



The Jewish Community of Hamelin Newsletter

November 2021 • Heshvan–Kislev 5782

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Dear members, friends and supporters,

November is aptly decreed as “gray,” in northern Germany and due to the time change on the last weekend in October we feel the darkness, the lack of light, particularly strongly. The daylight ends early in the afternoon and our bodies need some time to adjust. Sleep disorders and depression accompany us into the beginning of the month.

The creation narrative of the Tanakh (Hebrew Bible) begins with the following verses:

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was unformed and void, with darkness over the surface of the deep and a wind from God sweeping over the water. God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. God saw that it was good, and God separated the light from the darkness.” (Genesis 1: 1–3)

Before God creates the world, he turns on the light, so to speak. These are not yet the celestial stars - "the great light to rule over the day and the lesser light to rule the night, and the stars" (Genesis 1:16) – which will only be created later. Of course, this is not a scientific report about the origin of the cosmos, but a mythological story that tells us something about our place in the world. Here it is explained to us: There is no life in darkness, the prerequisite for this is light. Almost all plants and animals adapt their rhythm of life to the light. As part of nature, we humans are also subject to the alternation of light and dark, even if we have learned to cheat the night with the help of fire, candles or electric light and to extend our days. Our sleeping habits have emancipated themselves from the natural conditions: We neither go to sleep at nightfall nor do we get up at sunrise. And yet the long nights weigh on our affect.

November strikes an arc from fear of darkness to hope for light. While the beginning of the month shows us the existential dependence on cosmic events, at the end of the month we celebrate with Hanukkah our elevation above the darkness that sets in so early. On November 28th we light the first Hanukkah candle and a week later the entire Hanukkia will shine brightly - although at this time the days are still astronomically shorter. In this way, November shows the limits and grandeur of human existence. The Hanukkah festival signals with its daily increase in light, despite the long nights, that we humans have intellectual, physical and spiritual abilities to shape our surroundings. We are able to bring light and push back the darkness. So we want to try to open up many internal and external sources of light in order to illuminate the darkness for ourselves and for each other. And as it says elsewhere in the Bible: “The lifebreath of man is the lamp of the Lord.” (Proverbs 20:27)

—Greetings from Rabbi Ulrike Offenberg

Review of the month of October

Annual general meeting with election of the board

Our annual general meeting took place on October 10th, 2021 with members in good attendance in a friendly atmosphere. After the greeting and a minute’s silence for deceased members, the chairwoman, Rachel Dohme, reported on our synagogue activities in 2020. Auditors Aron Kaplan and Matvej Dvortsis found the treasurers books to be flawless. The members voted unanimously to discharge the board. The chairwoman thanked the board for their voluntary work and presented everyone with a bouquet of flowers. The members underscored their gratitude with strong applause. Peter Wendt wrote the minutes, which are available for members in the office.

According to the statutes, new board elections were also held at this general meeting. The following were elected to the new board:

Chairperson: Rachel Dohme
Second Chairperson: Peter Wendt
Treasurer: Olga Gerr
Board member: Claudia Fischer
Board member: Eva Schkolnikova

We are pleased about the new and younger expansion of the board of directors and we warmly welcome them, wishing all board members good luck with their tasks.

Shabbaton with the Kinderkehillah in Berlin

From October 15th to 17th, the older children of the Kinderkehillah traveled alone by train to Berlin and spent a Shabbaton with our rabbi. It turned out to be an intense weekend full of activities, the aim of which was to introduce the children to various synagogues and of course to get a taste of the “Berlin air.” We baked Challot, took part in a Chassidic Kabbalat-Shabbat service led by Rabbi Akiva Weingarten. We enjoyed a rich Shabbat meal including a traditional Cholent stew. On Shabbat morning we attended the Shacharit service in our sister community Sukkat Shalom and were warmly welcomed there too. On Sunday we were





part of the ShulClub of the Fraenkelufer Synagogue, where children of different age groups meet once a month to study. Rabbi Offenberg taught the biblical story of Creation and Noah's Ark and discussed thoughts on climate change and environmental protection. Sports, games and exploring the capital were also not neglected. Afterwards there was pizza for everyone. The Kehillah jumped for joy at a trampoline landscape, enjoyed a climbing park high in the trees, were intrigued at the Berlin Technology Museum and looked out over Berlin at night from the roof of the newly built palace. Hopefully again next year!

Jewish life in November

9th of November Memorial

On November 9th, two terrible events are at the center of our remembrance. At 4 p.m. we gather at the memorial in front of our synagogue. The memorial service will remember the pogrom on November 9/10, 1938, during which the Hamelin synagogue was burned down and many Jews were deported to concentration camps.

Afterwards, a musical and literary program with Igor Hochlowkin and Marina Kalmykova will take place in our newly built synagogue. We are marking the 80th anniversary of the mass murder committed by the Nazis in the Babyn Yar ravine, where 34,000 Jews from Kiev were murdered in cold blood. The program will offer texts and music that commemorates this long-forgotten and repressed crime against humanity. We thank the Central Council of Jews for their kind support.



Hanukkah

At the end of the month, on November 28th, Hanukkah begins and runs through December 6th. Our community festival will be held on the evening of the second Hanukkah light on November 29th. We can look forward to a concert by the "Trio Scho", who come to us thanks to the support of the Central Council of Jews. This year's Hanukkah gift is for everyone who loves Jewish music. Of course, there will also be sufganiyot for this happy festival of light, latkes and sweets and gift bags for the children.

Mitzvah Day

This year's Mitzvah Day on November 21st. This is an initiative of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, an idea from the USA which happily spread here. This day is about experiencing ourselves as a community and taking responsibility for one another. Everyone can do something good for others and thus make our world a little better. We will inform you in the next few days about the program.



Get Well — Refuah Shlamah

Who blessed our fathers Abraham, Issac and Jacob and our mothers, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah, may also send blessings and healing to all who are ill. May they be blessed with patience and strength of heart, and may they enjoy full recovery of body and mind.

Donations — Zedakah

We would like to thank our members and friends who support our community life and the upkeep of the synagogue with generous donations. This month we would like to highlight: Mr. Benjamin Möller-Struß and the Hamelin study seminar for student teachers majoring in religious education, Dr. Yoshimitsu and Judith Khan, California, USA, Dr. Gabriele Mertens, Berlin, the Ovsievych family, Ms. Niedert, the Dohme family, Mr. Kaiser and his senior group and Mr. Dieter Vogelhuber.

May all donors be blessed for their generosity

November Yahrzeit

Dr. Siegmund Kratzenstein	November 28, 1938 / 5. Kislev 5699
Revid Banchukov	November 28, 1999/ 19. Kislev 5760
Jan Olvovskj	November 25, 2001/ 10 Kislev 5762
Riva Voronova	November 16, 2002 / 11. Kislev 5763
Josef Pelts	November 20, 2008 / 22nd Heshvan 5769
Lev Vinnyskiy	November 21, 2013 / 18. Kislev 5774
Dr Leo Hepner	November 25, 2015 / 13 Kislev 5776
Borys Uchytel	November 22, 2018 / 14. Kislev 5779
Dr. Felix Peres	November 21, 2020 / 5th Kislev 5780



May their memory be blessed. Kaddish is spoken to family members during services. Yahrzeit candles are available in the office.

Shalom,
Your Synagogue Board

Program for November 2021 • Heshvan–Kislev 5782

Monday, November 1	6:00 p.m.	Schanah & Sanah. How time is lived in Judaism and Islam. Conversation about the annual cycle between Rabbi Offenber and Iman A. Reimann, via Zoom
Wednesday, November 3	6:00 p.m.	Shiur to the Haftarah of Shabbat "Toldot," via Zoom
Friday, November 5	5:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat, followed by a festive Birthday Kiddush
Saturday, November 6	10.00 a.m. 12.30 p.m.	Shacharit Shabbat, followed by Kiddush Children's Kehillah
Tuesday, November 9	4:00 p.m.	Commemoration of the pogrom night 1938. We meet in front of the Synagogue. After the service, we invite everyone to the musical-literary "Babi Yar" program with Marina Kalmykova and Igor Hochlowkin in the synagogue.
Wednesday, November 10	6:00 p.m.	Shiur to the Haftarah of Shabbat "Vajetze," via Zoom
Wednesday, November 17	6:00 p.m.	Shiur to the Haftarah of Shabbat "Vajischlach," via Zoom
Friday, November 19	5.30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat with Peter Benjamin Wendt, followed by Kiddush
Sunday, November 21		"Mitzvah Day" Program to be announced
Wednesday, November 24	6:00 p.m.	Shiur to the Haftarah of Shabbat "Vajeschew," via zoom
Monday, November 29	5.30 p.m.	Hanukkah celebration with Rabbi Offenber and the Klezmer group "Trio Scho" Candle lighting, Sufganiyot, Hanukkah gifts

Outside the synagogue

Monday, November 15	7:00 p.m.	Book presentation by the board members of the Society of Christians and Jews, Haus der Kirche, Emmernstrasse 6 In cooperation with the GCJZ
Friday, November 19	7:00 p.m.	Dr. Stefan Hagemann, "Israel — the current situation." In cooperation with the GCJZ, via Zoom
Thursday, November 25	6:00 p.m.	Jewish-Christian Bible dialogue, Rabbi Offenber and Dr. Christiane Desert: The end of the Joseph story. In cooperation with BCJ Lower Saxony, via Zoom
Friday, November 26	8:30 p.m.	"Shabbat Shalom." NDR Info, in Hameln on 99.9 MHz, Interpretation of the Torah by Rabbi Offenber

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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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