



## Rabbinic word

We are entering the darkest time of the year, the weeks and months when our region of the earth is furthest from the sun. The darkness and cold are not solely of cosmic origin. The ongoing attacks on Ukraine, the sight of many destroyed towns and cities that were once home to many of our members, the fear of the people there and of a winter without electricity and heating — all this leaves no one unmoved. Add to that the many other wars, conflicts, and irreconcilability that the news brings to our homes every day. It's not easy not to give up. But where does hope come from?



Hungarian-Jewish resistance fighter Hannah Senesh, executed by Nazi collaborators in 1944, was also a gifted poet whose lyrics are yet to be discovered. She countered the omnipresent violence with these words:

While the bonfires of war burn against the flames  
Igniting the bloody stormy days  
I light my little lamp  
to seek — to seek a Mensch.

It is not without reason that the festivals of lights in many cultures fall in the dark season. This is the time when we humans need hope and comfort most. As we light the first Hanukkah candle on December 18th, adding an additional candle to the Hanukkiah each evening, the candles glow brighter and brighter, giving us confidence that darkness will not prevail. Hanukkah is the festival of self-assertion and the casting out of darkness through an increase in light. May the Hanukkah candles that we put in the window give us strength and hope, and may we also pass on to other people the bright light of hope.

Hanukkah Sameach,  
—Your Rabbi Ulrike Offenber

## Review of the month of November

### November 9th

On November 9th we gathered at the Holocaust Memorial in front of our new synagogue, together with the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation and many citizens of Hamelin in somber commemoration.

Local high school students read short personal essays and reflections on anti-Semitism and its current disturbing manifestations. The young people then read the names of the over 100 Jews from Hamelin who were murdered in the Shoah. Several wreaths, stones and flowers were placed on the fence. We would like to thank Soprano Lauren Welliehausen for the moving musical arrangement.

After the memorial service, we gathered in the synagogue for a study session, led by Rabbi Offenber, with texts from the Jewish tradition relating to respect and acceptance of others in society.

### Mitzvah Day

Again our members, male and female, were busy on Mitzvah Day to bring joy to others. A large team spent many hours in the kitchen baking cookies, rugelach and other delicacies. They were then nicely wrapped and taken home to elderly and sick members. We would like to thank Olga G., Dora, Anya, Tamara, Masha, Feana, Nicole, Valerij, Nadia, Matvej and Heinrich and all who lent a hand. Working together to create something for others is a core of our 25-year synagogue history. The pictures in this month's collage shows the group and their gift bags. We thank everyone from the bottom of our hearts for their commitment.



## **Jewish December**

### **Earlier service times in winter**

Since it's getting dark so early, evening services will begin at 5:00 p.m. and continue until the end of winter in March. If it's still too late and dark in December and January, you're cordially invited to come at 4:00 p.m. for coffee, tea and pastries and a chat with Rabbi Offenberg.

### **Hanukkah**

This year our Festival of Lights starts on December 18th and runs until December 25th. We will celebrate together in the community on Sunday, December 18th, at 5:00 p.m. We will ignite the first candle and then our celebration will be enriched with a Sand Show by the artist Natalia Moro "Hanukkah & Chagall and Bella." Natalia Moro, who was born in Odessa and now lives in Düsseldorf, uses Hanukkah motifs in her program and combines the Sand Show Illumination with images by Marc Chagall. We thank the Central Council of Jews for supporting this performance.

### **Lecture**

Regina Jonas, who in 1935, was the first woman in the world to receive a rabbinical certificate. She lived and worked as a rabbi in Berlin and visited Jewish communities throughout Germany. In a time of severe persecution and disenfranchisement, she stood by the oppressed, trying to convey support and confidence. In November 1942 she was deported to Theresienstadt together with her mother. She followed her rabbinic calling in the concentration camp, gave lectures on biblical, Talmudic and ethical topics and worked as clergy in the team of the famed Viennese psychiatrist Viktor E. Frankl.

Rabbi Offenberg and Martin Heimbucher, Reformed Church President emeritus, followed the traces of her work in Berlin and Theresienstadt and shed light on the last years of her life. Numerous newly discovered testimonies combine to form an impressive overall picture. On Thursday, December 1, 7:00 p.m., they will present the work of Rabbi Regina Jonas in Berlin and Theresienstadt from 1938 to 1944. The event takes place in our synagogue and is in cooperation with the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation Hamelin. Please join us for the history of this amazing Jewish leader.

### **Interreligious women's meeting**

On December 1st at 4 p.m. the interreligious women's meeting will meet in the Evangelical Reformed Church, our next door neighbors. The women in our community are invited. Please bring something to share for the buffet. Coffee and tea will be provided.

### **New members**

We warmly welcome new members to our congregation: Ms. Polina T., Mr. Gregorij S. and Mr. Jurij A. We say to them: "Welcome!" and we are pleased that our congregation continues to grow.

### **New Year's Concert**

Please note! On Sunday, January 8, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. a New Year's Concert will be held in our synagogue. Soprano Kristine Gordadze and pianist Sergej Kolmanovskj will perform "Songs of Different Nations." Admission is free.

### **Get well soon**

The One who blessed our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and our mothers Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel and Leah, may also send blessings and healing to all who are sick or struggling. May they be blessed with patience and strength of heart and may they be granted full recovery in body and spirit.

### **Tree of Life**

Commissioning a new leaf can be used to commemorate special occasions such as births, bar or bat mitzvahs, weddings, appreciation, anniversaries or honors, and also make a contribution to community life.

Newly commissioned by the Dvortsis family: "For the birth of our great-grandchildren, Michael and Kiryl"



## Donations — Zedakah

We sincerely thank the members and friends who support our community life and the upkeep of the synagogue with generous donations. This month we would like to particularly highlight: Ms. Ingedore Rudlin, Hanna Carola Ruedi, the Dvortsis family, Ms. Hölscher (IGS, 11th grade), Ms. Wellmann (IGS, 11th grade) and Ms. Hodemann (nursing school, Sanaklinikum) and the Dohme family. May all donors be blessed for their generosity.

## Yahrzeit in December / Kislev–Tevet

Roza Chiriza	December 1, 2000 / 4 Kislev 5761
Ira Leimunskis	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 5, 2015 / 3. Tevet 5776
Grigory 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
Genrikh Yeger	December 23, 2018 / 15 Tevet 5779
Nechama Yeger	December 25, 2018 / 17 Tevet 5779
Genrich Leimunski	December 29, 2006 / 8 Tevet 5767



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

Shalom,  
Your synagogue board

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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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*We wish all members a Happy Hanukkah,  
and our Christian friends a Merry Christmas!  
To all a Happy New Year 2023!*

## Program for December 2022 • Kislev–Tevet 5783

Office hours: Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

From December 19, 2022 to January 2, 2023 the synagogue will be closed.

Mrs. Svetlana Banchukova is on vacation from December 16 to December 20.

Thursday, December 1	7:00 p.m.	Lecture: "Rabbi Regina Jonas, her life and work Berlin and Theresienstadt 1938–1944." Lecture by Dr. Martin Heimbucher and Dr. Rabbi Ulrike Offenberg
Friday, December 2	5:00 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat, followed by Kiddush
Saturday, December 3	10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Shacharit Shabbat, followed by Kiddush Children's Kehillah
Wednesday, December 7	6:00 p.m.	Schiur about the weekly Parasha "Wajischlach," via Zoom
Wednesday, December 14	6:00 p.m.	Shiur on the weekly Parasha "Wayeshev," via Zoom
Friday, December 16	5:00 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat, followed by Kiddush
Saturday, December 17	10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m.	Shacharit Shabbat, followed by Kiddush Children's Kehillah
Sunday, December 18	5:00 p.m.	<b>Feast of Hanukkah.</b> Lighting the First Light with Rabbi Offenberg, followed by Sand Show Illumination with Natalia Moro "Hanukka" & Chagall and Bella," Sufganyot, latkes and other Hanukkah treats, Dreidel games. With the kind support of the Central Council of Jews.
Wednesday, December 28	6:00 p.m.	Schiur about the weekly Parasha "Waijgasch," via Zoom

### Outside the community

Thursday, December 1	4:00 p.m.	Interreligious women's club In the ev.-Ref. Church Church, Hugenottenstrasse. Please bring something to share for the buffet.
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### ***Please note!***

Sunday, January 8, 2023	3:00 p.m.	New Year's Concert "Songs of different cultures" with Kristine Gordadze, soprano and Sergej Kolmanovskj, piano Free for all.
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