



## Dear members, friends and supporters,

We wish everyone a healthy and successful 2020! May this year bring us goodness, happiness, warmth and light. May it be full of bright colors, pleasant impressions and joyful events.

## Greetings and thanks from the president

Each Shabbat we share together is special and we are happy when many congregants are there to pray and sing, led by Rabbi Dr. Ulrike Offenberg and under the musical direction of Faina Pelts. Rabbi Offenberg's sermons in German and Russian give us spiritually intellectual food for thought. Communal song, supported by our choir "Shalom," adds a festive note to our Friday evening services. As Adon Olam ends we are all happy to sit at Liubow's delicious Kiddush table and enjoy a Shabbat meal together. Thanks also to the BFD positions of Vladimir Pesok, Svitlana Hladchenko, Svetlana Banchukova and of course to our trusted caretaker, Heinrich Moos. Nothing would work without our treasurer Olga Gerr, nor without Boris Markhaseev, Dieter Vogelhuber, Ludmila Rudi, Israel Edelstein, Valerij Friedman, Valerij Bogachik, Emma Lebedinska, Olga Trieskunova and Aron Kaplan. Hoping not to have forgotten anyone, I thank you all for enriching our Jewish life in Hameln. Personally, I hope everyone had a sweet Hanukkah holiday and wish everyone a happy and healthy new year.

—B'Shalom, Rachel

As many have noticed, the police security forces are stationed in front of our building during our services and cultural events. Sometimes we see the police cars and sometimes not. That is intentional. What is important is the knowledge that we are safe in the synagogue and well protected by the police. Unfortunately, since Yom Kippur and the attempted attack on the Halle Synagogue, in which two pedestrians were gunned down by a racist madman, this protection has become necessary for Jewish institutions in Germany and elsewhere.

The empathy and concern of the Hamelin non-Jewish citizens for us and German Jewry was and is very impressive. On December 5th, a detailed discussion with the State Criminal Police took place in our rooms. Together with the police, we do everything to ensure that we are safe in our beautiful synagogue.

We therefore ask that only board members, office employees or the caretaker open the door. We want to remain a friendly and open congregation but we must do our part. The board will always keep you informed. If you have any questions, please contact Rachel.

## And now to our review of December:

On Shabbat, November 22, 2019, the congregation honored its long-time member Arkadij Zyryjanov on the occasion of his 90th birthday. Arkadij thanked everyone and said:

"My wife, Natalja Zajtschenko, and I came to Germany in 1999. Natascha passed away in 2003, but the Jewish community, created by Rachel and the unforgettable Polina, became my second home. I am very happy that I was able to celebrate my 90th birthday with my close friends, the members of the Jewish Community of Hameln. Thank you very much for the honor!"



On Tuesday, December 5, numerous community members gathered in our synagogue as part of the "Aktion Mensch" project. Many had brought their friends and acquaintances with them. It was an evening that reminded us of our home. Ukrainian and Russian songs were performed by the Ukrainian group "Rodoslav" from Zhytomyr. With their beautiful voices and Ukrainian dances, they touched the soul and heart of the audience. All those present were enthusiastic and sang happily along. Faina Pelts thanked the musicians on behalf of the community and presented them with floral bouquets. After many rounds of applause and refreshments, we enjoyed the opportunity to ask questions and speak directly with the artists. We thank the "Aktion Mensch" for the kind support.

At the beginning of the month, Rabbi Dr. Offenberg gave an excellent lecture on Hannah Arendt, the German-Jewish philosopher and activist. More than forty people came to the synagogue and the 90 minute lecture was over before we knew it. There was time for questions and answers and an interesting conversation developed between the speaker and the audience. It was a captivating evening for our members and guests of the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation.



On Sabbath “Wajischlach” on the 13th and 14th of December we were able to welcome guests from the Liberal Kehilla of Württemberg in Stuttgart. It was very nice to have them with us, to pray, to sing and to learn with them and to learn about their religious traditions. We hope they will visit us again.

Rabbi Offenberg taught not only our Giyur candidates but also our children and teens, assisted by Olga Trieskunova. Through the financial support of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, we can offer the family groups meaningful and fun activities. The photos give an impression of the group's lessons and Hanukkah activities.

The eight-day Hanukkah festival brought the secular year 2019 to a happy end. We celebrated our community festival by lighting the first candle on Sunday, December 22nd. To get in the mood, Rabbi Offenberg talked about the importance of Hanukkah and asked everyone present to think about an event in their life that they felt was a miracle. Our congregation experienced its own Hanukkah miracle this year. During an auction in Hanover, Mr. Christian Grundmann from Hessisch Oldendorf bought a Yad, a stylus for the reading of the Torah. He gave it to Rachel for our community. According to his research, this intricate, sterling silver Yad was fashioned in Russia. The pointing finger is also crowned by the Russian coat of arms of an eagle and bears the year 1812. With this story, this Yad symbolizes a covenant with Hameln, where Russian-speaking immigrants once again made Judaism their living reality. We thank Mr. Grundmann and his parents, who represented him at our Hanukkah party, from the bottom of our hearts for this generous gift.



The children helped decorate the sanctuary with a garland with dreidels, candlesticks and Hebrew letters. Together with Rabbi Offenberg, they lit the first candle and sang the traditional Hanukkah blessings and hymn “Maoz Zur.” Of course, children of all ages were given gift bags with sweets, Hanukkah candles and a book about Judaism. The Duo Svitlana Banchukova and Valerij Friedmann and the group “Shalom” rounded off the festival musically with Yiddish and Hanukkah songs. The dance group “Chag Sameach” performed Israeli dances and then encouraged the entire community to participate in the Hora. The program was very well received by members and guests, as evidenced by the applause afterwards. A great Hanukkah gift! Of course, the culinary aspect was not neglected. Our Liubow once again spoiled us with crispy latkes (Potato pancakes), Sufganijot (jelly doughnuts) and other goodies.

## Jewish January



### New Year's reception

The congregation will welcome the New Year 2020 with a communal party on Thursday, January 9th. The afternoon is led by Faina Pelts, Svitlana Banchukova and Olga Gerr. These New Year's parties have a long tradition in our community. It will surely be an unforgettable evening with good food and happy music and dancing. Celebrate with us! We thank the “Aktion Mensch” project for the friendly support.

### Havdalah

On Saturday, January 18th, we invite you to our Havdallah ceremony, in which we bid Shabbat adieu with songs, texts, wine, spices and light as we make the transition from the holiness of Shabbat to a different holiness which we must create in our everyday life.

### Memorial Day for the Victims of the Shoah

International Holocaust Remembrance Day is observed on the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz by the Red Army in 1945. This year, the commemoration will take place on Monday, January 27th, at 7:00 p.m. in the social hall of Schiller Gymnasium. Members of the Lutheran Youth Group of Hameln will read from historical sources.

### Rabbinic word

Calendar events like the beginning of the year invite us to think about time. Especially at Hanukkah time as I write these words, I reflect on last year's events. We light the lights after saying two blessings; the second of them says: “Blessed are you, Eternal One, ruler of the universe, who made miracles happen for our ancestors in those days at that time.”

“Those days” (*bayamim habem*) refers to the Maccabees' victory over the Greeks in 164 B.C.E. The expression “at this time” (*basman baseh*) refers in a narrower sense, to our month Kislev–Tewet when the Jerusalem temple was rededicated. These words create a link between the past and the present, from the historical events of the time to the present time in which we are and who remember and celebrate the victory of preserving our culture 2,200 years ago. Almost all of our holidays are rooted in past events and the miracles which were experienced. We recall the liberation from Egypt (Passover), the gift of the Torah on Sinai (Shavuot), the wandering through the desert (Sukkot) and the salvation in Persia (Purim) and of course Hanukkah. During the fasting and commemoration days of the Jewish year, remembrance and keeping historical teachings is even more obvious. This is how we Jews always stand with one leg in the past and the other in the present. We should look to the future by filling our traditions with life and passing them on to our children and grandchildren. The eight-day Hanukkah Oil Miracle only took place after people started



cleaning up and restoring the temple by hand. And from the ninth day, they had to start producing oil again. Miracles or waiting for them cannot replace our own commitment. May the year 2020 be shaped by a living practiced Judaism for our community, sheltered in peace and accompanied by the small and large miracles of everyday life.

—Your Rabbi Ulrike Offenberg

### **Annual general meeting on February 2, 2020**

According to our statutes, our members will receive an invitation to the annual general meeting on February 2, 2020. We hope everyone will participate. If you are unable to attend, please give a power of attorney to a voting member so that your vote can be counted. Thank you.

### **Membership fees**

Please don't forget to pay your 2020 membership fees. Members of the Circle of Friends are also reminded that we depend on your dues. Thank you very much!

### **Visit of the Russian consul**

We are offering an informational meeting on January 7th for those still holding Russian passports.

The event also serves to prepare for the visit of the Russian Consul who will come to us on February 6, 2020.

### **New Member**

We welcome Ms. Bella Scheinberg as a new member of our community and say, “Welcometo the JGH family!”

### **Mazel Tov**

We congratulate Tymur and Yeva Trieskunov and Anamaria Fiebig on their successful performances. They took part on stage and in the orchestra pit for the fairy tale production of “Sleeping Beauty.” It was a magnificent evening of theater with more than 100 other children. We are proud of Tymur, Yeva and Anamaria and also congratulate their parents, grandparents and greatgrandmother Mascha.

### **Get well soon**

We wish all our members and friends of our community who are ill at home, in the hospital or in nursing care a complete and speedy recovery.

### **Donations — Zedakah**

We sincerely thank the members and friends who contributed to our community life and who have helped us with our synagogue maintenance, newsletter costs and rabbi's salary with their generous donations. Thank you to the friends of the Yeyger family, Ms. Hölscher and her students (IGS Hameln), Ms. Niedert and Ms. Dohme.



### **Thank you — Todah Rabah**

We once again express our thanks to Mr. Christian Grundmann for the wonderful gift of the Yad. Also Mr. Wolfhard Truchseß, DWZ, for the excellent newspaper report. To our congregational heroes, our thanks to you all for making our celebrations and many cultural events so beautiful. We really appreciate your commitment.

### **Yahrzeit in January**

Chaja-Rahel Kruchkovitch January 29, 2003 / 26. Schwat 5763

Larissa Shapiro January 4, 2013 / 22nd Tewet 5773

May the memory of the deceased be a blessing for us. Kaddish is spoken with family members during Shabbat services. Yahrzeit candles are available in the office for a minimal charge.

**Shalom and happy, healthy 2020,  
Your board of officers**



## Program for January 2020 • Tevet–Shevat 5780

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

The synagogue will be closed between December 23, 2019. and January 2, 2020

Tuesday, January 7	9:00–5:00 p.m.	<b>Informational Meeting for Russian passport holders,</b> with Olga Gerr
	7:00 p.m.	<b>Film evening: “Hannah Arendt,”</b> in cooperation with the Society of Christians and Jews
Thursday, January 9	3:00 p.m.	<b>After New Year New Year’s Party</b>
Friday, January 17	4:00 p.m.	<b>Giyur group</b>
	5:30 p.m.	<b>Kabbalath Shabbat,</b> followed by Kiddush
	8:00 p.m.	<b>Mishnah Study group</b> Tractate “Pirkei Avot”
Saturday, January 18	10:00 p.m.	<b>Shacharith Shabbat,</b> followed by Kiddush lunch
	12:00 p.m.	<b>Shiur</b> for Parsha “Shemot”
	1:30 p.m.	<b>Children’s Kehillah</b>
	5:00 p.m.	<b>Havdalah</b> with songs, readings, light, wine and spices
Friday, January 31	4:00 p.m.	<b>Giyur group</b>
	5:30 p.m.	<b>Kabbalath Shabbat,</b> followed by Kiddush
	8:00 p.m.	<b>Mishnah Study group</b> Tractate “Pirkei Avot”
Saturday, February 1	10:00 p.m.	<b>Shacharith Shabbat,</b> followed by Kiddush lunch
	12:00 p.m.	<b>Shiur</b> for Parsha “Bo”
	1:30 p.m.	<b>Children’s Kehillah</b>
Sunday, February 2	3:00 p.m.	<b>Annual Membership Meeting</b>
<b>In Addition</b>		
Tuesday, January 21	7:00 p.m.	<b>Lecture: Mrs. Riedesel: “Ghostchildren,”</b> In cooperation with the Society of Christians and Jews, St. Augustinus Church
Tuesday, January 28	4:00–9:00 p.m.	<b>Seminar: “Miriam-Maria-Maryam,”</b> Kardinal-von-Galen Ring 50, 48149 Münster, Academy Franz Hitze House, Münster

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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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