



Dear members of the community, friends and supporters,

Our Jewish life is like a carpet woven of different yarns and colors. Some elements appear sad and others happy, dark and colorful nuances. We are well practiced at this time of year in the art of reflection and so join us as we review the holidays of the past month that have filled our synagogue with a wide range of emotions, joy, prayer and music.

The High Holy Days are now behind us. Rabbi Offenberg led us through all the services of the High Holy Days, Sukkot and Simchat Torah with sensitivity. These were impressive, touching hours that we spent together, encompassing a wide range of emotions from the soothing silence, meditative introspection, heart-stirring sadness, pleading prayer, to serene and joyful singing.

We began at the end, as we do year for year. We visited both cemeteries before Rosh Hashanah. We told stories and shared memories of our beloved deceased and left stones and tears on each grave.

Together with Jews all over the world, we welcomed the new Jewish year 5780 with prayers and song on Sunday, September 29th. Our synagogue was full and Rabbi Offenberg led the services in Hebrew, Russian and German. Then we wished each other “L’Shanah Tovah Tikatevu” — that we may be inscribed for a happy new year. Our choir “Shalom,” in their original line-up with Valerij Fridman, Faina Pelts, Nadia Pesok and Mark Ovsievich, congratulated everyone to a happy and healthy New Year with songs for Rosh Hashanah. After saying the Brachot (prayers) for wine and the round challot, we dipped apples in sticky, sweet honey, symbolically wishing each other a New Year, happy and sweet for us. Then we sampled homemade treats that members contributed to our communal buffet table. There were plenty of vegetable dishes, fresh salads, steaming potatoes and sweet cakes.

The next day after the morning Rosh Hashanah service we went with a small group to the neighboring stream Hamel and observed the traditional ritual of Tashlich. In symbolic form, we threw our sins and spiritual burdens of the past year, in the form of bread crumbs, into the water so that they could be carried away by the current and not return, symbolically separating us from our misdeeds. A very meaningful ritual!

We were particularly pleased that we were able to use trilingual Machsorim for services. We remember and thank Rabbi Irit Shillor and Rabbi Ulrike Offenberg for making our services so accessible. The booklets allowed for uniform versions of the services with respective translations and additional texts that invited independent reading and meditation.

Kol Nidre on the eve of Yom Kippur is always a very solemn moment when we stand as one in front of the opened Aron Hakodesh, and the Torah scrolls are taken out with their new white and gold coverings. Yiskor services (memorial services for those no longer among the living) in the late afternoon of Yom Kippur afforded us a religious form to honor and remember all who are no longer with us. We spoke their names aloud and put down a small stone in a bowl with a single Yahrzeit candle. This moment is one of great meaning in our community. We can cry, be silent or search for words. Each and every one finds his own personal expression. In the company of the other mourners we feel that we are not alone in our pain and loss.

Once again we heard the shofar at the end of the Ne’ilah service. We ended the service and the long day of prayer and fasting with the Havdalah celebration and broke the fast with a meal. Many thanks to Liubow Pesina, who prepared our Shabbat and holiday tables so deliciously and so beautifully.

The generally cheerful and peaceful conclusion of the High Holidays was overshadowed from news of the terrorist act in Halle. By the evening of Yom Kippur everyone had heard of this horrific attempted massacre of our Jewish brothers and sisters in the eastern German city of Halle. Fortunately, the planned massacre in the synagogue could be averted, but two people fell victim to the cold-blooded hatred of the perpetrator. Throughout Germany, this attack caused great horror. While the police strengthened protective measures for Jewish institutions, people in towns and cities laid flowers in front of Jewish houses of worship and lit mourning candles. The two Hamelin mosques and Pastor Christiane Brendel and the Association of Christian Churches of Hamelin called citizens together for a vigil outside the synagogue. More than 200 people gathered in front of our synagogue on Erev Sukkot. They wanted to show their solidarity with us and against anti-Semitic violence and right-wing extremism. City and county politicians, Christian and Muslim community members came to us to express their sympathy and their anger. In memory of the victims, many people lit candles and laid flowers next to our memorial. After the short ceremony nearly 100 people entered the synagogue, where Rabbi Ulrike Offenberg led Sukkot services. For many of the visitors, it was the first time that they participated in a Jewish worship service. In view of the events, the service took on a special character. This wonderful service showed that we stand together and stand up to any form of anti-Semitism. Finally, there was an opportunity to shake the Lulav and sit in the Sukkah, a particularly apt symbol of the fragility of our lives. The children had made decorations and hung them in our Sukkah, painted pictures and pennants. We thank all those present for their solidarity and police inspection Hamelin-Pyrmont for the police protection.







At Simchat Torah, we conclude the yearlong cycle of reading the Torah and began by reading it anew. This age-old tradition highlights the timeliness and relevance of the Torah. If you ask a Jew from the former Soviet Union about his association with the Simchat Torah festival, you will probably hear that this was the only day of the year when the fear of neighbors and the Soviet government of showing their allegiance to Judaism disappeared. Many came to the synagogue to celebrate and dance with the Torah scrolls. Before Rabbi Offenberg set the last section of one of the Torah scrolls and the first chapter of the Genesis story on the other, we paraded and danced seven times through the synagogue. Led by a traditional musical verse, we sang and danced through the rows of seats accompanied by Faina Pelts on the piano. Everyone there had a turn and smiles abounded. May the joy that overwhelmed us in dancing with the Torah be with us throughout the year, bringing happiness, peace of mind and a sense of closeness to God to our homes.

Noteworthy were also two additional events in October sponsored by our project with the German Lottery "Aktion Mensch." The participants of the Senior Breakfast discussed various current events, enjoying themselves with the deliciously prepared dishes prepared by Svitlana Hladchenko. On Sunday, October 27, we had a dance group from the Jewish community of Hanover who performed Jewish dances for us. We enjoyed it very much! These social programs are important for our elderly who might otherwise become isolated in their homes.

Jewish life in November

On November 9, 2019, we will commemorate the 81st anniversary of the Pogromnacht. Prefacing the commemoration, our congregation will celebrate a short Havdalah ceremony (end of Shabbat) in the synagogue at 5:45 P.M. led by Rabbi Dr. Ulrike Offenberg. The memorial service will commence at 6:00 P.M. and take place in front of our synagogue in cooperation with the city of Hamelin and the Society of Christians and Jews. The Lutheran church invites those interested to a concert with pianist Cora Irsen (Weimar) at 7:30 P.M. in the Haus der Kirche. She devotes her program to Holocaust survivor Alice Herz-Sommer, including selections from Frédéric Chopin.



"Mitzvah Day"

The concept of a Mitzvah/Mitzvot is a central element of Jewish life. The idea behind international Mitzvah Day was born in 1999 in Los Angeles and quickly spread throughout the Jewish world. Mitzvah Day Germany was initiated in 2012 by the Central Council of Jews in Germany. Worldwide, 40,000 volunteers are active on this day, of which more than 2,000 in Germany alone take part in 130 small projects in over 40 cities nationwide. The motto this year is "Hand and Heart." Everyone is invited to participate! On November 17th, we will be a part of that group and celebrate Mitzvah Day by baking "Hand-and-Heart cookies" for home-bound members. The ingredients and the cookie molds will be provided. Please join us! Bring a good mood and perform the mitzvah of doing something nice for others.



Rabbinic word

This month in the Jewish calendar, almost identical to that of November, is Marheshvan, usually called Heshvan for short. Legend has it that the month received the prefix "mar" ("bitter") because it is the only month that does not include Jewish holidays. The month offers us no special occasions for celebrating and having fun, which is especially noticeable after the abundance of holidays last month. Heshvan is a time which returns us to the normalcy of our lives with its every day, recurring processes. Is that a reason for "bitterness" or a lack of joy? I do not think so, and I'm not alone. The intensity of holidays can be exhausting. Looking at it from this perspective, normal, day-to-day life can be a relief. Heshvan can be perceived then as a time of trial. In our daily lives we have the opportunity to examine what is left of the good intentions which we grasped toward during the High Holidays. It's not all about sinning or avoiding old and new mistakes. Rather the question arises whether we manage to preserve something of the festive joy in our everyday life. Right now, as the days are getting shorter and the cold, dark season is approaching, we need the easy cheerfulness and warmth that we "refueled" during the holidays. If only a little of the apple with honey accompanies us daily, we need not be afraid of the dreariness of November.

—Your Rabbi Ulrike Offenberg

Projekt Aktion Mensch

For our next "Senior Breakfast", we invite all members and friends to join us on Tuesday, November 12th. As part of the cultural program of the Central Council of Jews, a theater group will dazzle us with the cinema spectacle "Shalom, dear guests." The performance languages are Russian and German. We thank the Central Council of Jews for their kind support. See you there!

Get well — Refuah Shlamah

We wish all the people of our community, who are currently experiencing hardship, a good recovery. Our thoughts, prayers and hearts are with them.

Congratulations — Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to the Berhowski family on the birth of their first grandchild! May she live in a world of peace and happiness. We congratulate our Foundation Board member, Mr. Lippold von Klencke, on his 75th birthday. We wish all our members, who had their birthday last month, all the best and good health.

Thank you — Todah Rabah

We wish to thank and sadly say goodbye to County Commissioner Tjark Bartels, who resigned his post because of illness. Mr. Bartels was and is a faithful friend of our community. He visited our congregation often and always had time for questions, discussions and team work. He was very concerned about and worked for the continuity of our Jewish life, in the present and in the future. We owe him so much and wish him good health.

Our thanks also go to the police inspection Hamelin-Pyrmont for the security measures regarding our community.

Donations — Zedakah

We sincerely thank the members and friends who have supported our religious life with generous donations. Many dear people have donated in honor of the High Holidays. We thank Michael Zuelke, Dieter Vogelhuber, the Wendt family, the Rubanov family, the Dohme family, the Jacobsberg family, USA, and Ute Niedert. May all donors be blessed for their generosity.



Tree of Life — Etz Chaim

One can commemorate the commission of a new leaf on our Tree of Life for special occasions, such as a birth, Bar or Bat Mitzvah, wedding, gratitude, Yahrzeit, memories or honors and in this way also make a donation to the synagogue. Forms are in the office. Thank you so much!

Newly ordered leaf: “Mazel Tov Adam and Zoe on your Chuppah on April 4, 2019” — Jacobsberg Family, USA

Chewra Kaddisha

To accompany a person on the last day is one of the greatest Mitzvot in Judaism. For many years a Chevrah Kaddisha, the Holy Burial Society, has been working in our community. A male and a female group each perform the ritual washing of the deceased. We are currently looking for volunteers for these groups. Please contact the community office.

Yahrzeit in November

- Dr. Siegmund Kratzenstein 28. 11. 1938 / 5. Kislev 5699
- Revold Banchukov 28. 11. 1999 / 19. Kislev 5760
- Jan Olvovskj 25. 11. 2001 / 10. Kislev 5762
- Riva Voronova 16. 11. 2002 / 11. Kislev 5763
- Josef Pelts 20. 11. 2008 / 22. Heshwan 5769
- Lev Vinnytskiy 21. 11. 2013 / 18. Kislev 5774

May the memory of our dead be a blessing to us. Kaddish is spoken to family members during Shabbat services. Yahrzeit candles are available in the office.



Shalom,
Your synagogue board

Program for November 2019 • Heshvan–Kislev 5780

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

Friday, November 8	4:00 p.m.	Giyur class
	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services
	8:00 p.m.	Mishnah Study Group, Tractate Pirke Avot
Saturday, November 9	10.00 a.m.	Shabbat morning services
	12.00 noon	Shiur, Lech L'cha
	1:30 p.m.	Youth group
	5:45 p.m.	Havdallah
	6:00 p.m.	Memorial service, Pogromnacht 1938
	7:30 p.m.	Memorial Concert, Cora Irsen with readings from the life of Alice-Herz Sommer in Haus der Kirche, Altstadt Hamelin
Tuesday, November 12	12.00 noon	“Shalom, dear friends” Theatre and Luncheon, supported by the Central Council of Jews of Germany and Aktion Mensch
Sunday, November 17	3:00 p.m.	Mitzvah Day details in newsletter
Tuesday, November 19	7:00 p.m.	In cooperation with the Society of Christians and Jews, Film evening: <i>The Last Step</i>
Friday, November 22	4:00 p.m.	Giyur class
	5:30 p.m.	Friday night services and Birthday Kiddush. We honor Arkadij Zyryanov on his 90 th birthday.
	8:00 p.m.	Mishnah Study Group, Tractate Pirke Avot
Saturday, November 23	10.00 a.m.	Shabbat morning services
	12.00 noon	Shiur, Chaya Sarah
	1:30 p.m.	Youth group
Sunday, November 24	3:00 p.m.	Golden Year's Café, 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

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