



The Jewish Community of Hamelin Newsletter

February 2014 • Adar I 5774

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Dear members, friends and supporters,

**We wish everyone a happy and healthy 2014!
Please remember to pay your annual membership dues.
The congregation depends on everyone to pay promptly to enable us to continue our work.**



Jüdische Gemeinde Hameln

The New Year 2014 promises to be a good year in our congregation. Let's review a few of the most important events in January. We begin with our traditional New Year's party which we traditionally celebrate after the New Year. Everyone pitched in, doing just a little bit more than usual, ensuring a celebration for the heart and soul, evident in the following pictures. Please read this report from Faina Pelts:

The congregation celebrated with a belated New Year's party on January 5th. Six tables of eight were set and groaning under the weight of delicious homemade dishes, sweet and juicy fruits and deserts piled high. Congregational president Rachel Dohme welcomed everyone, emphasizing "how good and important each and every individual in the congregation is and although we are all different, coming from different cultures and religious experiences, we all can contribute our talents for the good of the group." The party commenced with a lively music program of Jewish and Russian music, encouraging everyone to tap their feet or dance. A "kibbitz" with friends and neighbors rounded off the party atmosphere. Hours later, members wandered slowly home in the chilly January night air, warmed by delicious food, good music and conversations. Our thanks to Polina Pelts and Svetlana Banschukova for organizing the culinary delights and to Faina Pelts for the entertainment.



A "second" New Year was celebrated on January 17th, our Tu Bi Shevat Seder, led by our Rabbi Irit Shillor. Every chair around the festive table was occupied, covered with everything required of the Seder, celebrating the "New Year of the Trees." In accordance of the Seder, we tasted different nuts and fruits, drank four cups of wine and fruit juices and recited blessings and read thought-provoking texts. What a lovely festival in our house—"Beitenu"!

International Holocaust Remembrance Day was observed on January 27th. It recalls the day in 1945 when the Red Army liberated the concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi extermination camp. Memorial

services for the victims address the emotions and intense pain, especially for Jews throughout the world and those of us living in Germany today.

Beside the city of Hamelin's observance of the day, our congregation was involved in a meaningful and important project with one of the local high schools. The entire tenth grade of Viktoria-Luise-Gymnasium, aware of our congregation's rejection of the so-called "Stolpersteine" (Stumbling blocks) spent the day exploring other forms of honoring and remembrance for the victims of the Shoah. In a hushed auditorium, the day ended with Rachel Dohme lighting a Yahrzeit candle and Faina Pelts chanting the prayer El Male Rachamim.

Bar Mitzvah Haakon Wendt



Haakon was thrilled to see every seat filled in our sanctuary as he was called to the Torah for the first time, becoming the 9th Bnei Mitzvah of our congregation and the second in our new synagogue. This may, to some readers, sound like a small number. If so, take a moment to realize that we have re-created a congregation and Jewish life where it had been absolutely decimated. To us, a small congregation, composed of 90 percent Jews from the FSU, each Bar or Bat Mitzvah is a testimony to the endurance and future of our People and nothing less than a miracle.

Haakon's proud family, friends and congregants all joined him for this joyous day, showering him with a hailstorm of sweets as he finished reading his portion. It was especially poignant that his three siblings, each of them a former Bar or Bat Mitzvah could be in attendance, especially big brother Joshua, who a day later left with his battalion for Kosovo.

Haakon assisted Rabbi Shillor, leading the service. Mom Elke gave an emotional speech to her young son, leaving all with a teary eye. The congregation's choir "Shalom" closed the service with a short program of Yiddish songs. Haakon thanked everyone, and the afternoon was filled with good food and conversation around the Kiddush buffet tables.

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 February — Rabbis for Hamelin

Our Rabbi Irit Shillor has served our congregation with monthly visits since 2001. She has helped us create the congregation we have today. We are pleased she will continue coming to us, leading services, giving lectures and continuing to work to improve our religious texts, making them accessible to all our members.

We are pleased to announce that Rabbi Adrian Michael Schell will also serve us with monthly visits. He will lead us through services and the High Holidays, and offer courses and seminars and work with our youth.

The conscious decision to have rabbinical guidance and presence every two weeks ensures our place as a viable Reform congregation. Financially this will be no easy task and we appeal to you, dear readers, to help us achieve this goal through your generosity.

Interreligious Dialogue

Anyone who reads our newsletter regularly knows what a high priority we place on interreligious dialogue. As a Reform congregation we are committed to this form of outreach with our non-Jewish neighbors. We work regularly with the House of World Religions, the Society of Christians and Jews and the Interreligious Women's Group, to name a few. In January our congregation took part in two events, both attesting to true tolerance.

The Interreligious Women's Group kicked off the year with the first of three sessions on Food and Religion—what we eat, when and why. Meeting in the women's section of the mosque, we learned about the laws of Halal and holiday foods in Islam, tasting delicacies prepared by the women of the community. It will be our turn in March, and we look forward to explaining the laws of Kashrut and taking a culinary journey through the Jewish year.

The series "Let's Talk" reaches many people and instills a feeling of respect between people of different cultures and religions. At the end of the month, Rabbi Schell and Hans-Georg Spangenberger will discuss great rabbis and church leaders. It is gratifying to see our synagogue being used for a center of interreligious and intercultural encounters.

Youth Group

One of the perks of having Rabbi Adrian Schell working with us is his ability to motivate and engage young people. He served as the Youth Director for the Union of Progressive Jews of Germany, and our congregation will profit from his creativity and experience. There's fun in store for our young people each and every month!

New Members

We are pleased to welcome Mrs. Sofia Banschukova to our congregation. Mrs. Banschukova is a cosmetologist and an avid reader. Please make an effort to make her feel welcome.

Friends

Mrs. Heidi Kuntzag loves Israeli dancing and has joined our Friends and Boris Markhaseev's dance troupe, "Chag Sameach." Welcome!

Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to the Trieskunov family on the birth of their third child, Lennard. Our best wishes for health and happiness to proud parents Olga and Eugen, big sister Yeva Daniela and big brother Tymur.

Mazel Tov to Haakon Wendt on becoming Bar Mitzvah. Well done!

We congratulate Mrs. Sofia Sander to her pulpit in the Reformed Lutheran Church. She fills a vacancy left by her predecessor, Pastor Martin Hoffmann. The beloved Pastor Hoffmann retired in December. We look forward to continued excellent relations between our congregation and theirs.

Refu'ah shlemah

We pray for the complete recovery of all who are ill and everyone who is going through difficult times. We will recite Misheberach for them during services.



Donations — Tzedakah

We thank the following for their contributions to our congregation or our synagogue fund: Mr. Norbert Baum, Mrs. Ursula Niedert, Dr. Ivo and Mrs. Kirsten Schwartzkopp, Mr. Wolfgang Fischer, Mrs. Lore Dörries, Mrs. Dora Vinnytska, Mr. Dieter Vogelhuber, Mrs. Anne Hoffmann and the volunteer staff of the Fischbeck Church.

We thank Mr. Hans Weltner, Mrs. Rachel Dohme and Mrs. Uta Gibas for their monthly contributions.

May you all be blessed for your generosity.

Etz Chayim — Tree of Life

Our Tree of Life is perhaps the only tree which grows leaves in winter. Please do your part and help a few more grow! 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. Two new leaves were donated from:

Dora Vinnytska: “In memory of my beloved husband, Lev”

The Dohme family: “In memory of Friedrich-Wilhelm Spilker”

A typographical error occurred in last month’s newsletter. Our apologies to Emma and Aron Kaplan, whose leaf reads correctly: Emma and Aron Kaplan: “60 years together: December 5, 1953, Emma and Aron Kaplan”

Thank you — Todah Rabah

We thank everyone who helps in making our holidays and cultural events very special. Our thanks go to everyone who plan and organize activities in our community.

Condolences

Our condolences on the death of Ariel Sharon, 11th Prime Minister of Israel.

Yahrzeit in February

Anna Raik	Feb.12, 2000 / 6. Adar I 5760
Vladimir Legkov	Feb. 7, 2003 / 6. Adar I 5763
David Saks	Feb. 6, 2008 / 30. Shevat 5768
Michael Lazer	Feb. 5, 2012 / 12. Shevat 5772

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

Shalom and best wishes to everyone for a healthy 2014!

The Congregation Board



[Newsletter Archives](#)

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

Bürenstrasse, Synagogenplatz 1, 31785 Hameln • Tel/Fax: 05151/925625

Web site: www.jghreform.org • Email: jgh@jghreform.org

Office: Neue Heerstraße 35, 31840 Hess. Oldendorf

Tel.: 05152/8374 Fax: 05152/962915

Email: racheldohme@jghreform.org

Program for February 2014 • Adar I 5774

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

Rabbi Adrian Schell's visit

Saturday, Feb. 1	10:00 a.m. 2:00 p.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with Rabbi Adrian Netzer Hamelin with Rabbi Adrian
Monday, Feb. 3	12 noon	"Judaism" a course in Russian with W. Pesok
Tuesday, Feb. 4	10:00 a.m.	Monthly Board Meeting
Saturday, Feb. 8	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with F.Pelts & R. Dohme
Tuesday, Feb. 11	11:00 a.m.	Russian Book Club with A. Konstantinova
Wednesday, Feb. 12	11:00 a.m.	Guest speaker: Mrs. Sheinberg: "Ukrainian passports changes"

Rabbi Adrian Schell's monthly visit

Friday, Feb.14	4:00 p.m. 5:30 p.m.	NEW! Judaism from A to Z with Rabbi Adrian Friday night services with Rabbi Adrian
Saturday, Feb. 15	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with Rabbi Adrian

Rabbi Irit Shillor's monthly visit

Friday, Feb. 21	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services with Rabbi Irit Shillor It's our synagogue's 3 rd birthday! Let's celebrate! Who will bring a birthday cake?
Saturday, Feb. 22	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with Rabbi Irit
Sunday, Feb. 23	3:00 p.m.	Senior's Café with Polina Pelts. Israeli dance performance, "Chag Sameach," led by Boris Markhaseev