozlova	March 11, 2013 / 29th Adar 5773

May their memory be for a blessing. Please join us at services when we say Kaddish. Yahrzeit candles can be purchased through the office.



The Congregation Board



[Newsletter Archives](#)

Program for March 2015 • Adar–Nisan 5775

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

Tuesday, March 2	12:00 noon 1:00 p.m.	Judaism—a class in Judaism in Russian with W. Pesok “Purim” Monthly Board meeting
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Rabbi Sascha Lyskovoy's visit

Friday, March 6	3:00 p.m. 5:30 p.m.	Open adult religion class in Russian Friday night services / Purim . Netzer group with Patrizia and Synagogue choir “Shalom”, Costumes, Graggers and Hamentaschen
Saturday, March 7	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study
Sunday, March 8	3:00 p.m.	International Women's Day
Saturday, March 14	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with Peter Benjamin Wendt
Sunday, March 15	3:00 p.m.	Annual Membership Meeting
Tuesday, March 17	11:00 a.m.	Seniors' Breakfast Club with P. Pelts, “Moscow”, lecture with Hans-Georg Spangenberg

Dr. Ulrike Offenberg's visit

Friday, March 20	3:00 p.m. 5:30 p.m.	Open adult religion class in German Friday night services
Saturday, March 21	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study
Wednesday, March 25	11:00 a.m.	Guest speaker, Mr. Raabe: “Changes in Social Services for the Elderly”
Saturday, March 28	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with W. Pesok



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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