



The Jewish Community of Hamelin Newsletter

May 2020 • Iyar–Sivan 5780

[JHG Home](#)



Dear community members, friends and supporters of our community!

Although the pandemic has changed our lives, our religious life is still accessible. The community office is open daily and our social workers can be reached there by phone and in person. We are not alone or forgotten. Our rabbi keeps in touch with us through emails, telephone calls, daily Omer texts and Zoom meetings. Lessons with the children and with the Gijur candidates also continue on the Internet. A weekly shiur has been added for all those interested and on Fridays we celebrate Shabbat together online. We also moved our commemoration ceremony for Yom HaSchoah to digital space. We

thank Rabbi Offenberg for her creative ideas and efforts. Our members also show that they are there for each other. We wish to recognize Svetlana Banschukova, who had the lovely idea to sew cloth masks for our elderly. Faina Pelts penned a card and within days the members had the practical gifts in their hands. Many called the community office and expressed their thanks. In addition members called the office, asking questions which were answered by Faina, Olga or Mr. Moss. Everyone could also order Passover Kosher food so that all members had provisions for Passover. We celebrated the Festival of Freedom in different ways, this time without our beloved community Seder evening together, but united in our traditions.

Rabbinic Thoughts

Rabbi Offenberg's thoughts in the last newsletter to the community deserve to be repeated:

“We would like to take this opportunity to thank the women and men in our community who work in hospitals, doctor's offices and nursing services and who take care of the sick and the elderly to the point of exhaustion and risking their own health. Even if isolation alone currently helps against the transmission of the virus, the only remedy that helps against isolation is: solidarity. The size of our community will be shown by whether and how we maintain charity and cohesion in this crisis. I ask everyone to look carefully and think- who needs help? Who is in quarantine right now? Please get in touch - our social workers and I can be reached by phone and e-mail at the municipal office.”

“אַיִן?” “Where are you?” This is one of God's first questions, to be found in the biblical reading of the Garden of Eden. Since then, this question has echoed through history, and it not only asks about our physical location, but primarily about the quality of being human, of being a Mensch. In an unexpected way, this question has now become relevant because we don't see each other. At the moment we cannot meet in the synagogue and enjoy services, we can't sit across from one another during Kiddush, we couldn't gather for Yom HaShoah or Victory and Liberation Day, our Hebrew and German classes were canceled as well as choir, dance and yoga. What our small community organizes in terms of activities becomes clear when all of a sudden it is absent. And yet we did not fall into a state of shock, but adapted to the new situation. Telephone calls, e-mails and the community letter sent home kept us bonded to one another. And we have discovered a whole new space through digital platforms. Every time we meet to study or to light the Shabbat candles on the Internet, there is a great, very original joy to see and speak of to each other. Geographical distances suddenly become meaningless: we can learn, talk and sing with each other, whether we are in Hameln or Berlin. Recently a friend from Cologne also took part in our Shabbat meeting. So our horizons and radius of action widens, especially in times when we live in such a restricted space.

We try to investigate the question "Where are you?" in a variety of ways. It is also a question for ourselves. How do I deal with the invisible danger of the pathogen and with the uncertainty how long the foreclosure measures will continue? How do I spend these days of emergency? How much it is burdening my soul?

How can I rid myself of worries and questions? And where can I find joy? The Israeli national poet Lea Goldberg, who grew up in Lithuania and Russia, finds her voice in the face of the vital force of nature and the cyclical order of morning, evening and seasons. What ways can we find to make each of our days meaningful?

Schalom and with good wishes for this time,
—Your Rabbi Ulrike Offenberg

COVID-19



Stay at home



Wear a mask



Exercise outdoors



Celebrate festivals at home



Yahrzeit



Shabbat



Studying on Zoom

Teach me, God,
to bless and to pray
for the secret within the enfolded leaf,
the glow of a ripening fruit,
and this freedom:
to see,
to sense,
to breathe,
to know,
to celebrate,
to fail.

Teach my lips how
to bless and sing praises
as Your time is renewed
with the arrival of morning
and evening,
that my day today
be not like my yesterdays,
that my day not simply
be habit.

—Lea Goldberg

Jewish May

The Corona virus knows no calendar. We want everyone to get through the pandemic safely. In the coming weeks there will be several holidays and commemorations, which we have celebrated together every year, but this year it will not be possible. If and when the state of Lower Saxony issues ordinances, and we consider it justifiable with regard to the health of our members, we will reopen the synagogue for services and events. If this happens before our next community letter is delivered, we will contact you by phone.

- May 9th, Liberation Day, a day full of gratitude and painful memories,
- Lag B'Omer with the barbecue in the garden of Ev.-Luth. Reformed congregation, which we celebrated with our neighbors, and
- Shavuot, the receiving of the Torah with our communal study and learning and our annual cheesecake competition the following morning

We have to keep these festivals in our hearts for the time being, looking forward to next year when hopefully the hardships of this viral plague will have passed over us all.

Try giving these holidays a place in your life at home by designing them yourself or by participating in online offers. This also conveys hope and confidence during isolation. We are happy to help you if there are technical problems or uncertainties.

Get well

If you have symptoms such as fever, dry cough, breathing problems, please call your family doctor immediately and stay at home! Your doctor will tell you what to do next.

We wish a quick and complete recovery to all those who are ill at home, in nursing facilities or hospitals. Our thoughts and hearts are with them.

Donations — Zedakah

We would like to thank the members and friends who shared our community life and supported us with generous donations. May you be blessed for your generosity!

Sabine Demuth, Wolfgang Schultner, Uwe Wolandowitsch, Elisabeth Pfeiffer, Werner and Doris Taube, Dr. Brigitte Lowe, to the Ev.-Luth. Kirchenkreis Neustadt-Wunstdorf, Dr. Peter Neumann and as always Ute Gibas, Mrs. Niedert and Rachel Dohme.

We wish to especially thank Nani and Austin Beutel, Canada for their annual donation. The Beutel family has supported us generously year after year and we are deeply grateful to them. It is not the donation alone but the contact, heartfelt interest and emotional support the Beutels have shown us which mean so much. Todah Rabah!



Jahrzeit in May

Betya Kholmer	May 8, 1997 / 1st Iyar 5757
Evgenia Benderskaja	May 24, 2001 / 2nd Sivan 5761
Vladimir Rubanov	May 14, 2002 / 3rd Sivan 5762
Sofia Kasplar	May 13, 2008 / 8th Iyar, 5768
Felix Gurevich	May 1, 2014 / 1st Iyar 5774



May the memory of our deceased be a blessing for us. Family members are invited to say Kaddish during our online gatherings. Yahrzeit candles are available in the office. We ask you to think of funeral authorization during your lifetime. Forms are available in the office.

Shalom and stay healthy!

[Newsletter Archive](#)

Jewish Community of Hameln

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