



Dear members of the community, friends and supporters,

Rabbinical Message

During the Shabbatot of December we read the story of Joseph in the Torah. This favorite son of his father Jacob is hated by his brothers because he is preferred and does not do much to ease the tensions himself. Joseph, for example, tattles on his brothers to his father and tells his brothers about his dreams in which his brothers bow to him. And then there is this beautiful and colorful robe that his father gives him. Dislike turns into murderous hatred and the brothers plot to kill Joseph. A family drama unfolds before our eyes, and a conciliatory end only comes decades later when they succeed in reshaping their relationships. They have learned that they need one another, and that they can live with one another, even if at a distance.

The Joseph story has inspired many works of art, literature and music. This is understandable, because the story addresses strong human emotions — love, hate, loneliness, hurt, longing. But why does the Torah tell us this story? What is religious about it? God actually only appears marginally, the plot is driven by human protagonists. Why is a story in which the people involved do not act morally at all part of the scriptures?

We find an answer to this in a detail of the story: At the beginning Joseph is sent by the father to his brothers who tend the flocks far away. On the way to them he gets lost and turns to a man he meets on the way: “I’m looking for my brothers.” This stranger shows him the way and from then on the story unfolds, which initially brings Joseph and later his entire family to Egypt - and a few centuries later also out again — the Exodus.

We ponder who this man was who directs Joseph along the way. His name is not mentioned and we do not know anything about his background. And yet he has an indispensable role in the development of the story. We can recognize ourselves in him, because we also do not know our role in the great history of the world, but what we say or do when we engage with others points beyond ourselves. Our biographies are part of a large tapestry that we help shape. With reflection and after all the trials and tribulations of his life, Joseph was able to accept his brothers in spite of all the pain and say to them: “Not you, but God brought me on this path.”

I wish you a December full of light and warmth,

—Rabbi Ulrike Offenber

November Review



9th of November

We commemorated the “Reichspogromnacht” on November 9th, the date 83 years ago when our Hamelin synagogue was destroyed. We stood in sadness and honor for those who came before us. We imagined their fear and pain as the beautiful 1879 synagogue burned to the ground and no one interfered. It was the beginning of unimaginable horrors to our people.

Standing in front of our newly constructed synagogue, “Beitenu,” we took part in a memorial service led by the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation Hameln, Mayor Claudio Griese and the citizens of Hamelin.

Texts and psalms were read aloud. Wreaths, flowers and stones were placed gently on the memorial sculpture. Aron Kaplan laid the wreath for our congregation with the words in German and Hebrew, “Remember and never forget.” The commemoration concluded with the reading of the names of the by high school students, of those Hamelin Jews who were persecuted and murdered during the Nazi regime, concluding with the prayer “El Male Rachamim” and communal recitation of Kaddish.

After the memorial ceremony there was a literary program in our synagogue with the title “Babyn Yar.” Well-known actors and musicians Igor Hochlowkin and Marina Kalmykova conveyed the tragic story of Babyn Yar with sensitivity. It was breathtaking and very moving, people sat dazed and listened to the terrible events of Babyn Yar. No sound could be heard. The performance was presented in Russian, with German translation by Vadim Hochlowkin.

We thank the artists and the Central Council of Jews for their support this evening. We thank Faina Pelts for the organization, as well as Liubov Pesina and Larissa Dvortsis for the help with the organization of this event.

Mitzvah Day



As is our longstanding tradition, we observed Mitzvah Day again this year. As in previous years, members of the community attended this event, ready to do something for others.

We baked pastries, made Hanukkah garlands and packed goodies for those who unfortunately can no longer visit our congregation due to old age and illness. We filled each package not only with goodies, but also with love, heartfelt and sincere wishes for

health and many years of life. We would like to thank everyone who attended this event. Special thanks to organizer Olga Gerr and assistant Larisa Dvortsis for their creative ideas!



Jewish life in December



Winter Machane

A Winter Machane is being offered for Jewish teens across the country. It is being led by our Reform youth organization, Netzer Germany, e.V. This year the teens will travel to Münsterland. The days will be filled with laughter, fellowship and discovering the treasures of Jewish life. Seeing old friends and making new ones is an added plus. Sign-up is in progress now.

Get well — Refuah Shlamach

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

Tree of Life

A new “leaf” has sprouted on our Tree of Life this autumn! We thank the Dvortsis family:
“In memory of our parents, from Larissa and Matvey”



Donations — Zedakah

We would like to thank the members and friends who support our community life and the maintenance of our synagogue with generous donations. This month we would like to highlight in particular: Mr. Wolfgang Kaiser with the Lion Club, the Marc Ovsievych family, Ms. Niedert, the Dohme family, Ms. Schriegel with her 3rd and 4th elementary school classes from Ottenstein and Ms. Hodemann, Hamelin vocational school of nursing. May all donors be blessed for their generosity.

Sympathy

We extend our condolences to Olga Trieskunova and her family on the death of their father, grandfather and father-in-law Gennadij Trieskunov. We send our condolences to the family. The funeral took place in the Ukraine.

We also extend our condolences to Mr. Oleg Kleper, his daughter Olga and the grandson Viktor regarding the death of their beloved wife, mother and grandmother, Marianne Kleper. The funeral took place on November 5th, led by Rabbi Dr. Ulrike Offenberg.

May the bereaved be comforted in the midst of the mourning of Zion and Jerusalem.

December Jahrzeit / Kislev–Tevet

Roza Chiriza	January 12, 2000 / 4. Kislev 5761
Ira Leimunkis	December 3, 2011 / 7. Kislev 5772
Frida Dachkevich	December 3, 2001 / 18. Kislev 5762
Igor Fuksa	December 5, 2006 / 15. Kislev 5767
Jakovs Judelsons	December 15, 2015 / 3. Tevet 5776
Grigori Drabkine	December 7, 2005 / 6. Kislev 5766
Mykhailo Gerr	December 12, 2018 / 4. Kislev 5779
Mikhail Timonin	December 14, 2015 / 2. Tevet 5776
Milja Golberg	December 18, 2012 / 5. Tevet 5773
Professor Dr. Genrikh Yeger	December 23, 2018 / 15. Tevet 5779
Nechama Yeger	December 12, 2018 / 17. Tevet 5779
Genrich Leimunski	December 29, 2006 / 8. Tevet 5767



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

Shalom, your synagogue board

Program for December 2021 / Kislev–Tevet 5782

**We regret to inform our readers that the Covid situation has forced us to limit our monthly schedule to virtual events. May the next secular year see us back together!
Stay healthy and get vaccinated!**

Wednesday, December 1	6:00 p.m.	Shiur: Haftarah Shabbat “Mikez,” via Zoom
Saturday, December 4	12.30 p.m.	Children’s Kehillah, via Zoom
Monday, December 6	6:00 p.m.	“Schanah & Sanah” How time is observed in Judaism and Islam. A conversation about the annual cycle between Rabbi Offenberg and Iman A. Reimann, via Zoom
Tuesday, December 7	7:00 p.m.	Rabbi Offenberg: Book Presentation, German edition, “Through the Jewish Year” by Rabbi Prof. Dr. Dalia Marx, Jerusalem. An evening sponsored by The Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation Hamelin via Zoom
Wednesday, December 8	6:00 p.m.	Shiur: Haftarah Shabbat “Vajigasch,” via Zoom
Wednesday, December 15	6:00 p.m.	Shiur: Haftarah Shabbat “Vajigasch,” via Zoom
Saturday, December 18	12:30 p.m.	Children’s Kehillah, via Zoom
Wednesday, December 22	6:00 p.m.	Shiur: Haftarah Shabbat “Shemot,” via Zoom
Wednesday, December 29	6:00 p.m.	Shiur: Haftarah Shabbat “Va’era,” via Zoom

The synagogue will be closed from December 20, 2021 and reopened on January 3, 2022.

*We wish all our members a Happy Hanukkah, our Christian friends a Merry Christmas
and everyone a Happy New Year 2022!*

[Newsletter Archive](#)

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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