



## Dear community members, friends and supporters!

As the New Year begins, the Board of Directors of the synagogue wishes you and your families all the best, health, happiness, peace and prosperity for the coming year 5784!

—Rachel Dohme, Peter Wendt, Olga Gerr, Eva Shkolnikova and Claudia Fischer



## Rabbinic word

“Can a synagogue be built in an octagon shape?” This question was put to Prague’s Chief Rabbi Jecheskel Landau (1713–1793), who then wrote a responsum, i.e., a halachic report, on it. Should a synagogue always have a rectangular floor plan, as is usually the case? After all, this form refers to the model of the Jerusalem temple, after the destruction of which every synagogue is regarded as a “small sanctuary.” What about our newly built synagogue in Hamelin, which has an oval floor plan?

If you look around the world, you can see that synagogue architecture can be very diverse: buildings made of wood or stone, with turrets, domes or flat roofs, richly decorated or kept very simple. The shape of the synagogue is shaped by the materials, styles and fashion of the place and time. The architecture of a building can also reflect the local traditions, customs and religious affiliation. So, what should be the “correct” form of a synagogue?

Rabbi Landau, who himself officiated at the famous “Altneuschul” in Prague, came to the conclusion that the Jewish sources: the Talmudim, the Shulchan Aruch, rabbinic responses, give no answer as to how many corners a synagogue should have. It is often a square building, but if you create more space with the shape of an octagon, that is allowed. And then I would like to add: In this sense, a round or oval shape is even ideal. Above all, it is important that the synagogue is a place where many people with all their differences find space and where there is room for the needs of community life.

Let us hope that in the forthcoming High Holy Days our synagogue will be a place to which our members will be drawn, where they will find space for their personal prayers, their concerns, their deepest hopes and desires. Here we talk to God, but we also talk to each other and take part in their lives.

May we all be inscribed in a prosperous year 5784 blessed with health and peace.

תכתבו ותחתמו לשנה טובה ומבורכת, לשנת שלום, אושר, נחת, בריאות ותקוות!

—Your Rabbi Offenberg

## July and August in Review

### Summer Machaneh

Every year, the children and young people of our community take part in Jewish camp programs, organized and led by Netzer Germany, JLEV’s youth organization. The youth leaders are highly qualified and motivated to create a camping program to strengthen Jewish identity and encourage new circles of friends from other Reform congregations. The lasting friendships and shared experiences are an opportunity to get to know their Jewish peers through games, fun and learning situations. Camp experience is an important supplement to their Jewish lives in the syna-gogue and family. Here Timur and Lennard share their experiences of this year with us:

Hello Dear Synagogue,

Lennard and I attended this year's Summer Machaneh from July 28th to August 6th. Of course we had a lot of fun and we want to tell you a little bit about it.

Overall, the Machaneh was full of great experiences and excursions. For example, we went to the Phaeno Museum in Wolfsburg and it was great! In addition, we learned a lot about Judaism around the world with great programs which were very enjoyable. The theme of this Machaneh was “Judaism around the World.” Above all, we learned a lot about Judaism in Brazil, Mexico, India, Ukraine, Australia and Ethiopia, which was a lot of fun and expanded our knowledge of Judaism. We also made a lot of friends and saw them again and had a great time.

Of course, we really want to go back to the Machaneh next year. We sincerely thank the synagogue for supporting us in our unforgettable journey, which broadened our horizons about Judaism.

Sincerely,

Lennard and Timur



## **Honorary Award for Jewish Life**

An eight-member jury chaired by Dr. Felix Klein, the Federal Government Commissioner against Anti-Semitism, awards an Honorary Award for Jewish Life. They selected Netzer Germany e.V. and Limmud e.V. from among 90 applications this year. In a press release, Felix Klein explained the jury's decision as follows: "Netzer Germany is a nationwide, very committed organization. With its work, the youth movement strengthens the self-image of Jewish life in Germany, beginning with public schoolchildren. With their commitment, the 'Netzers' are able to demonstrate a lively, modern-day Judaism and unite young people from different backgrounds." The jury decided to honor Limmud e.V. because "this association is characterized by innovation across a wide range of people and topics. Limmud means learning together in Hebrew. Participants can impart knowledge and acquire it."

Netzer Germany and Limmud are two organizations that we support and whose work benefits members of our community. We warmly congratulate them on this recognition.

## **Thanks to Maria Bielau and Valerij Bogatchyk**

Masha and Valera have completed their federal voluntary service in our congregation, also helping many of our members. For more than a year they have been involved in community work in a variety of ways: Masha especially in the kitchen, preparing the Kiddushim on Shabbat, holidays and other events; Valera took care of the dignified appearance of our cemetery in an exemplary manner, demonstrated his organizational talent at programming events and took care of the necessary technology. Both performed their work with great care and reliability. We thank them very much for all their help and dedication and wish them continued strength and health.

## **Jewish Life in September**

### **Holidays of the month of Tishrei**

The daily blowing of the shofar announces that the High Holidays are just around the corner. We welcome the New Year 5784 on Friday, September 15 at 5:30 p.m. with traditional prayers and a festive Kiddush. By eating round challot, apple and honey, pomegranate seeds and other symbolic foods, we express our hope that the year will be sweet and fruitful. Rosh Hashanah opens the Ten Days of Repentance, culminating in Yom Kippur. We will open this Day of Atonement on Sunday, September 24, at 6:30 p.m. with Kol Nidrej and evening prayers. Please note: The starting time depends on the sunset and can only be as late as not to prolong the fast. On Monday, September 25, at 10 a.m., the morning service, Schacharit, begins with a reading of the Torah, followed by the Mussaf prayer with the impressive "Unetaneh Tokef." After a break in which Rabbi Offenbergl will offer a Shiur, we will continue at 6:00 p.m. with Yiskor and Ne'ilah, "closing the gates" of our prayers. We celebrate the end of Yom Kippur with Havdalah and a "Break the Fast Nosh" at 8:00 p.m.

This year the main holidays of Tishrei fall predominantly on Shabbat, and just a few days later, Sukkoth, the Feast of Tabernacles begins on Friday, September 29, at 5:30 p.m. The evening prayer, as well as Shacharit the next morning, Saturday, September 30, 10:00 am, are followed by a celebratory Kiddush in our Sukkah. Our holiday period flows into October with Shmini Atzeret and Simchat Torah on Shabbat, the 6th/7th of October.

May our prayers for a prosperous and peaceful 5784 be answered.

## **Cemetery Visits**

As we do every year before the High Holidays, we visit our two Jewish cemeteries to commemorate our departed loved ones. On Friday, September 15, 2023, we will meet at 11:00 a.m. at Scharnhorststrasse Cemetery to visit the graves. Then we drive to the Wehl Cemetery, where we arrive around 12:00 p.m., to then again go grave to grave and exchange memories.

## **Condolences**

We mourn the loss of our longtime member Boris Markhashev, of beloved memory, who passed away on July 19. Boris was a professional ballroom dancer and brought his passion for dancing to Hamelin. Here he built up the dance group of our community and led it for many years. The group often performed with Israeli dances and invited many people to happily join in the dancing. With his gentle, friendly and joyful nature, Boris was a valued and important member of the community who also actively participated in Shabbat services. We miss him very much and will remember him fondly. The burial took place at the Jewish Cemetery in Hannover-Seelhorst at the request of his family.



## Unveiling ceremony for Julia Shurupova, of beloved memory

It's hard to believe, but Julia Shurupova has been gone for a year. Her friendly smile, her fine manner and her devotion stand out so vividly before our eyes. Petro, daughters Dasha and Natascha with their families and we in the community miss her very much. Early on August 4, Rabbi Offenberg performed an unveiling service and dedication of her headstone in the presence of the family.

Jehi Sichrah Baruch — May her memory be a blessing.

## September Yahrzeit

Samson Avrus – 3 September 1999 / 22 Elul 5759

May his memory be a blessing to us. Kaddish is spoken during the services. Yahrzeit candles are available in the office.



## Shalom and Shanah Tovah, Your community board



Photo by Aleida Stoller

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### **Jewish Community of Hamelin**

Member of the JLEV (Jewish Liberal-Egalitarian Organization), the World Union of Progressive Judaism, and the Central Council of Jews of Germany

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## Program for September 2023 • Elul 5783–Tishrei 5784

Daily Office Hours: Thursdays and Fridays, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Friday, September 1	5:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat, followed by Kiddush
Saturday, September 2	10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Shacharit Shabbat, followed by Kiddush and Shiur Children's Kehillah
Wednesday, September 6	6:00 p.m.	Shiur about the weekly Torah portion Nitzawim-Wajelech, Zoom
Wednesday, September 13	6:00 p.m.	Shiur on Rosh Hashanah, Zoom
Thursday, September 14	7:00 p.m.	"The High Holidays" Rabbi Offenberg Lecture "Principles and rituals of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur" In cooperation with the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation Hamelin
Friday, September 15.	1:00 a.m. 12:00 noon 5:30 p.m.	Visit to Scharnhorststraße Cemetery, Visit to the Am Wehl Cemetery Maariv Rosh Hashanah, festive Kiddush
Saturday, September 16	10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Shacharit Rosh Hashanah, Kiddush and Tashlich Children's Kehillah
Wednesday, September 20	6:00 p.m.	Shiur via the weekly section Ha'asinu, Zoom
Sunday, September 24	6:30 p.m.	Erev Yom Kippur Kol Nidre
Monday September 25	10:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m. 8:00 p.m.	Shacharit and Mussaf for Yom Kippur Jiskor and Ne'ilah Hawdalah and Break the Fast Nosh
Wednesday, September 27	6:00 p.m.	Shiur on Sukkot, Zoom
Friday, September 29	5:30 p.m.	Maariv Sukkot followed by Kiddush
Saturday, September 30	10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Shacharit Sukkot, followed by Kiddush and Shiur Children's Kehillah
Friday, October 6	5:30 p.m.	Maariv Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah, Kiddush
Saturday, October 7	10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Shacharit Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah, Kiddush Children's Kehillah
Friday, October 29	6:20 a.m.	Thoughts on Sukkot, Rabbi Offenberg, "Wort zum Tag" on Radio Deutschlandfunk