



The Jewish Community of Hamelin Newsletter

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January 2010 • Tevet–Shvat 5770

[Program](#)



Dear members, friends and supporters,

We wish all our readers a happy and healthy 2010. May there be peace and security for everyone everywhere.



The last month of last year saw many wonderful activities, programs and services in our congregation. A very special evening was held in memory of Josef Pelts, of blessed memory. Josef was not only a gifted mathematician but a poet and playwright as well. Years ago he penned a piece entitled *We come from the Stettl*. It had been performed in German and Russian more than 10 years ago. Almost a

A very special Hanukka Bar Mitzvah was celebrated on December 12th. Joshua Went beamed with pride as he was called to the Torah for the first time. The joyous service was led by Rabbi Irit Shillor with Joshua at her side. Our sanctuary was filled with members, relatives, and friends of the Bar Mitzvah and guests of our congregation. Joshua read *Parascha Vayashen*, the story of Joseph and his brothers. In



year to the day after Josef's passing, it was decided to perform the piece again, in his honor.

Many months of planning and practice went into the production and it was well worth it. The result was an evening of bittersweet memories, of a time gone by and of the man who brought them to life. The actors came from our midst and received rousing applause and words of grateful appreciation from Josef's widow, Polina Pelts. Performing were Josef's daughter, Faina Pelts, Valerii Bogachyk, Svitlana Banchukova, Wladimir Model, Genrietta Bachmachnikova, Larissa Dvortsis, Mark Ovsievych, Nadja Pesok, and Matvej Dvortsis.

Every seat was taken as texts, poems, and songs created an eastern European village somewhere outside of Odessa. The actors transported the feeling of stettl life, with its moments of melancholy and joy reflected through daily life during one week's time. With this piece, Josef has left us a memorable story, filled with emotion. Polina Pelts thanked everyone and said with a tearful voice, "Josef is with us today."



Joshua's sermon he questioned how he would react to a boy like Joseph. The service involved many members and relatives, allowing everyone to share in Joshua's joy.

Proud parents, Elke and Peter said, "A Bar Mitzvah is a young person who consciously accepts the rights and responsibilities of a religiously adult Jewish life. Our young people are our future and each one brings us closer to our own synagogue in Hamelin."

The synagogue's choir "Shalom" sang a short program in honor of Joshua, and he thanked them and Rabbi Shillor and his teachers Rachel Dohme, Lior Bar-Ami, and especially his mother, who had studied Hebrew with him, as well as the various rabbinical students who worked with him. Joshua particularly remembered Adrian Schell, who is now studying in Jerusalem and thanked him for his gift, a Kippa personalized with his name.

The festive Kiddush was enjoyed by one and all. Many members and guests added to the beautiful table that Elena and Lubov had set.

Looking at all the members, friends, and relatives, Joshua said, "I am so happy!" We, as a community are also happy to have such a wonderful young man in our congregation. Mazel Tov Joshua!



A day after the festive Bar Mitzvah festivities, we gathered together again to celebrate Hanukka as a congregation. The soft warm light of the Hanukka candles glowed in the faces of the children from our religious school as they led the community in the blessings. A short service followed with many members reading prayers and special texts.

Lior Bar-Ami, our cheder teacher, prepared a short presentation with the children. Holding large felt Stars of David, which they had decorated, each child expressed his or her feelings about the meaning of the Hanukka lights. Afterwards, the young people led the congregation in singing traditional Hanukka songs.

Next on the program was our Hanukka raffle, a Hamelin tradition. Rachel was assisted by little Naomi who drew the lucky numbers. Each winner could select a gift from the "Hanukka basket." No one went home empty handed. Besides the raffle surprises, each family received a Hanukkia, a box of colorful candles and, of course, a dreidel from the congregation.

The grand finale was a concert by Lia Simagina and Boris Orentlicher. Lia Simagina performed many favorite Jewish pieces, accompanied on the accordion by Boris Orentlicher. In the second half of their program, the duo sang melodies in Russian, Italian, and Yiddish. We are



grateful to the Central Council of Jews in Germany, which provides congregations with financial support for these concerts.

Finally the buffet was opened and it was time to enjoy delicious latkes and jelly doughnuts and conversation. Amid the laughter, music and dancing, each one of us took a little of Hanukka's light home. One could even say, "A small miracle has happened here."

Our Internet Presence

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 of this newsletter and we are grateful to all involved.

If you would like to help us stay online, please contact Rachel Dohme at racheldohme@jghreform.org. We appreciate any and all support.





Jewish January

We will celebrate the holiday of Tu BiShvat on Friday evening, January 29th. Join us as the children from our religious school lead us through the Seder, celebrating the return of spring in Israel. The Seder is heavy in symbolism, comparing children to the first fruits. It is fitting then that the children lead us in this short but festive service. It will be a lovely way to celebrate the month's last Shabbat. Please show the children your support by attending.

On a more solemn note, we will observe Holocaust Memorial Day on Wednesday, January 27th. Professor Dr. Goetz Aly will give a lecture entitled "Hitler's Empire- Theft, Racism and national socialism". The lecture is free to the public and will be held in the Weserberglandzentrum. In times of rising intolerance, the observance of this day is more important than ever.

Rebekka Dohme's CD *Shabbat Melodies*

We are pleased that the CD is meeting with such positive reaction. The CD is selling for \$18 and 100% of the money raised will go to our synagogue building fund. Please visit us online at www.ighreform.org and listen to an MP3 selection. It is also possible to download the CD liner notes in German and English.

Naturally, our own members are buying the CD. In addition, the CD is being sold in German and American Reform congregations as well as in local churches in Hamelin. This fills us with pride and gratitude, and we thank Rebekka for lending her lovely voice to this project.

We hope many of our friends from around the world will purchase the CD. Buying the CD affords one the performance of a double Mitzvah: contributing money to the building project and listening to Shabbat liturgy.

This CD makes the perfect gift for any occasion.



Cultural Events in January

We look forward to greeting the new year on Saturday afternoon, January 9th with a new year reception. Faina Pelts and Svitlana Banchukova as well as Valerii Bogagchik have prepared an interesting program. Our new year receptions are a tradition and everyone is sure to enjoy themselves.

On Sunday, January 17th the world-famous Klezmer artist, Giora Feidmann will perform in St. Bonifatius Lutheran church. Tickets are 38 Euros and 17 Euros. Mr. Feidmann has generously allotted a contingent of reduced-priced tickets for our members. Tickets are on a "first come, first served basis", two per family. Don't miss this incredible evening of eastern European music.

New Series with Rabbi Irit Shillor

Rabbi Irit Shillor will begin this year's monthly "Rabbi's Table" with a series of study sessions revolving around great Jewish books. She will present each great book's history and guide us into the deeper meaning of the Bible, Mishna, Talmud, Shulchan Aruch and selected texts from Maimonides. The series will commence on Thursday, January 21st at 3:00 p.m., beginning with the Bible. We hope to see many members and guests there and look forward to fascinating discussions together.

Donations — Tzedaka

We are grateful to the many people who continually support our work and our plans to build a new synagogue.

We wish to thank: Theodor-Heuss School, grades 10a and 10d, Schiller High School, grade 6C, Herder School, grade 9/10, Bente Nursery and Landscaping, Mr. Karl-Hans Schnell, Mr. Wittekind, Mrs. Ursula Bomnüter, Mr. Karl-Friederich Meyer, Mr. Valentin Geletneky, Mrs. Heidemarie Braun, Mr. Lior Bar-Ami, the Dohme family, Mr. Mark H. Schwartz, Hameln City Works.

We especially wish to thank all our members, Jewish congregations, churches and organizations in Germany and the US who have bought Rebekka Dohme's CD and in doing so have helped raise money for our synagogue building project. We thank every single person.

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!

New leaves have budded:

- In memory of Nathan and Bessie Leshner and children, donated by Mark H. Schwartz
- In honor of Juergen Winkel, donated by Heidemarie Braun
- In memory of Hilde Moehlmann, donated by the Dohme family



Shalom,
Your Synagogue Board

Mazel Tov — Congratulations

Congratulations to our newest Bar Mitzvah Joshua Wendt. We are proud to have such wonderful young people in our congregation!

Thank you — Toda Raba

We wish to thank Greta, Chava and Jehudith for a fantastic Netzer Hanukka Party in December. Everyone had a great time and can't wait for the next Netzer event.

We thank Mrs. Bachmachnikova for organizing the visit of the Russian consulate. This annual visit helps many of our Russian members.

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

The homemade dishes were delicious and we thank everyone who helped with the planning, organization and implementation of our festivals.

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

Yahrzeit in January

Chaja-Rahel Kruckkovitch

January 29, 2003 / 26th Shvat 5763

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

Jewish Community of Hamelin

Member of the Union of Progressive Jews in Germany
Member of the World Union of Progressive Judaism
Member of the Central Council of Jews of Germany

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

Sunday, January 3	12:00 p.m.	Netzer Day for children and teens with Lior and Jehudith
Monday, January 4	12:00 p.m.	“Judaism” — a class in Russian with Wladimir Pesok
Tuesday, January 5	9:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m.	Monthly Board Meeting Video Afternoon with Isaak Katz
Friday, January 8	4:00 p.m. 5:30 p.m.	Religious school with Lior Bar-Ami & Faina Pelts Friday night services with Rachel and Rebekka Dohme
Saturday, January 9	3:00 p.m.	New Year’s Reception with Faina Pelts and Svitlana Banchukova
Tuesday, January 12	10:00 a.m.	Information meeting: Russian Pensions with G. Bachmatchnikova
Saturday, January 16	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with Rachel Dohme
Monday, January 18	10:30 a.m.	Russian Embassy Officer is our guest
Wednesday, January 20	11:00 a.m.	Russian Book Club with Alexandra Konstantinova
Thursday, January 21	3:00 p.m.	Rabbi’s Table: The Bible with Rabbi Irit Shillor
Friday, January 22		Rabbi Irit Shillor’s monthly visit
	4:00 p.m.	Religious school with Lior Bar-Ami and Faina Pelts
	4:00 p.m.	Parents-Rabbi meeting for new Bar/Bat Mitvah students
	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services with Rabbi Irit Shillor
Saturday, January 23	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with Rabbi Irit Shillor
Sunday, January 24	4:00 p.m.	Senior’s Café with Matvej Dvortsis
Tuesday, January 26	4:00 p.m.	“Russian Afternoon” art history class with Maya Olovovska
Friday, January 29	4:00 p.m. 5:30 p.m.	Religious school with Lior Bar-Ami and Faina Pelts Tu BiShvat Seder and Birthday Kiddush Rachel Dohme and Religious school class
Saturday, January 30	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with Rachel Dohme

Activities outside the community

Sunday, January 17	7:00 p.m.	Concert: Giora Feidmann Lutheran church St. Bonifatius Tickets available in our synagogue office
Wednesday, January 27	6:30 p.m.	Holocaust Memorial Day Lecture: Professor Dr. Goetz Aly, Frankfurt Weserberglandzentrum

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