



Dear community members, dear circle of friends!

Many legal restrictions to protect against the corona pandemic have just been lifted. It is now our own responsibility to deal appropriately with the circumstances so that our events and community life can take place. Since the incidences are still very high, we are upholding the precautionary measure of masks in the synagogue, distancing and avoiding crowded interiors.



Rabbinic word

“What are the things whose fruits are enjoyed in this world and that remain as a credit to the world to come?” asks the Talmud (BT Kiddushin 39b). That doesn’t seem entirely logical: how can we consume something and keep it at the same time? Apparently there are things for which we get a double reward: we can already feel their benefits in our everyday lives and in addition, they have a positive effect on our life’s balance after we die. “And these are,” the Talmud then lists, “honoring father and mother, practicing charity, showing hospitality, and making peace between two people.”

“Honoring Father and Mother”: Showing respect and care to our parents anchors us in the cycle of our lives. Families aren’t always harmonious, but they’re the one place where we don’t have to declare our affiliation. We were cared for in childhood when we could not take care of ourselves, so in adulthood we reciprocate that responsibility and in so doing also set an example for the next generation.

“Practicing charity”: Anyone who shows friendliness and helpfulness towards other people is usually rewarded with gratitude and respect. Our daily activities are given meaning and purpose, our self-esteem is strengthened and we experience the satisfaction of doing good.

“Granting hospitality”: In our community, which consists almost exclusively of immigrant people, this probably needs no explanation. Almost all of us were strangers here at one point and depended on help or a friendly gesture from others. Now many of our families and we as a community are asked to help the new refugees – with translations, by accompanying them to administrative appointments, with donations, practical help and simply by showing empathy and listening to their stories.

“Make peace between two people”: This is probably the most difficult mitzvah of the ones mentioned. Peace is not made between friends, but between people who are in a deep conflict. It’s not about loving the other person uncritically, but we have to find a constructive way of dealing with each other. If you can succeed in bridging the abyss of conflicting feelings with another person, the reflection of seeing yourself in them and not as an opponent not only helps the two individuals but also the community as a whole.

This passage about things that bring us benefit in this world and also reward in the world to come is found in the daily morning prayer. As soon as we wake up, this prayer places us in the world and reminds us of our life’s priorities. We are also reminded of other mitzvot and of the importance of studying the Torah. In the current situation, in which we are challenged in many ways, the tasks of hospitality and peacemaking seem to me to be the most urgent. Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907–1972), one of the most important rabbis of the 20th century, once said: If one had to sum up the principles of Judaism in one word, it would be “rachmanut” – mercy, compassion, empathy for suffering people. Worldviews that have been formed over many years do not change from one day to the next. It should be possible to be touched by the suffering of others, to feel empathy and to show such human emotions. This is the essence of our Torah.

With warm regards and shalom,
—Your Rabbi Ulrike Offenberg

The month of March

Purim

The Purim story tells of a very depressing event, of mortal danger, but also of miraculous salvation. We celebrate the reading of the Megillah with great slapstick, but especially this year with great tension. Can one be joyous when people are suffering in war elsewhere? Nobody missed the seriousness of these events and we hope for the end of the war. The story of the events 2,500 years ago in Persia suddenly became very topical.

The Megillat Esther was again recited in different languages by different members and Rabbi Offenberg. The name of the villain Haman was erased with a cacophony of rattles and foot stomping. We welcomed guests to our festival: the children’s group of the Lutheran Reformed Church and their Pastor Anna-Mirjam Walter, dressed in colorful costumes. Happily a group of Ukrainian mothers and children who had fled Ukraine and who were now being taken in by community members also came. May the happiness of this day give them strength to cope with their difficult situation.

Purim



Exhibition: “Children and their Religious Holidays”

As part of the “Interreligious Dialogue” project, the opening of the exhibition “Children and their Religious Holidays” took place on March 13th in the social hall of the Lutheran Reformed Church. The children’s paintings will be the basis of an interreligious calendar by children from the Lutheran Reformed Church, the Church of St. Augustine Church and our Synagogue in Hamelin. We would like to thank Pastor Anne-Mirjam Walter and her congregation for providing the space and a lovely reception.

Birthday greetings

Due to Covid restrictions, we unfortunately were not able to celebrate our 25th congregational birthday, but we received many cards and warm wishes. One example came from Pastor Christiane Brendel and her St. Annen congregation in Wangelist: “We send our warmest regards and congratulations on your 25th anniversary! It is a wonderful gift for us to have you as brothers and sisters in the midst of our city and we are very happy that Jewish life in Hamelin and in the synagogue is flourishing. May God continue to bless you and Jewish life in the future.”

The greeting was accompanied by a donation of 100 euros, which will benefit our congregational work.

Jewish April



Passover

Passover is just around the corner. Our synagogue will be cleaned and made Kasher L’Pessach on Thursday, April 14th. We ask that you do not bring any food into the synagogue until after Passover.

We will celebrate our congregational Seder on the first evening of Passover, Friday April 15th. After a two-year break due to Corona, we are happy to be able to sit together again this year. The Seder will be led by our Rabbi Offenberg. The preparation for this festival requires a lot of planning and a lot of work. We are

respecting Corona rules and therefore the number of seats must be limited, exclusively for our members.

Passover Supplies

While supplies last, we offer kosher Passover products for our members. Matzah, wine and a matzah-ball mixture can be purchased at a reasonable price in the office. There is Israeli matzah in one-kilo packages for 4 euros and 0.75 liter bottles of Manischewitz red wine, very sweet, for 5 euros. Make sure you have enough for Passover week.

We wish all members and friends a kosher Passover!

Yom HaShoah

In an attempt to firmly anchor the memory of the Shoah in the Jewish calendar, in 1951 the Knesset designated the 27th of Nissan as the official day of remembrance. This year Yom HaShoah is observed on April 28th. In Israel the sirens wail for two minutes and all public life literally comes to a standstill. We will observe a short service on Yom HaShoah on April 28th at 5:00 pm.

Limmud Rabbah

Rabbi Offenberg has been leading Zoom courses on the weekly Torah and Prophet readings under the title “Limmud Rabbah” for almost two years. A fixed group of 40–50 people from Hameln, all over Germany, Austria, France, Switzerland, Israel and the USA take part. For the first time we want to give the participants an opportunity to meet face to face. Therefore, on the last weekend in April, a Shabbaton will take place in our synagogue! We will celebrate Shabbat together, from the lighting the candles of Shabbat to the Havdalah candle, learn Torah and show our guests Hamelin. Community members are also cordially invited to take part in this Shabbaton in full or just part of the time.

Get well soon — Refuah Shlamah

May the One who blessed our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and our mothers Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah, send blessings and healing to everyone who is ill. May they be blessed with patience and strength of heart and may they be granted a full recovery in body and spirit. May all those who nurture and care for them also be blessed with strength, patience and hope.

Donations — Zedakah

We sincerely thank the members and friends who support our community life and the maintenance of the synagogue with generous donations. This month we would like to particularly highlight: Heidi Braun, Sabine Demuth, the Dohme family, Ute Gibas, Mrs. Grach, Dr. Lawrence and Barbara Jacobsberg, Mr. M. Judelsons, Dr. Sally Lipsky, the Lutheran Reformed Church, Ute Niedert, the Ovsievitsch family for their monthly donation, Mrs. Panchenkothe, Elisabeth Pfeifer, the St. Annen Parish of Wangelist, and Mrs. Hiltrud Schulz. May all donors be blessed for their generosity.



Condolences

Unfortunately we lost two of our synagogue's founding members in the past weeks. Mrs. Shanna Weinberg died on February 13th after a long illness and was buried in the presence of her daughter, grandson and many mourners in the Deisterstrasse Cemetery.

On March 17th, our oldest parishioner, Rimma Kopirovskaja, passed away at the blessed age of 96. The sons and their families with grandchildren and great-grandchildren as well as many mourners attended the funeral. She was buried next to her husband in our community cemetery Am Wehl. Both funeral services were led by Rabbi Offenberg.

Also deeply mourned is Rabbi Dr. hc. Tovia Ben-Chorin, who died in Sankt Gallen on March 23rd. He was one of the founders of the Reform movement in Israel and a pioneer in re-establishing Jewish life in Switzerland and Germany over the past 25 years. With his energy, erudition, warmth and humor he became a role model for many. For Rabbi Offenberg he was a revered teacher and guide. With his wife Adina, he visited our Jewish community in Hamelin, took an avid interest in our development and was a devoted and helpful advisor to Rachel Dohme.

May those who mourn be comforted among those who mourn in Zion and Jerusalem.

April Jahrzeit

Tatyana Khodos	April 4, 1998 / 8. Nisan 5758
Anna Pototcaia	April 11, 2000 / 6. Nisan 5760
Eugenia Borishanskaia	April 26, 2004 / 5. Iyar 5764
Boris Frid	April 28, 2011 / 24. Nissan 5771
Yuriy Lebedinskiy	April 2, 2012 / 10. Nissan 5772
Alex Voronov	April 10, 2012 / 18. Nissan 5772
Ryssia Kochergina	April 27, 2015 / 8. Iyar 5775
Vilen Feldmann	April 24, 2016 / 16. Nissan 5776
Arkadij Drejzer	April 4, 2018 / 19. Nisan 5778
Zinaida Gogulinska	April 19, 2018 / 4. Iyar 5778



May the memory of our departed be a blessing to us. Kaddish is spoken to family members during services. Jahrzeit candles are available in the office for a small price.

Shalom,

Your Synagogue Board

Program for April 2022 • Nisan–Ijar 5782

Daily Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 6	6:00 p.m.	Shiur, Haftarah Shabbat “Mezora,” via Zoom
Wednesday, April 13	6:00 p.m.	Shiur, Haftarah for Pesach, via Zoom
Friday, April 15	5:30 p.m.	Pesach Seder (only with prior registration)
Saturday, April 16	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit Shabbat Pesach, followed by Kiddush
Tuesday, April 26	6:00 p.m.	Shiur, Haftarah Shabbat “Achareh Mot/Kidushim,” via Zoom
Tuesday, April 28	5:00 p.m.	Yom HaShoah
Friday, April 29	5:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat and Limmud Rabba Shabbaton Weekend
Saturday, April 30	10:00 a.m. 12:30 p.m. 3:00 p.m. 8:00 p.m.	Shacharit Shabbat, followed by Kiddush Kinderkehillah City tour Torah Study and Havdalah
Sunday, May 1	10:00 p.m.	Torah Study and end of the Limmud Rabba Weekend

Other events

Monday, April 4,	6:00 p.m.	“Shanah & Sanah” Life cycle ceremonies in Judaism and Islam with Rabbi Offenberg and Iman Andrea Reimann, via Zoom
Thursday, April 7	6:00 p.m.	“The Jewish Year” with Rabbi Dr. Ulrike Offenberg discussing the month of Nisan, hosted by Christian and Jewish Encounter Group, via Zoom
Thursday, April 14	6:00 p.m.	“Bible Dialogue” with Rabbi Dr. Ulrike Offenberg and Professor Dr. Klaus Greunwaldt in conversation about Vayikra/Leviticus, hosted by Christian and Jewish Encounter Group, via Zoom
Friday, April 22	8:30 p.m.	“Shabbat Shalom” NDR Radio, Rabbi Offenberg

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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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