



The Jewish Community of Hamelin Newsletter

[JHG Home](#)

May 2010 • Iyar–Sivan 5770



[Program](#)

Dear members, friends and supporters,

March's spring sunshine ushered in our congregational Pesach Seder this year. The long tables were beautifully set and the Haggadot in Hebrew, German and Russian laid waiting for the Seder to begin. Rabbi Irit Shillor led the Seder with Faina Peits assisting with the Russian translation. The youngest member of our religious class, Haakon Wendt read the Four Questions as everyone listened intently. Everyone enjoyed taking part in joyful singing of familiar Pesach melodies. As always in our congregation, it was as if we were all one big family.



The kitchen ladies had once again created a lovely and sumptuous meal. Delicious and piping hot matzah ball soup, gefilte fish, potatoes, and fresh green salad filled the plates. Liubow baked her famous Matzahmehl cake, and Rachel brought homemade chocolate macaroons.

The children searched long and hard for the Afikomen. Finally it was found by Haakon, and Rabbi Shillor paid a happy ransom to get it back and share it with everyone for dessert. Of course, all the children who took part in the search were rewarded with sweets. Rabbi Shillor finished the

Seder with the traditional prayers and everyone chimed in with the wish, "Next year in Jerusalem!" It was a lovely Seder from start to finish, and we thank all who sent Pesach greetings from near and far. We were pleased to have shared the holiday with each other and our guests.

Pesach, the Festival of Freedom is to be observed as if we ourselves were freed from slavery. We make an effort to consciously feel as if we made the Exodus from Egypt. This year especially, we thought about this being the last year to celebrate the holiday in our current space and looked ahead in the hope that we will celebrate next year in our new synagogue. This dream becoming reality is also a Pesach story.

We are a congregation in progress. We are a congregation with vision. We envision a new synagogue for us and our town, the first newly constructed Reform



synagogue built since the Shoah. This strengthens our Jewish identity. We are a vital Jewish community, a community who needs its own Jewish home. We will proudly put brick upon brick and rebuild Jewish life for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren.

As the Pesach evening drew to a close, many chose to linger a bit longer. Stories of other homelands were told, of Pesach Seders of the past and of dreams of all those to come. Happily and under a canopy of stars, we wandered contentedly home.

Two weeks later we gathered again for a moving memorial service for Yom HaShoah. As the service began, the sanctuary was darkened. In the hushed and darkened room, Rebekka Dohme's voice touched every heart with the words and melody of "Ani Ma'anim," "I Believe." Six



yellow candles stood on the Bima, representative of the Six Million. Solemnly Polina, Aron, Dieter, Elena, Rimma and Emma came forward to light them, one by one. Lost in their own thoughts and memories of all that was lost, each tiny flame shed light into the darkness. The service of sorrow and remembrance was filled with readings and prayers, recited by Rachel and Wladimir in Hebrew, German and Russian. After El Male Rachamin, the candles were extinguished and a Yahrzeit candle was lit. The community rose and recited Kaddish together as the tiny flame flickered.

A reading from the children's book *If the Stars could Speak* followed. Dieter Vogelhuber's German class prepared the reading and did so with great emotion. Arkadij Zyranov, Julia Shurupova, Irene Grach, Nadja Pesok, Wladimir Pesok, Tamara Ovcharenko, Dieter Vogelhuber, Viktor Shilzow and Emma Lebedinska recited passages from the book, giving the tragedy of the Shoah a very personal face. We thank everyone involved in this moving service and all who attended.

On the 18th of April a service commemorating the 65th anniversary of the liberation of Bergen-Belsen was held at the site of the former concentration camp. Dieter Vogelhuber laid a wreath for our congregation there. Over 100 Survivors and many international guest speakers also took part as well as representatives of Jewish congregations and organizations in Germany. Reverent observance of this day is of utmost importance and we thank Dieter for attending.

What could be a better answer to the evil represented by the Shoah than evidence that Jewish life has not been extinguished?

At the same time the wreaths created a sea of flowers in Bergen-Belsen, our young people met in our community for a third Netzer Day. Activities were organized by Madricha Greta Golberg, religious class teacher Lior Bar-Ami



and Schicha Jehudith Weinberger. The young people of our congregation came together to learn and discuss Jewish and Israeli themes a day before Yom HaZikaron, the Memorial Day for fallen Israeli soldiers and two days before Yom HaAzma'ut, Israel's 62nd Independence Day. The youth invited the community to join them for a short service, which they designed at 3:00 p.m. that afternoon. The adults were impressed with the seriousness with which the young people approached the subject and the texts they had prepared, sharing with us what they had learned that day. Patrizia and Miriam did an excellent job leading the service. Afterwards we sat together, enjoying cakes in the shape of a Magen David and Israeli flag. The day ended with Faina Pelts playing Jewish and Israeli songs and everyone joining in. "Am Israel Chai" "The People Israel live!"



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. 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, 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 May

On Sunday, May 2nd, we invite everyone to a happy Lag B'Omer picnic in the garden of our future neighbors, the Lutheran Reform Church. Pastor Hoffmann and his members generously invite us each and every year to celebrate the day in their lovely garden. We thank them and hope to see them at the picnic too.

"Lag" is a word constructed from the Hebrew for the number 33. According to legend, a horrible plague befell the students of the great Rabbi Akiva, but on the 33rd day of the counting of the Omer, the plague miraculously ended. It has become traditional on this day to celebrate with picnics and bonfires. It is a time of celebration and we intend to celebrate!

The picnic will begin at 3:00 p.m. with a short service led by our Rabbi Shillor. We ask everyone to bring either a vegetarian salad or a non-dairy dessert. Kosher hot dogs and drinks will be provided by the congregation. We hope to see many members and guests there and wish to thank Pastor Hoffmann and his congregation for this annual show of hospitality.

CD *Shabbat Melodies*

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

We are thrilled that all 500 copies have been sold in Germany, England and the US. We thank all those who have supported this project. We have just re-ordered and 300 CDs await happy listeners. Our vision to share beautiful Shabbat music and help ourselves 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.



Groundbreaking Ceremony for our Synagogue!

Can one possibly describe the joy we feel? What began as a dream is finally taking shape and will become reality thanks to so many good people. It's been a long road but a path we've traveled and will continue to travel with so many others. On Friday morning, May 7th at 11:00 a.m. we will stand together on the very spot where the Hamelin Synagogue stood until its destruction in 1938. We will celebrate the groundbreaking for the first newly constructed Reform synagogue in post-war Germany.

We are happy, honored and awed to invite all our members and friends to share this historic moment with us. We look forward to seeing you there.

Catalogue of Jewish Soldiers

Were you a soldier in World War II, or do you have relatives who were? If so, The Museum of the Jewish Soldier in World War II in Kiryat Ono, Israel is compiling information. Forms are available in our synagogue office, and we encourage members to take part in this important project of honoring and remembering.

ZDF (Channel 2) to film in our congregation on April 30th

ZDF, German TV Channel 2, will pay our congregation a visit on Friday, April 30th, filming in particular the work of our rabbi, Irit Shillor, and our congregational life. The film is being directed by Anabel Münstermann.

During the Friday night service, we expect a special guest, Mr. Robert Zalman van Gasteren, former president of the Jewish Congregation of Lörrach. He plans to come to Hamelin to present us with a specially decorated stone which he procured in Israel. In addition our young friends from "Netzwerk Bünde" will also attend the service and are also bringing us a stone they have made. Both stones will become part of our new building and we are honored by these lovely gifts. Our architects, Mr. Nasarek and Mr. Bojic, will be on hand to officially receive the stones.

We invite all our members and friends to this very special Kabbalah Shabbat service.



Mazel Tov — Congratulations

We congratulate Lior Bar-Ami on his graduation from the University of Paderborn and his acceptance to the Conservative Yeshiva in Jerusalem. He will begin his studies in August. We thank him for his dedication to the education of our youth. We will miss him sorely. We wish him all the best for his studies in Israel and look forward to his return to our congregation.

We congratulate Rebekka Dohme on her graduation from Columbia University in New York. We are thrilled that Rebekka will be home for the summer and look forward to seeing and hearing her at services.

Mazel Tov to Harold and Eva Brown (nee Kratzenstein) on the birth of their granddaughter in Byron Bay, Australia. Our best wishes go to the young mother and their daughter Lisa and husband, Kieron.

We congratulate our sister congregation in Unna on the dedication of their community center on May 2nd. We wish them all the best in their new home.

Please share your Simchas with us.

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 each and every person and organization who has purchased our CD *Shabbat Melodies* in Germany, England, Israel and America.

We also wish to recognize and thank the following people for their contributions: Hospice Association of Hamelin, Mr. Dieter Schulz, Mr. Adolf Späth, Mrs. Dora Vinnytska, Dr. Heinrich and Mrs. Ursula Kasting, Mrs. Ursula Ryf, Mr. Robert Garber, Mrs. Rachel Dohme, Dr. Peter Neumann, Mrs. Ursula Niedert, the Hamelin chapter of the German Women's Council and the 9th grade class of the Bad Pyrmont High School.

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!

Two new leaves have been contributed by Mr. Robert Garber, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and read: "You did good, Rachie" and "In honor of our parents"

Thank you — Toda Raba

- 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.
- There are so many regular activities offered in our congregation by congregants for congregants and we are grateful for their hard work and dedication.
- Thanks to Heidi Braun for leading a leadership skills seminar for the board.
- Thank you to Rimma Kopirovska for contributions of books for our synagogue library.
- We thank Mrs. Scheunpflug and members of the Hamelin chapter of the German Women's Council, a member of the International Council of Women for an interesting visit and discussion.

Bishop Josef Hohmeyer, Patron of our Synagogue Foundation, Dies

We mourn the passing of the Catholic Patron of our Foundation Liberal Synagogue Hamelin, Bishop Josef Hohmeyer. He passed away in April. Bishop Hohmeyer was dedicated to the success of our building project. We will include him in our prayers.



Yahrzeit in May

Betja Kholmer	May 8, 1997 / 1st Iyar 5757
Evgenia Benderskaja	May 24, 2001 / 2nd Sivan 5761
Vladimir Rubanov	May 14, 2002 / 3rd Nissan 5762
Sofia Kaspler	May 13, 2008 / 8. Iyar 5768

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

Shalom,

—Your Synagogue Board

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

Community Center: Bahnhofstr. 22, 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

Archived Newsletters:

2010:	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul–Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2009:	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul–Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2008:	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul–Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2007:	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul–Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2006:	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul–Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2005:	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul–Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2004:	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul–Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2003:	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul–Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2002:	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun–Aug		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2001:		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

Program for May 2010 • Iyar–Nisan 5770

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

Saturday, May 1		Rabbi Irit Shillor's monthly visit
	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with Rabbi Shillor
Sunday, May 2	3:00 p.m.	Lag B'omer Picnic with Rabbi Shillor In the garden of the Ev.-Ref. Church. If inclement weather, we'll meet at our synagogue. Kosher hotdogs and drinks provided. Please bring a vegetarian dish to share.
Monday, May 3	12:00 p.m.	"Judaism"—a class in Russian with Wladimir Pesok
Tuesday, May 4	3:00 p.m.	Monthly Board Meeting
Friday, May 7	11:00 a.m.	Groundbreaking ceremony for our new Synagogue, Bürenstrasse, Synagogenplatz 1
Saturday, May 8	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with R. Dohme & F. Pelts
Sunday, May 9	4:00 p.m.	Memorial Day—a Day of Remembrance. Members: €5 Guests: €10
Tuesday, May 11	5:00 p.m.	Interreligious Women's Group, "Jewish Life in Hamelin" with R. Dohme
Saturday, May 15	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with D. Vogelhuber & F. Pelts
Tuesday, May 18	4:00 p.m.	"Russian Afternoon" art history class with Mrs. Lypovych "Chagall"
	8:00 p.m.	Erev Shavuoth und Tikkun HaLaila: We will read and discuss the Book of Ruth with D. Vogelhuber & W. Pesok
	Midnight	Midnight's soup
Wednesday, May 19		Shavuoth
	11:00 a.m.	Russian Book Club with Alexandra Konstantinova
Friday, May 21	4:00 p.m.	Religious school with Lior Bar-Ami & Faina Pelts
	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services with rabbinical student N. Lyskovoy
Saturday, May 22	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with rabbinical student N. Lyskovoy. Shiur: "Shavuoth"
Tuesday, May 25	4:00 p.m.	Video Afternoon with Isaak Katz
Friday, May 28	10:00 a.m.	Seminar with Heidi Braun for board members
	4:00 p.m.	Religious school with Lior Bar-Ami & Faina Pelts
	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services with R. Dohme
Saturday, May 29	10:00 a.m.	Saturday morning services and Torah study with R. Dohme & F. Pelts
Sunday, May 30	3:00 p.m.	Senior Café with Polina Pelts. Our guests: Residents from St. Monika Senior Residence. Concert with "Schalom"

Activities outside the community

Monday, May 3	6:00 pm	In cooperation with the Society of Christians and Jews, Seminar: "City guide for walking tour of Jewish Hamelin," led by H-G Spanberger. Meeting point: Market church, Old City
---------------	---------	---