



# The Jewish Community of Hamelin Newsletter

October 2019 • Tishri–Heshvan 5780

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**Dear members of the community, friends and supporters,**

At the beginning of the New Year 5780, the members of the synagogue board wish you and your families all the best, health, happiness, peace and well-being!

***Shanah towah — Leschanah towah tikatewu!***

**May you all be enrolled for a good year!**

—Rachel Dohme, Peter Wendt and Olga Gerr



We were particularly honored to be selected by the Hameln Stadtsparkasse for a special project on September 4th. Each year this banking institution offers organizations the opportunity to submit projects with which they need help realizing. Once selected, a team of bank employees offer their volunteer help to bring the project to fruition. Rachel submitted the project and Olga Gerr coordinated the day, complete with refreshments for the helpers. In addition to the bank employee volunteers, Olga Gerr, Heinrich Moos, Aron Kaplan, Svetlana Hladchenko and Vladimir Pesok cleaned the cemetery grounds, mowed the lawn, washed the tombstones and renewed faded letters on them. In Judaism, remembering our deceased is very important. Many of our members have reached their golden years and it is not easy for them to look after the graves. We are grateful that we had support from the friendly and hard-working

employees of Hamelner Sparkasse just before the High Holidays. We thank all those who have participated in this work.

The integration office of our city’s social services organized their annual culture festival on September 15th, this time in Hessisch Oldendorf. Many different religious and cultural groups were represented and of course our congregation was also involved. Our dance group "Chag Sameach" showed their skills in Israeli dances. We thank our dance group, showing once again that we are a vital and welcome mosaic piece in Hamelin’s landscape.

Also noteworthy were the activities of our project through “Aktion Mensch.” On Sunday, September 22, Isaac Katz, a member of the Jewish Reform Congregation of Bad Pyrmont, visited us. He offered a fascinating lecture regarding his art and poetry. We thank Mr. Katz and wish him continued success.

We continue to be very involved with our local chapter of the Society of Christians and Jews. Many of the organization’s activities take place in our synagogue. Lectures and a walking tour of Jewish Hamelin were the highlights last month-as always very informative and interesting.

Because of the editorial deadline, we can only report in the next newsletter about Rosh Hashanah.



## **Jewish in October**

Please note! Our community office is closed on the 1st, 3rd, 9th, 14th and 21st of October, due to the different Jewish and national holidays. On these holidays, regular group activities will not take place.

Yom Kippur begins on the evening of October 8 with Kol Nidre. Kol Nidre is an Aramaic text dealing with the annulment of vows: "Let our vows and oaths, all the promises we make and the obligations we incur to you, O God, between this Yom Kippur and the next, be null and void should we, after honest effort, find ourselves unable to fulfill them. Then may we be absolved of them." The haunting melody of Kol Nidre is one of the best-known examples of Jewish music and was set to classical music for cello and orchestra in a piece by Max Bruch. The recording was made famous in 1968 with cellist Jacqueline Bruch and the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by under the baton of Daniel Barenboim.



Yom Kippur services will continue on Wednesday, October 9th, at 10:00. Fasting on this day is an important ritual, helping the worshipper to attain a higher level of spirituality. Of course, children and those who are ill or fragile are not allowed to fast that day. This holiest of all days concludes with the Jiskor and Ne'ilah prayers. Sunset this year falls at 7:33 p.m. ending the 25-hour fast and we will sit down together and enjoy a light repast. School-age children are exempt from school; excuses are available in the office.

The cheerfulness at Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles on Sunday, October 13th at 5.30 pm, with guests from the House of World Religions in Bückeberg and many others is always shaped by our children. They help decorate and lead us in song, showing the older generation how to shake the Lulav properly. With the fruits of the year in mind, with the fullness of the harvest, God is praised. Again and again after Yom Kippur the gratitude and the wonder of God's goodness are in the foreground.

One week after Sukkot on October 20th at 5:30 pm, we celebrate Simhat Torah, the festival of joy of the Torah; for on this day the last section of the Torah Scroll is read and the cycle of the first section of the Book of Genesis is restarted. This is a cause for celebration and we hope that our synagogue would be as full again as on the High Holidays!

On the 27th of October a Golden Years Sunday café will take place, with the support of "Aktion Mensch". The dance ensemble of the Reform Jewish Congregation in Hannover will visit us. We invite everyone to take part in this afternoon's program. A cup of tea, something sweet, a nice chit chat with neighbors and a dance await one and all.

### Rabbinic word

The month of Tishri, almost identical to October this year, is the first month of the Jewish calendar. We have just celebrated Rosh Hashanah and welcomed the New Year 5780. This marks the beginning of the Ten Days of Repentance, culminating in Yom Kippur. Following are Sukkot, Schemini Azeret and Simchat Torah. And yet, the month of Tishri is not a linear sequence of events, similar to a line of numbers where one date is completed before the next one follows. One has to imagine this month more like a chain or a necklace, where the individual links intertwine: A new link begins before the old one is closed. Only in this combination of new and old does the necklace fall glittering in place.

Like the links of this necklace we see the holidays of Tishri: Something new begins even before the old one ends. The first month of the New Year is in movement- back and forth, beginnings and endings. Although we have just started a new year, the prayers to Yom Kippur are filled with the confessions of our transgressions last year. On Rosh Hashanah we look forward, the New Year seems like a blank slate in front of us. Yet we look back to Yom Kippur and review the old year in order to learn from it and to be able to initiate real beginnings. Good intentions for change and renewal are important, but they will not take hold if unfinished business await closure.

We also see the intertwining of new beginnings and endings in our other feasts of the month Tishri. We celebrate Sukkot two weeks after New Year, but it is still the festival of the harvest of the past year. Not only are we looking forward, we are also celebrating the wealth that has been given to us over the past year. It's a similar story with Simchat Torah: it's not until three weeks after the New Year that we finish our annual reading cycle of the Torah and then start all over again. The entire month of Tishri seems to remind us that although Rosh Hashanah has started a new year, the coming weeks also present an opportunity for closure. New beginnings cannot be had without things being completed beforehand. The Israeli poet T. Carmi points out that we never really start from zero:



Beginnings Endings (Aleftaw)  
Apparently it's hard to bring one thing  
to a real, definitive conclusion,  
with a fresh standpoint starting again.  
So you just have to get used to it  
to start from the Old in order to come  
to New again.

May we all be inscribed for a year of blessings, health and happiness.

—Your Rabbi Ulrike Offenberg

### Get well Wishes — Refuah Schlamah

We wish fast and complete recovery to all the people in our community who are going through hardships at the moment. Our thoughts and hearts are with them.

### Donations — Zedakah

We sincerely thank the members and friends who donate to our community life and have supported the synagogue upkeep with generous donations.

We would like to thank: Alla Jankowski and Wolfgang, Pastor Kurt Druerge, the Harris Family, England, Ursula Niedert and Rachel Dohme. May all donors be blessed for their generosity.



### Tree of Life — Etz Chaim

It is usual in the fall to see the trees losing their leaves. Not so with our “Tree of Life,” which graces our sanctuary with its many golden leaves. Regardless of the season, new leaves are added every month. Please consider commissioning a new leaf to commemorate a special occasion, a birth, Bar or Bat Mitzvah, wedding, thanks, Yahrzeit, memories or honors, and in this way also donate to our synagogue fund. Forms are in the office. New this month:

“On the birth of our granddaughter Isabella Rachel on 17.07.2019” — by Alla Jankowski and Wolfgang

### Thank you — Todah Rabah

We thank our Rabbi Dr. Ulrike Offenbergl for leading beautiful and meaningful High Holy Day services as well as services on Sukkot and Simchat Torah. We thank all the others who helped and participated in the services, the cultural events and the regular courses.

### Yahrzeit in October

Oleksii Bogdanov — 10.10.2014 / 16. Tishri 5774

May the memory of him be a blessing to us. Kaddish is spoken with family members during Shabbat services. Yahrzeit candles are available in the office. We ask you to think of a funerary mandate during your lifetime. Forms are available in the office.



Shalom,

Your synagogue board

## Program for October 2019 • Tishri–Heshvan 5780

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

Tuesday, October 8	6:30 p.m.	Kol Nidre services
Wednesday, October 9	10:00 a.m.	Yom Kippur services
	6:00 p.m.	Yiskor, Ne'ila
	Sundown	Break the Fast communal meal
Sunday, October 13	3:00 p.m.	Youth Group and Sukkah decoration
	5:30 p.m.	Sukkoth celebration with guests from the House of World Religions
Tuesday, October 15	3:00 p.m.	Golden Years group. Supported by “Aktion Mensch”
Sunday, October 20	3:00 p.m.	Youth Group Simchat Torah
	5:30 p.m.	Simchat Torah celebration
Friday, October 25	4:00 p.m.	Giyur class
	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services
	8:00 p.m.	Mishnah Study Group, Tractate Pirke Avot
Sunday, October 27	3:00 p.m.	Golden Year's Café — Guest performance: Dance Ensemble, Hannover Reform Congregation. Supported by “Aktion Mensch”

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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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