



The Jewish Community of Hamelin Newsletter

February 2018 • Shvat-Adar 5778

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Dear members of the community, friends and supporters,

The New Year 2018 began happily and it promises to be a good year in our congregation.

On the 9th of January we celebrated the New Year with a party. It was *hämisch*, warm and welcoming. A new year presents us with new hopes and dreams and congregational president Rachel Dohme and vice president Polina Pelts welcomed everyone present and wished them a healthy and happy 2018. Music and dancing followed, the buffet tables sagging under the weight of the richly prepared foods. Everyone went home feeling good and happy. We thank all who organized and created this wonderful evening. Here is a report by Doroti Bogachik:



“How was our New Year's Eve? I can only judge subjectively because I was involved in the organizational team. I would like to say a few words, if I may. The preparation of this evening was very involved. We all put a lot of time and effort into it. We worked during the last two months to prepare the performances, select the songs and video footage, rehearse, create menus and buy groceries. I wanted to pamper everyone with delicacies as much as I could! Everyone on the team put their heart and soul into their work in order to make it an entertaining and enjoyable evening for those in attendance (and also for themselves)! We hoped our performances would be evaluated positively by you, dear members. We were pleased that we were showered with many words of thanks, there and then and the following day. This tells us that the evening was successful. May I thank all the participants: Faina Pelts, Nadia and Volodimir Pesok, Peter Shurupov, Valery Friedman, Svetlana Banchukova, Boris Uchitel, Mark Ovsievich, Larissa Dvortsis, Anna Anikina, Inna Weinberg, Valery Bogachik, Tanya Geller and a special word of gratitude to Boris Kagan for his wonderful portraits. We also thank Lyudmila Zaichenko, Nadia Pesok, Anna Anikina, Svetlana Hladchenko, Svetlana Bolt, Tanya Geller, Larissa and Matvej Dvortsis, Tamara Ovcharenko and Valery Bogachik for preparing the banquet. We can't forget to mention the help we received from our custodian Heinrich Moos.”

On the 19th of January a wonderful concert, starring Giora Feidman took place in the St. Bonifatius Church in Hamelin. Many of our members enjoyed an evening of beautiful music. Thanks to Mr. Feidman personally, we were given discounted tickets, enabling our members to attend the concert. It is a positive sign that Jewish artists desire to perform in Hameln.

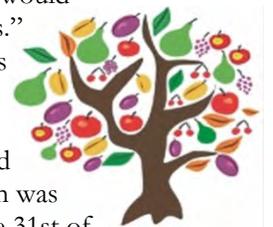
Visit of the Russian consul

The Russian Consul will make his annual visit to our community on February 1st at 11:00. Members and non-members with Russian passports will be given the opportunity to have their papers checked on-site. We are always happy to help other people.

Jewish in February

Tu biShvat

When have you wished a tree a Happy New Year? The 15th day of the Hebrew month Shvat would be a good opportunity for that. The day is better known as Tu biShvat, the “New Year of the Trees.” In the 16th century, the custom a Tu biShvat Seder was born, during which we eat different types of fruits, nuts are eaten and wines are imbibed. Tu biSchvat is a reminder of the first fruits that can be harvested in Israel, which we celebrate also as a symbol of new life and sweet season of spring. The festival also reminds us to be grateful for all the food God and nature afford us and to renew our mindfulness of our place in the circle of life. During the 19th century, a new custom was introduced, and since then planting a tree belongs to this holiday. This year the festival fell on the 31st of January. We want to celebrate this happy holiday with our rabbi, so we will not celebrate the Tu BiShvat Seder until Friday, the 2nd of February. At 5:30 we hope to welcome many members and friends to our community Tu biShvat Seder.





Rabbinic word

Tu biShvat, the New Year of Trees, invites us to reflect on nature and our relationship to it. Often people are often compared to trees. For example, it is said that both have roots and are nourished by them. But one difference that strikes me most in our migrant community is that while you can only transplant trees while they are young, people - voluntarily or forcefully—change their place of life at any age. They take their old roots with them so as not to lose their personality. Then in the new location, they once again take root and receive nourishment, thus expanding their identity. Without roots, without reference to the surrounding habitat, no one can live. So we humans are a part of the natural world, and yet distinguished from it and yet differentiated from it because we consciously shape it—and should. The Jerusalem-born world famous rabbi Adin Even-Israel Steinsaltz described human nature in a touching parable: “When God created man, he said strangely: ‘Let us make man in our form, in our likeness’ (Genesis 1:26). To whom does He speak? Does God need to agree with someone and seek consent? Much has been written about this sentence, this verse, many different interpretations have been given, and one of them says that when God said, ‘Let us make man in our likeness,’ He spoke to the whole world and said to all, ‘Let us make man in our resemblance.’ So, all things in the world contributed a part. The foxes gave a little cunning. And the birds gave something from flying. And the ant gave some diligence. And some animals contributed some of their laziness. The seas gave the storms and the wind’s voice and strength and the icebergs gave some of their ice. Out of all this, God created man. So man is the essence of the whole world. This is also in many respects our understanding of the duty of man in the world. If you think about it, you will ask yourself: ‘Am I like this little sparrow?’ Yes, sometimes you are like that. If you try, you will find the similarities. That’s the way it is, you are a dove and you are a hawk, you are a wolf and you are a lamb—and all that at the same time—that’s a human being. That’s the uniqueness—to combine this enormous accumulation of all the possible properties and mix them together. How wonderful that is!

Every human is a world of its own. Let us see which huge assets are in us. And may we have the wisdom to apply the right potential in every situation. If you would like to see the original Rabbi Steinsaltz in English, click the image on the right.



If the video does not play, go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=TvhBOJ8imuE

Community 21st Birthday

Join us on Thursday, February 15 and celebrate our congregation’s 21st birthday. To mark this special day, there will be a birthday concert at 5 p.m. with our choir “Shalom” and “Simcha,” the choir of the Jewish community of Bad Pymont. Celebrate with us, enjoy beautiful music, and we’ll raise our glasses to toast our great community and our future.

Hamentaschen Bakery

Calling all bakers—grab your aprons and join Polina on Tuesday, February 27th at 10:00 o’clock in our synagogue kitchen where the sweet smell of poppy seeds and jam will fill the air. The bakers, under the direction of Polina Pelts, will treat us once again with home-baked “Hamentaschen” for our Purim celebration. Join the busy bakers who practice this community tradition year after year.



Purim

Get your costumes and masks ready! We will celebrate Purim on February 28th at 5:30 pm. Led by our rabbi Ulrike Offenberg, we will read and hear the biblical “Megillah Esther.” Thanks to Rabbi Offenberg, we have the story of Esther in Hebrew, German and Russian, so that everyone can understand it. This festival reminds us of the rescue of the Persian Jews in 357 BCE, when their annihilation by evil Haman was planned. Through Queen Esther’s heroic and wise plan, her people were saved. Every time Haman’s name is mentioned during the reading, we make as much noise as possible, so his name is not understandable. Purim is a very happy celebration, and it is customary to organize costume parties on this day. We look forward to celebrating with all our members and friends, young and old, and hope that many will come in costumes and masks. After the reading, we



will dine on the delicious Hamentaschen, drink sweet red wine and juices and celebrate our redemption. Of course, we also think of those who are homebound, and we will send them small gift baskets of food, Shlachmones.

Annual Membership Meeting

With this communal letter, members will receive an invitation to the Annual General Meeting, which will be held on Sunday, March 4 at 3:00 pm. We will hold Board elections and hope for a good attendance. If you are unable to attend, please give a proxy to another member with voting rights so that your vote can be counted. Thank you!

New members

We welcome a new member of our circle of friends Mrs. Svetlana Hladchenko. Svetlana is Mark and Tamara's daughter. She was a fitness trainer in the FSU.

Get well wishes

We wish everyone who is currently experiencing illness a complete and good recovery. Our thoughts and hearts are with them.



Donations — Tzedaka

We sincerely thank the dear members and friends who have supported our synagogue life and/or synagogue building fund with generous donations. Thank you Dr. Mr. Geletneky, Mrs. Roseau with two sections of 8th graders from the Barntrup High School, Mrs. Klein with a confirmation group from Bodenwerder, the Dohme family, Mrs. Niedert and Mrs. Gibas.

May all donors be blessed for their generosity.

Tree of Life — Etz Chaim

It is possible to commemorate the commission of a new leaf for special occasions, e.g., birth, Bar or Bat Mitzvah, weddings, thanks, Yahrzeit, memorials or honors and in this way also donate to synagogue construction. Forms are in the office. Many Thanks!

Newly ordered: "In memory of Miriam Elberger" by the Dohme family.



Mazel Tov — Congratulations

We congratulate the Jewish community Freiburg on their 20th anniversary. We wish the community much success and prosperity.

Deepest Sympathy

We express our deepest condolences to Mr. Hans-Georg Spangenberg on the death of his beloved mother, Gisela Spangenberg, s.A. We are with him in thought and prayer.

To the family and friends of Mrs. Lorie Dories, s.A., may we express our condolences. Mrs. Dories had generously supported the community financially during the 20 years of our existence.

Yahrzeit in February

Anna Raik	12.02.2000 / 6. Adar I 5760
Vladimir Legkov	07.02.2003 / 6. Adar I 5763
David Saks	06.02.2008 / 30. Schwat 5768
Michael Lazer	05.02.2012 / 12. Schwat 5772

May the memory of our dead be a blessing to us. Kaddish will be recited during services with family members. Yahrzeit candles are available in the community office.



Shalom,

—Your Synagogue board

[Newsletter Archives](#)

Program for for February 2018 • Shvat–Adar 5778

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

Thursday, February 1 11:00 a.m. Guest: Russian Emissary, Hamburg Consulate

Rabbi Dr. Ulrike Offenberg's weekend

Friday, February 2 2:00 p.m. B'nei Mitzvah class

3:00 p.m. Giyur class I

4:00 p.m. Giyur class II

5:30 p.m. Friday night services/Tu Bi Shvat Seder

8:00 p.m. Mishna Study Group, Tractate Berachot

Saturday, February 3 10:00 a.m. Shacharit services and Torah study

1:30 p.m. Kinder Kehilla

Monday, February 5 10:00 a.m. Monthly Board Meeting (Board members only)

Thursday, February 15 5:00 p.m. Gemeinde 21st Birthday, Choir concert with "Shalom" and "Simcha"

Rabbi Dr. Ulrike Offenberg's weekend

Friday, February 16 2:00 p.m. B'nei Mitzvah class

3:00 p.m. Giyur class I

4:00 p.m. Giyur class II

5:00 p.m. Discussion: "Jewish practices of burial and mourning"

5:30 p.m. Friday night services and Oneg Shabbat

8:00 p.m. Mishna Study Group, Tractate Berachot

Saturday, February 17 10:00 a.m. Shacharit services and Torah study

1:30 p.m. Kinder Kehilla

Tuesday, February 27 10:00 a.m. Polina's Hamentaschen Bakery—all bakers welcome!

Wednesday, February 28 4:00 p.m. Discussion with Rabbi Offenberg und Hans-Georg Spangenberg,
"Esther—from a Jewish and Christian Perspective"

6:00 p.m. **Erev Purim:** Megillah reading, Graggers, Purim Sing-a-long and
Hamentaschen Come in costume!

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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