



Rabbinic word

“God, please heal her!” (Numbers 12:13) Moses begs when he sees his sister Miriam covered with leprosy. He doesn’t first ask, “How did you get that?” He doesn’t address that this rash is a punishment for Miriam opposing her brother. Moses does not dwell on the question of whether a person’s illness is self-inflicted. It is compassion instead of condemnation. “God, please, heal her!” This plea of Moses became one of the most succinct prayers of the Tanakh, the Hebrew Bible.

It is deeply rooted in our thinking that there could be a connection between illness and guilt: illness as a punishment for misconduct. Of course, we know that an unhealthy lifestyle, the wrong diet, too little exercise or even addictions promote disease in the body. But is that a reason to deny compassion to someone who is suffering? Is it moral, when visiting the sick, to make references to the alleged misconduct? Or, on the contrary, to suggest that sickness is an expression of God’s special attention? Is that what helps a person in the moment of their suffering?

The Talmud (BT Berachot 5b) tells of Rabbi Chiya, who was very ill. He was already so weak that he no longer had the strength to ask about the meaning of his suffering. Neither the assumption that the illness was a punishment for past misconduct, nor for the thought that in this way a special devotion of God to him was being expressed. His teacher, Rabbi Yochanan, visited him, understood his despair and said to him: “Give me your hand.” Rabbi Chiya took his hand and it is written, “And he, Rabbi Yochanan, lifted him up.” In the midst of suffering and despair, it was the hand of his friend which helped him pull himself up and regain the courage to face life.

And then the Talmud goes on to say that once the teacher, Rabbi Yochanan, too, became seriously ill and lay listless. Then he received a visit from his colleague, Rabbi Chanina, who treated him in the same way. He holds hands with him, and this empathy allowed him to get up again. And then the Talmud goes on to ask: If this is the recipe for healing, couldn’t Rabbi Yochanan have healed himself? Isn’t it all about pulling yourself together a bit when you’re sick? But the answer is: “A prisoner cannot free himself from prison!” Rabbi Yochanan was not helped by self-analysis or mind over matter and a stiff upper lip, but by the presence of another person who accepted him, holds his hand and lifts him up.

Compassion, accompanying someone in their unbearable situation, is the only thing that helps. Blame or unsolicited advice only increases the loneliness of the ill and makes their suffering worse. May we also always have enough strength and patience to be a support for the sick so that they can lift themselves up with us.

Rabbi Ulrike Offenbergl wishes you a summer full of health and joy

Review of the month of June

Lecture on Marc Chagall

In cooperation with the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation, Hans-Georg Spangenberg gave a lecture on June 1st about the Jewish artist Marc Chagall. He introduced us to this famous impressive painter. We thank Mr. Spangenberg for this presentation. Mr. Spangenberg is part of the founding history of our community. We remember the invaluable help and support he gave us. He is always a welcome guest and we were very happy to see him again this time.

Shavuot and Cheesecake

After a long period of corona-related restrictions, the synagogue finally filled up again on Shavuot. The focus of the feast day service was the reading of the Torah. During the course of the Aliyot, the entire community was called and gathered on the Bimah, as they once did on Sinai, to listen to the Ten Commandments. Rabbi Offenbergl then recited Yiskor, the prayer in memory of the deceased.

After services, numerous Shavuot delicacies prepared by Larissa, Maria and Dorit were enjoyed. The women were helped from Valerij and Matvey. Their blintzes and cheesecake were delicious. The next morning we gathered again, studied the poem “Voices” by the Israeli poet Yoav Ginai in order to discuss the concept of revelation. Study makes one hungry and so we sampled each other’s homemade dairy competition entries and sang to little Elia, who delighted in the sweets and music, encouraging us to sing on and on. What a joy to be together.







Annual Members Meeting

Our annual general meeting took place on June 12th. The board members gave their reports on the past year's activities and answered questions that arose. The minutes are in the office. Chair Rachel Dohme thanked all board members for their volunteer service to the community and presented them with bouquets.

25th community anniversary

It was with great joy that we celebrated the Jewish Reform Congregation of Hamelin's 25th anniversary. President Rachel Dohme welcomed the many community members and guests, including Hamelin Mayor Sattler, members of the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation and the Synagogue Foundation, representatives of the Hamelin's churches and citizens of the city of Hamelin. In her welcome speech, Rachel recalled that at the beginning people who met came from different countries and cultures but were connected through Judaism. She thanked all members for their diverse and loyal work, which enriches community life in a spiritual, social and cultural way. Matvey Dvortsis thanked Rachel Dohme for her many years of service as chair with heart-felt words and a bouquet. Both commemorated our long-standing vice president, Polina Pelts, of beloved memory, without whom the congregation would not have been possible. Rabbi Ulrike Offenberg shared her thoughts on the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Hamelin congregation and offered a prayer for their continued prosperity. A concert followed with "Duo Nefesh" and rounded off the day. Marjan Abramovitch, accompanied on the piano by Olga Abdissa, performed Jewish songs to sing along with. We would like to thank the artists and the Central Council of Jews of Germany for their kind support. A sumptuous buffet with baked goods, kosher wine and mountains of mini challot made by our women's group was enjoyed by all. The guests also found time to visit information tables, asking questions about our Jewish life, as well as a book table and library book giveaways. Thank you to everyone who took an active part in this celebration and especially to everyone involved for their commitment.



Jewish life in July and August

Interfaith Women's Group

As part of the "Interreligious Dialogue" project, we invite the women to a tour of the Hunoldstrasse Mosque. We are pleased that this group is meeting once again after a long break due to Covid restrictions and that we have the opportunity to exchange ideas with Christian and Muslim women about their traditions and cultures.

Information event

For the second time we are offering the informational meeting with the social worker of the Jewish community in Hanover for Ukrainian refugees. The "Political Asylum and Refugee Act" will be discussed. The event will take place on August 10th at 11:00 am.

Summer Camp

We are delighted that five children from our congregation will attend Netzer Negev summer camp. The program will be exciting as always. The community, Mrs. Tatjana Meschede and the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation helped support the families with donations which enabled all the children to participate. Jewish Summer Camp brings the children together with their peers from other Jewish communities and strengthens their Jewish identity. Thank you all!

Summer Break

As you have noticed, this Bulletin is a double issue for July and August. This means that in July and August all courses take a break. Then in September we begin with renewed vigor and in anticipation of the High Holidays.

Get well wishes

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

Donations – Zedakah

We would like to thank everyone who supports our community life and the upkeep of the synagogue with generous donations. This month we would like to particularly emphasize: The Krasa-Meschede family, Mrs. Lynn Magid-Lazar in honor of the birth of Galila Yara Schleier, Tatjana Meschede and the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation for their donations for the summer camping program and our anniversary, Olga Gerr, Mrs. Wojawski with her 4th grade class, Ms. Ruppert with her 6th grade class and Ms. Kleine with her 5th grade class, Viktoria-Louise-Gymnasium, Ms. Klein with her two confirmation courses, Ms. Streicher-Tietz with the Alverdissen confirmation course, Ute Niedert, Ute Gibas and the Dohme family. Anniversary donations also came from Hamelin Mayor Claudio Griese, the Sattler family and the de Jong family. May all donors be blessed for their generosity.

Sympathy and Condolences

We offer our deepest condolences to Tamara Ovsievich and Svetlana Hladchenko on the death of their husband and father, our beloved member, Marik Ovsievich. Marik was one of the founders of the synagogue, was a key member of our choir “Shalom” with his strong, beautiful voice. He took an active part in the life of our congregation. We will miss him very much and will remember him fondly. The funeral was well attended and was presided over by Rabbi Offenberg.

We would also like to offer our sincere condolences to the family of Nina Sinizina, who passed away on June 2, 2022, after a long illness. The funeral service was conducted by Volodymyr Pesok .

Jahrzeit in July and August

Nataliya Zaychenko	July 1, 2003 / 1. Tammuz 5763
Sergei Yevdokymov	July 21, 2008 / 18. Tammuz 5768
Inge Dickman	July 16, 2008 / 13. Tammuz 5768
Volodymyr Zaslavsky	July 29, 2012 / 10. Av 5772
Musiy Khazanov	August 7, 2020 / 17. Av 5780
Ethel Lazer	August 16, 2009 / 26. Av 5769
Emilia Sheenkova	August 18, 2020 / 28. Av 5780

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



Shalom!

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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

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

Web site: www.ighreform.org Email: igh@ighreform.org

Office: Neue Heerstraße 35, 31840 Hess. Oldendorf

Tel.: 05152/8374 Fax: 05152/962915

Email: racheldohme@ighreform.org

Program for July–August 2022 • Tammuz–Av 5782

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

Monday, July 4	9:00 a.m.	Interreligious Women 's Group , Hunoldstrasse Mosque
Wednesday, July 6	6:00 p.m.	Shiur about the Haftarah of Shabbat “Balak,” via Zoom
Friday, July 15	11:00 a.m.	Seniors Breakfast “Let’s remember the past,” Part I with Olga Gerr, kindly supported by “Aktion Mensch”
Wednesday, July 13	6:00 p.m.	Shiur on the Haftarah of Shabbat “Pinchas,” via Zoom
Wednesday, July 27	6:00 p.m.	Shiur on the Haftarah of Shabbat “Mass’ej,” via Zoom
Friday, July 29	5:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat, followed by Kiddush
Saturday, July 30	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit Shabbat, followed by Kiddush
Wednesday, August 3	8:00 p.m.	Shiur about the Haftarah of Shabbat “Chazon,” via Zoom
Wednesday, August 10	11:00 a.m.	Informational meeting, Political asylum for Ukrainian refugees
	6:00 p.m.	Shiur about the Haftarah of Shabbat "Nahamu", via Zoom
Friday, August 12	5:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat, followed by Kiddush
Saturday, August 13	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit Shabbat, followed by Kiddush
Friday, August 19	11:00 a.m.	Senior breakfast “Let’s remember the past”, Part II with Olga Gerr, Kindly supported by “Aktion Mensch”
Friday, August 26	5:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat followed by Kiddush
Saturday, August 27	10.00 a.m.	Shacharit Shabbat, followed by Kiddush
	12.30 p.m.	Children Kehillah

Outside the community

Monday, July 4	6:00 p.m.	“Schanah & Sanah”: Conversation between Iman Andrea Reimann and Rabbi Offenberg, Life cycle in Islam and Judaism, via Zoom
Thursday, July 7	6:00 p.m.	“Time Travel: The Month of Tammuz”: Rabbi Offenberg talks about festivals and traditions of the Jewish Year, Meeting Christians and Jews, Lower Saxony eV, via Zoom
Friday, July 29	8:30 p.m.	“Shabbat Shalom”: Rabbi's weekly Torah sermon: Rabbi Offenberg, NDR Info, 99.9 MHz
Monday, August 1	6:00 p.m.	“Schanah & Sanah”: Conversation between Iman Andrea Reimann and Rabbi Offenberg, Life cycle in Islam and Judaism, via Zoom
Friday, August 5	3:00 p.m.	“Shabbat Shalom”: Rabbi's weekly Torah sermon: Rabbi Offenberg, NDR Info, 99.9 MHz