



Jüdische Gemeinde Hameln e.V.

Mitglied der Union progressiver Juden in Deutschland

Mitglied der Weltunion progressiver Juden

Mitglied des Zentralrates der Juden in Deutschland

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Program for July–August 2009 • Tammuz–Av–Elul 5769

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

Ms. Faina Pelts is on vacation the week of July 13th

Tuesday, July 7	9:00 a.m.	Monthly board meeting
Friday, July 10	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services with Dieter Vogelhuber
Friday, July 24	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services and Birthday Shabbat with R. Dohme
Tuesday, August 4	9:00 a.m.	Monthly board meeting
Friday, August 7	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services with R. Dohme
Friday, August 28	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services with R. Dohme

Activities outside our congregation

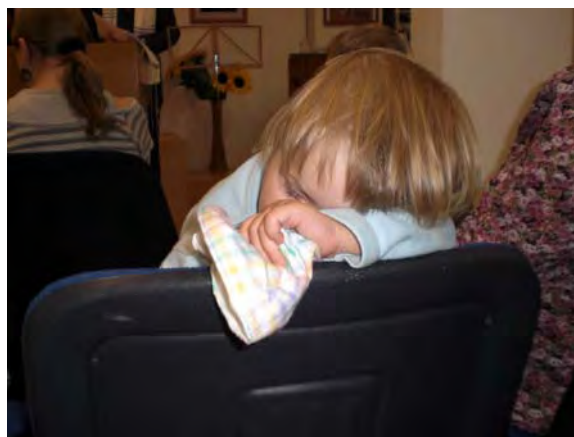
Thursday–Sunday, July 9–12

15th Annual Conference of the Union of Progressive Jews of Germany in Berlin/Spandau

Saturday, August 15	10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.	“Cultural Festival,” Hochzeitshaus Hamelin Performances from “Schalom” and “Chag Sameach,” Congregational Information booth
Wednesday, August 26	9:00 a.m.	Society of Christians and Jews bus trip to Göttingen, Walking tour: “In the footsteps of Edith Stein” followed by a visit to the new Göttingen Synagogue. P. Pelts and H.-G. Spangenberger, €20,- / €10,- Please register by August 10 th , Meeting point: Hamelin train station

Dear members, friends and supporters,

We celebrated the holiday of Shavuoth with services led by Rabbi Irit Shillor. Following Erev Shavuoth services and dining on scrumptious cheesecake, we commenced our *Tikkun ha Leilah* (Night of Learning). As a sign of the joy of receiving Torah, we studied through the night together. This year, Rabbi Shillor selected texts to deepen and intensify our understanding of the principles of Reform Judaism. We examined the history of Reform Judaism and its origin in Germany. Using the pamphlet "35 Principles of Reform Judaism," in German and Russian, lively discussions filled the hours. The relaxed atmosphere of the evening allowed members to come and go as their time allowed. We thank Dieter for his traditional "midnight soup," which no Shavuoth Study Night can be without! The following afternoon we gathered together again for a Mincha service before having to bid Rabbi Shillor goodbye for another month.



With June, came the last visit of our Abraham Geiger Rabbinical student, Yan Tsipris. During his one-year internship, he has supported our Bar Mitzvah student, Joshua Wendt, in his studies, and led services, adding his voice and guitar to our communal prayer and leading our Shabbat morning Torah study group. Congregational president Rachel Dohme thanked Yan for his work this year and presented him with a book from the community, wishing him continued success in his studies.

One of our newest clubs, the Russian Book Club, met for the third time in June. Mrs. Alla Lybich prepared an essay on the life and work of the Russian director and writer Elgar Riasanov. A lively discussion about his films, books, and poetry followed. The Book Club will take a summer break and meet again in September.

A very special evening was held at the House of Religion in Steinbergen on June 13th. The spectrum of our congregation's musical talents was the showcase to an exciting benefit concert there. The evening began with opening remarks from Mr. Bernhard Priesmeier, member of the advisory board of the House of Religion. Rachel Dohme followed with information about the Hamelin synagogue project. Choir-master Petr Chrastina accompanied our choir "Shalom" on the piano through their program of Jewish music. Choir members Faina Pelts, Nadya Pesok, Larissa Dvortsis, Mark Ovsievykh, and Rudi Brückner gave a brilliant performance. Our young cantor, Rebekka Dohme, followed



with moving liturgical a capella pieces, which gave everyone goose bumps. The "Trio Benkschaft," with Petr Chrastina on piano, Rudi Brückner on guitar, and singer Uwe Wolandowitsch presented soulful Yiddish pieces. Everyone joined together for a finale of "Wir leb'n ewig" The wonderful acoustics of the room underlined the talents of all our wonderful musicians, and we wish to thank everyone involved for dedicating so much time, energy, and above all, love for Jewish music, which made this concert such a success. Contributions amounted to more than 1200 Euros for our new synagogue. Thank you all.

We especially wish to thank House of Religion Director Pastor Dr. Peter Neumann for organizing the concert.

Matvej Dvortsis organized a wonderful evening of classical and Jewish music on June 14th for the participants of the Senior Café. The music of Ljubov Sizer and Tatjana Stepanova were enjoyed by a full house and everyone left hoping to hear the Hannover musicians perform again soon.



Our Israeli dance troupe "Chag Sameach" performed at the three-day festival, "Lower Saxony Day," which our city of Hamelin hosted this year. More than 300,000 visitors attended the festival during the three-day period. We thank our courageous dance group for their fantastic performance in front of such large crowds. Ours was the sole event of Jewish character at this state fair. Our sister congregation from Hamburg was visiting us for the day, and we all returned to the synagogue afterward for coffee, cake, and a chat.

The busy month ended with "our evening" in the summer series, "Music and Words." This year's theme was "Fairy tales and Legends." Our Rabbi, Irit Shillor, and Pastor Christiane Brendel provided thoughtful and humorous stories, framed by the music of our choir "Schalom," accompanied by Petr Chrastina. The music and words left a smile on everyone's lips and a bounce in their step.

We wish everyone a wonderful summer.

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 to our congregational efforts and developments. 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, and we are grateful to all involved.

If you would care to help insure that we can stay online, please contact Rachel Dohme at racheldohme@jghreform.org. We appreciate any and all support.

Cultural events in July and August

Things will be a lot quieter during the summer months as many members take advantage of the warm months and go on vacation. We extend an invitation to all our members and friends to the following cultural events that will take place in August.

On **Saturday, August 15th** our synagogue choir "Shalom" and our Israeli Dance Group "Chag Sameach" will represent our community and Jewish life in Hamelin at this year's Cultural Festival. Besides the choir's musical program and the performance of our dance troupe, we will offer information about our congregation and the building of the new synagogue. If you'd like to help, please contact the office.

On **Wednesday, August 26th** the Society of Christians and Jews are offering a day trip to the city of Göttingen. We will take a walking tour, revisiting the history of Edith Stein, led by Dr. Mary Somers Heidheus and visit the newly renovated liberal synagogue, meeting with our friends from our sister community there. We will meet at the Hamelin train station. The cost is 10 Euros. Mr. Hans-Georg Spangenberg and Mrs. Polina Pelts will lead the group. Register now for this interesting outing.

Behind the Scenes

As one can see, our congregation makes every effort to provide a rich variety of religious, cultural, and social activities for our members. Our congregational life is spiced with an amazing assortment of people, young and old, with myriad talents. It is a priority that everyone has the opportunity to add his or her hue to our congregational mosaic. Congregational life is multi-faceted. Much is apparent, but other things happen without being seen by a majority of the congregants. We'd like to take a moment and acknowledge this work and these people:

Oulia Berhowski has invested much energy in organizing outings of religious and cultural nature for the children and youth of our religious school. She's led field trips to neighboring congregations and museums, arranging for transportation and tickets, involving the parents and researching the area to make the experience enriching for all. She spends countless hours of her free time in the hopes that the outings create a feeling of solidarity among our young people. It certainly has paid off and we thank her.

Lior Blase took it upon himself to instruct 80 Kindergarten children from the Hamelin Catholic Kindergarten, who visited our congregation in two groups. With many hours of planning, Lior offered these tots a feel for Judaism. The little ones listened intently and enjoyed the morning, especially the Challa and grape juice.

Dieter Vogelhuber represents our congregation in a local anti-Nazi initiative. His work in this group is invaluable for our congregation. He acts as a communicator between them and us, informing both. His work with the group helps us send out a message of civil courage against neo Nazis and anti-Semitism.

Rebekka Dohme beautifies our services with her lovely and moving voice when she cantors at services while home from her studies in New York. When her name is on the monthly program, it ensures a larger than usual crowd at services.

Peter Wendt holds lectures from time to time for our members. He prepared excellent lectures on Dementia and the Stages of Grief for our members.

Uwe Wolandowitsch has done much in the area of fundraising for our synagogue, organizing benefit concerts, giving interviews, engaging musicians, and countless other aspects of events of such proportion. The results were astounding, full concert halls, happy guests who not only enjoyed wonderful Jewish music but also showed their support for a synagogue for Hamelin.

Rachel Dohme teaches many different groups about Reform Judaism in our community center. School classes of every age, church groups, and clubs visit our congregation and learn about our community and Judaism. This public relations work is very important to her. Fascinating discussions have taken place with young and old. The groups especially enjoy the relaxed atmosphere and the "hands-on" approach. Positive inter-religious work is a safeguard against prejudice.

The list of names and activities could and will be continued in upcoming newsletters. This is only a small look behind the scenes of our synagogue's doors.



Donations — Tzedaka

We are grateful to the many people who continually support our work and our plans to build a new synagogue. We thank all those who gave so generously:

Two second grade classes from Rosenbusch Elementary School, Hessisch Oldendorf, the Catholic Kindergarten in Hamelin, House of Religion Benefit Concert in Steinbergen, Mr. Justin Stone (USA), Mrs. Anastasia Kritvzova, Mr. Dieter Vogelhuber, Mr. Lior Blase, Mr. and Mrs. Nierstheimer, and Tanya Adams. We are also grateful for a very generous anonymous contribution.

May all donors be blessed for their generosity.



Tree of Life — Etz Chayim

Who will contribute the next leaf? Each leaf not only adorns our sanctuary but also helps us raise funds for our synagogue. Leaves can be ordered through our office or by contacting [Rachel Dohme](#) or on this Web site: [Tree of Life](#). Each leaf costs a minimum of \$100 (quadruple *chai* plus expenses). Please contribute a leaf and help us to build our synagogue!

- Contributed by Dieter Vogelhuber: "Happy 18th birthday to my granddaughter Lea from Opa Dieter"

Mazel Tov — Congratulations

Mazel Tov to this year's graduating class at Abraham Geiger Rabbinical College. The festivities were held on June 18th in the newly restored Synagogue Rykestrasse in Berlin. The ordination was followed by evening festivities, celebrating the College's 10th anniversary and the awarding of the 2009 Abraham Geiger Prize to the German theologian, Dr. Hans Küng.

Mazel Tov to all the children and youth on completion of this year's studies at school and have a great summer!

Thank you — Toda Raba

Special thanks to Rabbi Irit Shillor and Rebekka Dohme for the lecture and musical program in House of Religion on May 27th. It was a fascinating evening for more than 50 people in attendance.

We thank the musicians of our congregation, our choir "Shalom," the "Trio Benkschaft," and Rebekka Dohme for an excellent benefit concert in House of Religions on June 13th. Special thanks go to Pastor Dr. Peter Neumann, who organized the concert but was unable to attend due to health problems. We wish him a speedy recovery!

Polina Pelts wishes to thank her German class participants for the surprise party they gave her. The music group Matvej Dvortsis organized was the icing on the cake!

We wish to thank Mr. Vogelhuber, Mrs. Martinova and Mr. Vinnytska for contributions to our congregational library.

We thank the Union of Progressive Jews of Germany for the grant allowing six of our members to attend the national conference in Berlin in July.

We are grateful to each and every person and every organization, in Germany and America, for their support of our community.

We appreciate and thank our community members who helped make our holidays, services and celebrations special.

We thank Julian Dohme who helped us with the graphic layout of this newsletter.



Unveiling

The unveiling ceremony for Sergei Jevdokimov, of blessed memory, was held on June 24th. Rabbi Irit Shillor and Wladimir Pesok led the service.

July Yahrzeit — We remember:

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|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Nataliya Zaychenko | July 7, 2003 / 1 Tammuz 5763 |
| • Inge Dickmann | July 16, 2008 / 13 Tammuz 5768 |
| • Sergei Yevdokimov | July 21, 2008 / 18 Tammuz 5768 |

May their memory be for a blessing. Please join family members during Sabbath services as we recite Kaddish. Yahrzeit candles are available in the office.



Shalom,

—Your Synagogue Board