

The History of the Synagogue Building

The **New Synagogue**, designed in the Moorish style, was inaugurated in 1866. It was the largest house of worship in Germany, and its 3,200-seat capacity was urgently needed by the expanding Jewish community. Services were conducted according to the New Rites and Practices, including the use of an organ and choir, a reflection of the changing practices of Jews in Germany.

Until services were discontinued in 1940, famous Rabbis and Cantors served here, including Louis Lewandowski, Abraham Geiger, Alfred Jospe, Ignaz Maybaum, Moshe Nussbaum and Melwin Warschauer. Notably, Regina Jonas, the first female Rabbi worldwide, also lectured here.

During the Second World War, the building was spared significant damage on Kristallnacht in November 1938, but it was later desecrated by the Nazis and nearly destroyed by Allied bombing. With much of the once imposing structure in ruins, the GDR demolished the remnant of the main sanctuary in 1958, leaving only the façade and main entry. Renovations got under way in 1988, shortly before the fall of the Berlin Wall. To memorialize the significant loss, the large sanctuary was not reconstructed, remaining as an open space visible from the former Women's Gallery on the 3rd floor. The building, with its signature gilt ribbed dome and ornate façade, is once again a landmark, visible throughout Berlin.

The building was reopened in 1995 as a museum and archive. We highly recommend visiting the museum and learning more about this site and local Jewish history. Additional information can be found on the museum's website (www.cjudaicum.de). Today, the building also houses classrooms and offices of the Berlin Jewish Community – and our sanctuary.

The Leadership Team

Rabbi Gesa S. Ederberg
gesa.ederberg@jg-berlin.org

To make an appointment or if you need other assistance, please call or send an email to the rabbi's assistant Dalit Mann
+49 (0)30/880 28 253
dalit.mann@jg-berlin.org

Cantor Avital Gerstetter
cantor@avitall.de
www.avitall.de

We are happy to welcome visiting cantors who serve other Berlin synagogues, including Simon Zkorenblut, Laszlo Pasztor, Itzhak Sheffer and Jochen Fahlenkamp.

The Gabbaim (synagogue officers):
Miriam Rosengarten
Aharon Risto Taehtinen
Prof. Dr. Gerhard Baader

Keeping in Touch

To receive our bi-monthly English-language newsletter, please send your contact information to contact@or-synagoge.de.

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שבת שלום!

**Shabbat Shalom
and Welcome!**

**Synagogue
Oranienburger Strasse**
Jewish Community
of Berlin

Welcome!

We are glad that you are joining us today. Whether this is your first visit, or you have visited us in the past, we would like to welcome you!

About Us

We are an egalitarian community, committed to observance of our shared Jewish tradition in ways relevant to today. Men and women sit together in services and participate actively wherever possible. With respect to communal learning and observance, we recognize that each person is on his or her individual path of spiritual growth and education. Wherever you are in your journey towards deepening your Jewish practice, you will find support and encouragement in our community.

As a learning community, engagement is not restricted to services. By tapping into the interests and enthusiasm of our members and guests, we enjoy inspiring shiurim (lessons) on Jewish topics. Informed presentations and lively discussions provide wonderful opportunities to delve into new material or dig deeper into a familiar topic. While the subject matter of these shiurim varies widely, the style remains fairly casual. We would love to hear about the issues about which you are enthusiastic and knowledgeable.

Our family focus entails a relaxed but mindful attitude about accommodating the needs of both children and adults. As the number and age range of the children increases, we plan to expand and adjust our programming accordingly. Currently, we offer two children's services during our Saturday morning service as well as a full schedule of holiday services and other special programs.

Background

Our synagogue is part of the Jewish Community of Berlin (Jüdische Gemeinde – www.jg-berlin.org), the umbrella organization for eight synagogues in Berlin, along with the Jewish day schools and other institutions.

Our synagogue began in 1994 with a small group of people interested in an alternative and egalitarian approach to a Jewish religious life. It has grown significantly since then. Following a number of years as an experimental lay-led group, Rabbi Gesa S. Ederberg became our rabbi in February 2007. Ordained at the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary in Jerusalem, Rabbi Ederberg is the founding director of Masorti Germany (www.masorti.de), and a member of the International Rabbinical Assembly of Conservative/Masorti Rabbis.

Attending Services

Our sanctuary is on the 3rd floor near the main staircase. You will find prayer books in Hebrew and English (as well as German and Russian), Chumashim, Tallitot and Kippot next to the entrance.

Men are required to wear a head covering in the synagogue and women are welcome to do so. Jewish men and women may wear a Tallit during the morning service and are required to do so when called to the Torah.

A dairy Kiddush is served following the Shabbat morning service, and some Friday evening services as well. Please join us. We look forward to meeting you and hearing your story!

Service Times

Friday Evening – Times change with Daylight Savings Time.
Winter 6:00 pm, summer 7:00 pm.

Saturday Morning – 10:00 am, followed by Kiddush.

Please check our website (www.or-synagoge.de) for service times on holidays and special occasions.

Getting More Involved

We look forward to getting to know you and invite you to speak with us about what you are looking for in a Jewish community and how you would like to participate in our community.

Supporting Our Work

We hope that you enjoy your visit and feel moved to support our efforts. Thank you!

Contributions within Germany

Our bank account is:
Juedische Gemeinde zu Berlin
Berliner Sparkasse
Account No.: 6000031180
BLZ: 10050000
IBAN: DE 271 0050006000031180

Contributions from the United States

Tax-deductible contributions from the United States are appreciated. However, high banking fees are charged for handling checks and international bank transfers. We therefore suggest that you send donations to our partner, the World Council of Synagogues/Masorti Olami. We will receive your donation safely – and you will receive a tax-deductible donation receipt!

Checks – make checks payable to:
World Council of Synagogues
3080 Broadway
New York, NY 10027

Online options

Charged to your credit card through the website:
www.masorteworld.org (→ get involved)

Note: Please make sure to earmark your donation and to let us know about it by email so that we can watch for it.

Other Countries: Please contact us if you would like to donate from another country.