



The Jewish Community of Hamelin Newsletter



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December 2011 • Kislev–Tevet 5772

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Dear members, friends and supporters,

The religious cycle ended in October with the festive holiday of Simchat Torah. We observed our beloved tradition of unrolling the scroll, each member gingerly and lovingly holding the parchment. The words of The Law wound through our sanctuary and with our Rabbi in the middle, we heard the final chapter and the first. This underscores that the Torah has no end and we can turn it and turn it and still see it anew week after week, year after year. With great care we assisted our rabbi in rolling the scroll again, readying it for the next Shabbat's reading.

After the holiday service we enjoyed a rousing and joyous concert by Roman Kuperschmidt and Friends. The musicians enchanted us with clarinet, accordion and percussion instruments. The music joined hands with our festival of Simchat Torah, and we felt the joy of Torah in every note. In no time everyone was on their feet dancing and singing along. After two hours the musicians were exhausted and were showered with applause. Music knows no language barrier or age restrictions but speaks to the heart as does our Torah. The streets were certainly aglow with all

the smiling and humming congregants as they made their way home.

On a more serious note, we observed memorial services for the 9th of November. This year was the first year that the service took place in front of our completed building. This mere fact alone stood testimony to the survival of the Jewish People. More than 100 citizens of every age, race and religion gathered in front of our doors. Pastor Christine Brendel found fitting words and documented the life of Leon Elias Holman (Kratzenstein). He fled Hamelin in 1934 and found refuge in Amsterdam only to be deported with his wife and murdered at the hands of the Nazis.

Christa and Bernd Bruns recited the names of the 128 murdered Jewish Hameliners in hushed humility. Cantor Andre Sitnow recited Kaddish.

After the service, we opened our synagogue doors to all in attendance to view the glass sculptures of Frieder Korff. His exhibition, "We Want to Remember, Not Forget," was displayed and was free to the public until November 30th. We wish to thank Mr. Korff for displaying his works and being on hand to discuss his pieces. It demonstrated once again that our synagogue is a meeting house in our city and serves to offer healing and hope whenever possible.



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.





Jewish December

“O Hanukka, O Hannuka, come light the menorah...” These sweet words remind us all that Hanukka not only thrills the little ones but those young at heart too. The holiday begins this year at sundown on Tuesday, December 20th and ends on Wednesday, December 28th. As we light each of the eight candles we recall the story of the rededication of the Temple in 165 BCE and the triumph of the gallant Macabees. The candles remind us of the miracle of the tiny vial of oil that lasted until new oil could be obtained. In December our homes will glow warmly with soft candlelight as the little ones make Hanukka decorations, and the sweet smell of Hanukka cookies waft through the rooms.

Please join us in the sanctuary for the lighting of the first candle and a Hanukka sing-along with our congregational choir Shalom. The evening will be sweetened with Sufganiyot and other holiday treats. Join us in a game of dreidel or catch up with a chat with friends and neighbors as we celebrate the miracle of the few who triumphed over many. Our own history is mirrored in the age-old story. In 1997 eighteen Jewish men and women envisioned a

Jewish community, and today we stand as a congregation of 200 in the first newly constructed Reform synagogue in post-war Germany. Come celebrate with us!

That Hanukka Feeling

Don't miss a wonderful concert on Sunday, December 18, when we will host musicians Marcel Solomon and Harold Berghuis in our synagogue for a pre-Hanukka concert. We promise you will not want to miss this evening of classical guitar and clarinet spanning Chassidic niggunim as well as Russian and Ukrainian melodies. We thank the cultural program of the Central Council of Jews of Germany for helping to make this concert possible.



New Year's Party

Please note that we'll be celebrating the New Year with our traditional “After–New Year New Year's Party” on January 5th. Please register in the office.

Winter Machene

As every year, our annual winter camp for 12–18-year-olds takes place. This year the winter fun will be in the lovely Eiffel Mountains. The camp will be held December 23–30, and the teenagers will be celebrating Chanukah in the beautiful mountain range in the Rhineland of Germany.

It's sure to be a mixture of fun with enough time for consideration and study, making the days spent together unforgettable. Please register with UPJ Youth Leader Adrian Schell or through the UPJ office.



Union of progressive Jews of Germany

A weekend seminar, “Forward—Strong Jewish Identity for a Strong Jewish Leadership,” led by Rabbi Dalia Marx was held in Berlin. The project was the joint effort of the World Union of Progressive Jews and the Union of Progressive Jews of

Germany. We thank Rabbi Joel Oseran for his support and guidance in making this weekend such a success. Community leaders from all over Germany attended—two from our congregation. Heidi Braun gave the following report:

Faina Pelts and I attended a WUPJ-UPJ seminar in Berlin from November 11 to 13. The seminar's goal was to provide active congregants, through discussion and workshops, a strong background in Reform Judaism as it relates to our community work and our relationship with Israel. The 22 participants profited greatly from the myriad exchange of ideas and the new and different possibilities of approaching the challenges of leadership within the congregational structure. Everyone enjoyed and was enriched by experiencing different forms of services led by various participants. I was impressed to see once again how differently we practice our Judaism, yet how familiar the various expressions are. It reinforced my view that Reform Judaism allows and encourages conscious practice. Our thanks to Debbie Tal-Reuttger and Rabbi Dalia Marx for the professional and challenging seminar.

Central Council of Jews of Germany

Mrs. Polina Pelts and Mrs. Faina Pelts took part in a seminar offered by the Central Council in November. The information and ideas won there will enrich our congregation's cultural life.

Mazal tov — Congratulations

We congratulate Dr. Gesa Snell on the dedication of the newly renovated Hamelin Museum.

We congratulate the graduating class of Abraham Geiger College who received their ordination on November 27.

Refu'ah Shlemah — Get Well Soon

We pray for the continued recovery of Dr. Ferdinand Dohme.

Tzedakah — Donations

We thank our members and friends who support our community life and the building of our synagogue with generous donations.

We thank Mr. Andreas Priesner, the Erhardt Albrecht Company, Mrs. Christa Bruns and her club, Mrs. U. Niedert, Mrs. Ruf, Mr. and Mrs. Hans Weltner, and Rachel Dohme.

May they all be blessed for their generosity.

Etz Chayim — Tree of Life

Especially during the fall 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. One 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!

The newest leaf added to our tree was contributed by Mr. Andres Priesner and reads:

“In memory of my beloved ones”

Todah Rabah — Thank you

We thank our Mr. Frieder Korff for providing us with his beautiful glass exhibit.

We thank Mrs. Bardusch and Mrs. Bruns for books for our congregational library.

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.

New Yahrzeit Board

In honor of our deceased members a new Yahrzeit Board has been added and hangs in our sanctuary. The 33 name plates were engraved by the Heutger Jewelry store. We honor the memory of deceased community members and bring them into our midst while we are praying.

Yahrzeit in December:

Roza Chirita	12/1/2000 / 4. Kislew 5761
Frida Dachkevich	12/3/2001 / 18. Kislew 5762
Grigori Drabkine	12/7/2005 / 6. Kislew 5766
Igor Fuksa	12/5/2006 / 15. Kislew 5767
Genrich Leimunski	12/29/2006 / 8. Tewet 5767

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

Program for December 2011 • Kislev–Tevet 5772

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

Student rabbi Natascha Lyskovoy's visit

Friday, December 2	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services
Saturday, December 3	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit services and Torah study
Wednesday, December 7	5:00 p.m.	"Hanukka and Christmas- History, customs and practices" in cooperation with the Society of Christians and Jews with Peter Wendt and Hans-Georg Spangenberg
Saturday, December 10	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit services and Torah study with F. Pelts & H. Braun
Sunday, December 11	3:00 p.m.	"Young and Jewish" with Marysol Fischer
Wednesday, December 14	11:00 a.m.	Russian Book Club with A. Konstantinova
Friday, December 16	11:00 a.m. 5:30 p.m.	"Russian Afternoon" with M. Olvovskaja Art History class Friday night services with F. Pelts. P. Wendt and our synagogue choir "Shalom"
Saturday, December 17	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit services and Torah study with F. Pelts & P. Wendt
Sunday, December 18	3:00 p.m.	Pre-Hanukka Concert with Marcel Solomon and Harold Berghuis with friendly support of the Central Council of Jews in Germany
Tuesday, December 20	5:00 p.m.	Congregational Hanukka Party Hanukka sing along with "Shalom," lighting of the first candle, sufganiot, dreidels and more

**Happy Hanukka and a happy and healthy 2012
to all our members, friends and supporters!**

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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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