



Rabbinic word

It's finally spring! Together we will celebrate the Exodus and our freedom through the rituals and celebrations of Pesach.

For most of us, we feel with our family and friends in Israel and the Ukraine which saddens our hearts and souls. The daily news robs us of hope — where are we supposed to find the strength to leave “our Egypt”? Liberation begins with the refusal to accept things as unchangeable. Judaism is a culture of hope, and it is no coincidence that the Israeli national anthem is called “Hope” (Hatikvah).

On Purim we read in the Megillah that grief and sadness were transformed into joy and celebration. The Seder evening accent is the Freedom Festival of Passover. It transports us from fear and sadness to renewed strength and liberation. We have the choice to be discouraged or to seek encouragement and resilience through the example of so many generations before us. Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907–1972) spoke these wise words:

“We are free to choose between the pursuit of freedom and the renunciation of it. (...) We are free to choose between good and evil, but we are not exempt from the act of choosing. We are obliged to make a choice. God waits for man to choose.”

—Your Rabbi Ulrike Offenberg



Review of the month of March

Annual general meeting and board election

The AGM took place on Sunday, March 10th. The chairwoman, Rachel Dohme, gave an account of the congregation's activities over the past year. This was followed by a discussion and various projects for the coming year were discussed. A new board was elected, which represent a big change: After almost 30 years of self-sacrificing work for the community, the synagogue and the re-establishment of Jewish life in Hameln, our long-time chairwoman chose, for personal reasons to not stand for re-election. Peter Benyamin Wendt was unanimously elected as the new chairman. Also elected to the board were Olga Gerr, Eva Shkolnikova, Claudia Fischer and Evgen Treskunov, completing the synagogue board of five. Congratulations to all of our board members on their election!

Rachel Dohme

My dear friends and community members,

As you know, I chose not run for re-election as president of our congregation. It has been my great honor, privilege and incredible joy to serve as president for the past 27 years. But it is time for a younger generation to take the helm. It is not an end but a continuum. I know that the leadership of the community is in good hands, including our rabbi Dr. Offenberg as advisor.

This congregation was always close to my heart. It expressed my love for Judaism and for all of you. We have become a strong Jewish family over the last three decades. What began in a Hasperde transitional home and developed our Jewish identity has grown and is evidenced by our religious and social life. Our beautiful synagogue is a symbol of this.

I love you all and carry you in my heart. I will continue to be by your side wherever I may be. I feel so much pride in our community, where everyone has always been equally important. As Rabbi Dr. Henry Brandt s.A. always used to say, “Who is the congregation? WE are the congregation.”

May God bless us and this synagogue community.







Greetings from Peter Benjamin Wendt

Our new chairman has been well known to everyone for his active involvement in our synagogue life. Peter Benjamin Wendt is 57 years old, married and father of four children, all of whom celebrated their Bar or Bat Mitzvah in Hameln. With regard to his new position, he said: "It is a precious task to help make Jewish life in Hameln and within our community active, to cultivate Jewish faith and culture, to seek out encounters in society, to be welcoming and to look into the future. My heartfelt thanks Rachel Dohme, who presided for so long and worked tirelessly for our community. I have learned much from her, especially about living Judaism. I also remember our dear Polina Pelts, of blessed memory, and her valuable work over many years. I am very much looking forward to working with our Rabbi Offenberg, the entire board and our community members."

Shabbaton by JLEV

The first weekend in March brought many guests from all over Germany to our synagogue. The ten congregations of the Jewish Liberal-Egalitarian Association (JLEV) joined us to celebrate a Shabbaton in Hameln. More than 40 guests from Freiburg, Munich, Göttingen, Berlin, Stuttgart, Frankfurt, Kassel, Hanover, Bad Pyrmont and Hamburg attended the weekend of services and learning.

Mayor Claudio Griese warmly welcomed everyone to Hameln. It was a special honor for us that Rabbi Prof. Dr. Elisa Klapheck, chairwoman of the General German Rabbinical Conference and Rabbi Alexander Kovtun, Hanover, helped organize the Shabbaton. In addition to the beautiful services organized by Cantor Daniel Kempin and Rabbi Offenberg, many rounds of discussions and shiurim framed the Shabbaton. On Sunday, special guest, Amos Davidowitz from Kibbutz Gescher spoke to us about the current situation in Israel.

The next JLEV Shabbaton will be held in September in Freiburg.

International Women's Day

On March 8th, International Women's Day was celebrated in our community. Valerij and Dora B. prepared a beautiful musical program and delighted the community members. There was also a delicious buffet and flowers for all the women. A film about previous Women's Day celebrations in our community was particularly touching. We would like to thank everyone for organizing this get-together.

Purim

Our Purim festival took place after this issue went to press, so we will report about it in the next community newsletter. The photos give an impression of the celebration, the reading of the Megillah and our choir. More next month!

Upcoming events in April

Marc Chagall

On Tuesday, April 16th, at 4 p.m., our dear friend Hans-Georg Spangenberg will speak about Marc Chagall and his art. The lecture will be translated into Russian.

Passover

Beginning in April, Passover items, matzah, matzah flour, wine can be purchased for a minimal price while supplies last.

We will celebrate our Seder evening on Monday, April 22nd, at 5:30 p.m. It is a special mitzvah to help set up, set the table, and help clean up afterwards.

Start of summer time

With our clocks changing to daylight saving time, our evening services will begin until 5:30 p.m. until autumn.

Donations — Tzedakah

We thank all those who made donations last month. Our thanks go in particular to Tatjana Meschede-Krasa, Ute Gibas, Ursula Niedert, Ms. Oelkönig and the St. George Church in Afferde, Ms. Stegmann and the Eugen Reintjes School, Ms. Rischmüller and the Catholic School, Christiane Klein and the Confirmation class from Bodenwerder, Uwe Wolandowitsch, Hiltrud Schulz and Mariya Mezheryska. May all donors be blessed for their generosity.



Baruch Dayan HaEmet — Condolences

We mourn Eva Gerr, who passed away on March 11th / Rosh Chodesh 1 Adar II 5784. We express our deepest condolences to her daughters, Olga Gerr and Stella Bogdanova, as well as her grandson, Alexander Gerr and granddaughter Evgenia Bogdanova-Kummer. Consolation to the family but also for all of us; we will miss the lovely Eva very much. She was buried in the family grave in Kiev. May her soul be woven into the bond of life.

Yahrzeit in April

Anna Potozkaia	April 11, 2000 / 6. Nissan 5760
Evgenia Borischanskaya	April 26, 2004 / Iyar 5, 5764
Tetyana Khodos	April 4, 1998 / 8. Nissan 5758
Boris Frid	April 28, 2011 / 24. Nissan 5771
Yurij Lebedinskyi	April 2, 2012 / 10. Nissan 5772
Alexey Voronov	April 10, 2012 / 18. Nissan 5772
Vilen Feldman	April 24, 2016 / 16. Nissan 5776
Ryssjy Kochergina	April 27, 2015 / 8. Iyar 5775
Arkadij Drejzer	April 4, 2018 / 19. Nissan 5778
Zinaida Gogulinski	April 19, 2018 / 4 Iyar 5778



May their memory be a blessing.

Shalom,
Your Community Board

[Newsletter Archive](#)

Jewish Community of Hamelin

Member of the JLEV (Jewish Liberal-Egalitarian Organization), the World Union of Progressive Judaism, and the Central Council of Jews of Germany

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Program for April 2024 • Adar II–Nissan 5784

Office hours: Thursday and Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m

Telephone: 05151 / 925 625 Email: jgh@jghreform.org

Friday, April 5	5:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat, followed by Kiddush
Saturday, April 6	10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Shacharit Shabbat “Shemini/ HaChodesh,” Kiddush, Shiur Youth Kehillah
Wednesday, April 10	6:00 p.m.	Limmud Rabbah, via Zoom
Thursday, April 11	6:00 p.m.	Digital Bible Dialogue. Dr. Katrin Großmann and Rabbi Offenberg talk about the Second Book of Samuel.
Tuesday, April 16	4:00 p.m.	H-G. Spangenberg: Lecture, Marc Chagall, with translation
Wednesday, April 17	11:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m.	Meeting of the Liberal Synagogue Hameln Foundation Limmud Rabbah, via Zoom
Friday, April 19	11:00 a.m.	Lecture in Russian: “Changes in everyday life in spring,” Aktion Mensch
Monday, April 22	5:30 p.m.	Pesach Seder
Tuesday, April 23	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit Pesach

Outside the community

Thursday, April 4	7:00 p.m.	Prof. Dr. Gerald Weidner: “The path of man according to Martin Buber.” In cooperation with the GCJZ. Location: Evangelical Reformed Community, Huguenottenstr. 3a
Friday, April 5	2:55 p.m.	“Shabbat Shalom,” NDR Info, Hameln 99.9 MHz, Torah interpretation by Rabbi Offenberg
Tuesday, April 16	7:00 p.m.	Annual general meeting of the GCJZ. Location: St. Augustine, Vicelinstrasse, 7:45 p.m. Lecture by Hans-Georg Spangenberg: “Meditative reflections on pictures by Marc Chagall”

Outlook for the month of May

Thursday, May 2	3:30 p.m.	Interreligious women's meeting with coffee, tea, cake and Discussion in our synagogue with Rabbi Offenberg “The role of women in Judaism”
Friday, May 10	5:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat, followed by Kiddush
Saturday, May 11	10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Shacharit Shabbat “Kedoshim,” Kiddush and Shiur Youth Kehillah
Thursday, May 16	6:00 p.m.	Digital Bible dialogue about the Second Book of Samuel
Friday, May 24	5:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat, Kiddush. Limmud Rabbah Shabbaton
Saturday, May 25	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit Shabbat “Behar,” followed by Kiddush. Limmud Rabbah Shabbaton (program follows)
Sunday, May 26	10 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Limmud Rabbah Shabbaton Lag BaOmer

Regular courses via Zoom:

Tuesdays, 4:00 p.m.: Bar Mitzvah Class
Wednesdays, 4:00 p.m.: Bat Mitzvah Class
Wednesdays, 6:00 p.m.: Limmud Rabbah