



Rabbinic word

We recently sang “Mah Nishtanah” — “What’s different today?” — the famous four questions of the Seder evening. And everyone could feel that so many things were different, not just the eating of matzah and bitter herbs, or the other symbolic acts to remind us of the exodus to freedom. So many people were missing from their families' Seder tables this year because they were murdered, abducted or killed. Bitter herbs and salt water are probably the most impressive symbol to remind us of slavery in Egypt. This year, watching the news was enough to feel במצרים, in distress. But the dramaturgy of the Seder evening is one of departure. We pause, look back, don't forget, but we don't stop there. The leitmotif of the coming month of May/Iyar is hope — hope for the return of the hostages, for peace, for the future and freedom from terror for all peoples of the Middle East region. And also hope for a containment of the old-new anti-Semitism, as it became visible in Germany, Europe and the USA on the streets, in the media, at universities and in the cultural scene. In May we celebrate the Jewish and Israeli national holidays of Yom HaShoah, Yom HaSikkaron (Remembrance Day) and Yom HaAtzma'ut, Israel's Independence Day. This year we celebrate 76 years of the existence of the State of Israel. We have often said lightly that it is reassurance for Jews all over the world. These days we are experiencing how fragile this expectation can be and also how important the existence of this Jewish state is. But the name of the Israeli national anthem is “HaTikvah” — hope. And so, despite all the hardships, we also say: “Od lo avdah tikvatenu” — “We hold on to hope”.



—Your Rabbi Ulrike Offenbergl

Review of the month of April

Purim + Hamantaschen

Now Purim was a while ago, but it fell so late in the month of March that we were only able to include photos of this festival in the last community newsletter. It was a joyous celebration (there was even a live dinosaur!) that so many of our members contributed to. Several young people and adults took part in the recital of Megillat Esther in Hebrew, German and Russian. In the week before Purim, several members of the community baked a mountain of delicious Hamantaschen with various fillings. And a big thank you goes to Valerij, Valera, Nadia, Dora and Genrietta, who founded a small choir and delighted us with Jewish songs.

Gift of historical pewter plates

In March we received an unexpected donation from the Landt-Lohmann family. The Lohmann department store had existed in Hamelin since 1843 and offered textiles on Ritterstrasse. Due to the needs of the armaments industry, this line of business became more important during the Nazi era; metals and raw materials had to be sold here. At the same time, the living conditions for Jews in Hameln became increasingly difficult: as early as 1935, the NSDAP local group had presented the mayor of Hamelin the following anti-Jewish demands:

1. Signs should be placed at the entrances to the city with the inscription “Jews are not welcome in Hamelin”.
2. In places with a lot of public traffic, glass boxes should be installed in which the anti-Semitic newspaper “Der Sturmer” is displayed.
3. No craftsman or businessman should receive orders from the city if he or his family members have personal or business dealings with Jews or consult Jewish doctors or lawyers.
4. The immigration of Jews, including those who have been baptized, should be prohibited.
5. Jews should be forbidden from bathing in bathing establishments in Hamelin.



Under these conditions, Jewish residents of Hamelin lived in severe isolation and became increasingly impoverished. The father of the Lohmann family (born in 1938) remembered that as a small boy he saw boxes of tin dishes being piled up. These plates, which were said to have been made around 1830, later hung in the family dining room. It was only in the last few decades that the family's three children became aware that Hebrew letters were engraved on some of the plates and investigated the story. There was hardly any talk about the Nazi era in her family and there was no coming to terms with the past. However, the Landt-Lohmann siblings believe that these plates would not have come into their possession if it had not been for the National Socialist persecution of Jews. They wrote to us: "We would like this pewter tableware to be returned to Jewish families in Hamelin. Perhaps the plates can be a bridge to past generations of Jewish life. Shocked again and again by the atrocities during the Shoah, we say: Never again is now!" The plates were handed over as part of the Kabbalat Shabbat service at the end of March. We are very grateful for this gift, but even more so for this willingness to deal with a difficult family history.



Marc Chagall

On Tuesday, April 16th, our friend Hans-Georg Spangenberg reported on the life of Marc Chagall and made his art accessible with many pictures. We would like to thank him for this lecture, as well as Feana, who translated into Russian for those present.

Seder

Our Seder evening was well attended, with around 50 community members taking part. The celebration of Chag HaCherut, the festival of freedom, was overshadowed by the ongoing captivity of around 130 hostages in the Hamas tunnels. An empty space at the Seder table, portraits and texts reminded of their fate. Rabbi Offenbergl guided us through the complex text of the Haggadah and the ritual actions of the evening with questions, explanations and stories. The children and young people searched for the Afikoman throughout the house for a long time — congratulations go to Florencia, who finally found it. But everyone was rewarded for their search with cinema vouchers. The evening ended with happy bleating, meowing, barking and other noises that accompanied the closing song "Chad Gadia." A special thank you goes to our chef Liubov for the rich feast; we also thank Dora, Valerij and Sveta for their help, as well as Feana for the delicious charosset.

Outlook for the month of May

Interreligious women's meeting

On Thursday, May 2nd, from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., the Interreligious Women's Meeting will meet again in our synagogue. The women are warmly invited to sit together with Christian and Muslim women over coffee and pastries. Rabbi Offenbergl will begin the conversation with texts on the topic "The role of women in Judaism".

Information event

On Thursday, May 16, 11 a.m., Margarita Suslovyh will report on news and changes in social legislation.

Shabbaton of Limmud Rabbah

For the third time, the participants in the Limmud Rabbah Zoom course are invited to meet in person and celebrate the services with our community at a Shabbaton and learn together at numerous Shiurim. From May 24th to 26th, guests from all over Germany will be our guests again. Our members are warmly invited to participate in all or parts of Shabbaton.

Lag BaOmer

This year we want to celebrate Lag BaOmer again, the cheerful barbecue festival that breaks up the otherwise serious mood of the Omer season. We invite you to do so on Sunday, May 26th at 3 p.m. It's not yet entirely clear whether we can be back in the garden of the Reformed Community on Hugenottenstrasse to grill sausages there. If it's not possible, we will grill in our community's small garden, but then it's vegetarian. Please ask for the location beforehand.

Donations — Tzedakah

We thank you for the donations received last month for our community life and the synagogue. May all donors be blessed for their generosity.



Baruch Dayan HaEmet — Condolences

On Purim Day, March 24th / 14th Adar II 5784, our community member Oleg Kleper died at an old age. We express our condolences to his daughter and grandson.

Yahrzeit in May

Felix Gurevich	May 1, 2014 / 1. Iyar 5774
Isaac Frid	May 7, 2020 / Ijar 13, 5780
Betja Kholmer	May 8, 1997 / 1. Ijar 5757
Sofia Kaspler	May 13, 2008 / Ijar 8, 5768
Vladimir Rubanov	May 14, 2002 / 3. Sivan 5762
Evgenia Benderskaja	May 24, 2001 / 2. Siwan 5761
Mark Ovsievych	May 30, 2022 / Iyar 29, 5782

May their memory be a blessing.



Shalom,

Your Community Board

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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 May 2024 • Iyar 5784

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

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

Wednesday, May 1	6:00 p.m.	Limmud Rabbah, with Rabbi Tamarah Benima, via Zoom. Topic: Yom HaShoah
Thursday, May 2,	3:30 p.m.	Interreligious women's meeting with Muslim and Christian Women in our synagogue. Rabbi Offenberg speaks to the Topic "The Role of Women in Judaism"
Tuesday, May 7	7:00 p.m.	"The Way of Man according to Martin Buber and Marc Chagall." Reading with musical accompaniment about Martin's life. Buber's. Speaker: Reinhilde Freund, Bad Orb. In cooperation with the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation Hamelin.
Wednesday, May 8	6:00 p.m.	Limmud Rabbah, via Zoom. Topic: Megillat HaAtzma'ut / The Declaration of Independence of the State of Israel.
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, Shiur Youth Kehillah
Wednesday, May 15	6:00 p.m.	Limmud Rabbah, via Zoom. Topic: "The period of Counting the Omer Time"
Thursday, May 16	11:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m.	"New changes in social legislation," Information session with Margarita Suslovych Digital Bible Dialogue. Dr. Katrin Großmann and Rabbi Offenberg talk about the Second Book of Samuel, chapter 13. via Zoom
Wednesday, May 22	6:00 p.m.	Limmud Rabbah, via Zoom. Topic: "The Book of Ruth", via Zoom
Friday, May 24	5:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat, followed by Kiddush
Saturday, May 25	10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Shacharit Shabbat "Behar", Kiddush, Shiur Youth Kehillah
Sunday, May 26	10:00 a.m. 3:00 p.m.	Spiritual Awakening and Shiurim with Limmud Rabbah Shabbaton Lag BaOmer celebration (location to be announced)
Wednesday, May 29	6:00 p.m.	Limmud Rabbah, via Zoom. Topic: "The Book of Ruth"

Outlook for the month of June

Tuesday, June 11	5:30 p.m.	Shavuot service, followed by Kiddush with cheesecake
Wednesday, June 12	11:00 a.m.	Cheesecake competition and Shiur for Shavuot
Thursday, June 13	6:00 p.m.	Digital Bible dialogue about the Second Book of Samuel
Friday, June 28	4:00 p.m. 5:30 p.m.	Presentation of the Blickwechsel Prize to Rabbi Offenberg Kabbalat Shabbat, festive Kiddush
Saturday, June 29	10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Shacharit Shabbat "Schlach Lecha", followed by Kiddush Youth Kehillah

Regular courses via Zoom:

Tuesdays, 4 p.m.: Bar Mitzvah classes
Wednesdays, 4 p.m.: Bat Mitzvah class
Wednesdays, 6 p.m.: Limmud Rabbah