

## Welcome to the Egalitarian Minyan / Frankfurt a. M.



### **B'ruchim habaim!**

The Egalitarian Minyan is the liberal branch of the Jewish Community of Frankfurt. 'Minyan' means ten counted Jews. According to the Jewish tradition, this is the minimum of people constituting a community. 'Egalitarian' means that men and women are counted equally.

The Egalitarian Minyan of Frankfurt sees itself as part of the 'Einheitsgemeinde' – the 'unified community,' in which orthodox, liberal and secular Jews are organized under one umbrella. It forms part of the 'Frankfurter Modell,' a unique approach supported by the Jewish Community of Frankfurt. This trailblazing model opts for a pluralistic Jewish future in Germany, without harsh rifts between orthodox and liberal Jews. This permits the Minyan to be in essence liberal while remaining unaffiliated with any particular denominational movement.

In 2007, the board of the Jewish Community of Frankfurt decided to give the Egalitarian Minyan the former weekday synagogue in the building of the Westendsynagogue. Here, the Minyan celebrates Shabbat, as well as Jewish holidays and Jewish lifecycle events. In addition to creative, warm and inclusive services, the Minyan also offers a diverse program of shiurim that provide a rich variety of learning opportunities. On Friday evenings, the shiur is usually about the weekly Torah portion (parashat hashavua); on Saturdays after Kiddush, shiurim discuss religious-cultural, philosophical or societal topics of Jewish relevance. Thus the Egalitarian Minyan contributes to the vibrant Jewish life in Frankfurt as well as to the overall intellectual tradition of the city.

Shabbat services take place on alternate Friday evenings and Saturday mornings. Services and shiurim are led by Rabbi Dr. Elisa Klapheck, Cantor Daniel Kempin and the members of the Minyan. Everyone is personally included in congregational life.

The program on Friday evening is:

19.00 – Shiur on the weekly Torah portion (parashat hashavua)

20.00 – Kabbalat Shabbat, evening service (ma'ariv)

21.00 – Kiddush, hamotzi, dinner (vegetarian / fish potluck)

The program on Saturday morning is:

11.00 – Morning service (shacharit). Child care is provided during the service.

13.00 – Kiddush, hamotzi, lunch (vegetarian / fish potluck)

13.30 – Shiur about a Talmudic theme, liberal halachah or a religious-cultural, philosophical or societal topic of Jewish relevance.

More details about the services and activities can be found on this website under 'Termine' ('Gebetszeiten' and 'Schiurim & Aktivitäten'). If you need more information in English, please contact

Rabbi Dr. Elisa Klapheck - [rabbi.klapheck@minjan-ffm.de](mailto:rabbi.klapheck@minjan-ffm.de)

or

Cantor Daniel Kempin – [chasan.kempin@minjan-ffm.de](mailto:chasan.kempin@minjan-ffm.de).

## History of the Egalitarian Minyan Frankfurt/Main

The former **Kehillah Chadascha e. V.**, founded in 1994, has met in a variety of locations in Frankfurt: Beginning in the **Philanthropin**, it moved to the **Frankfurter Frauenschule**, and then to the **Fritz Bauer Institut**, where it remained for more than two years.

In 1998 the Jewish Community invites the Egalitarian Minyan to hold its services and programs in the Jewish Community Center (Jüdisches Gemeindezentrum), Savignystr. 66.

In 2000 the members of **Kehillah Chadaschah e. V.** change the name of the group to **Egalitarian Minyan in the Jewish Community of Frankfurt am Main**.

The Egalitarian Minyan is recognized and supported by the **Jewish Community of Frankfurt am Main**, and as an egalitarian congregation within the greater community, it contributes to the diversity of Jewish religious practice.

Beginning in 1994 the **Egalitarian Minyan** holds **biweekly Friday evening Kabbalat Shabbat services, High Holidays (Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur) services** and a **Seder on the second evening of Pesach**. Also on the calendar of yearly events is the **Shavuot (Jewish Festival of Weeks) 'Night of Learning.'** Singer-Songwriter **Daniel Kempin** becomes worship leader for the **Friday evening services**.

For a number of years, the **Egalitarian Minyan** engaged **guest rabbis and cantors** to perform the High Holiday services, and augmented its program of events with speakers from Germany and abroad.

2005 **Rabbi Elisa Klapheck** introduces regular **Shabbat morning services** and develops them in cooperation with **Cantor Daniel Kempin**. She holds shiurim and nights of learning, offers instruction in **Torah chanting (leyning)**, and is also available for **private consultation**.

As is the practice in other congregations, a **volunteer board of directors (Gabbaim and Gabbaoth)** organizes and schedules services, holidays and special programs.

The **Egalitarian Minyan** is the only **liberal Jewish** congregation in the entire **Rhine-Main** region.

## **History**

### **Fall 1993**

Rabbi Dr. Harry Brandt gives the women of the synagogue in Hanover permission to carry the Torah scrolls on Simchat Torah.

Drawdown of American troops following German reunification: Military installations in Frankfurt are slated for closure. This includes the chapel and its Jewish congregation, where many of the founding members of the Egalitarian Minyan had found a spiritual home.

### **January 1994**

Micha Brumlik and Andy Steiman issue an invitation to those who are interested in holding Reform services in Frankfurt. About 30 people attend the first meeting in the Philantropin. They introduce themselves and their religious backgrounds and discuss how they wish to proceed.

Beginning of regular biweekly shirum and services: initially in private homes, then in leased rooms in the Frankfurt Women's School and in the Fritz Bauer Institute. During this time similar groups are forming in Cologne, Munich, Berlin and Hanover.

### **March 1994**

Founding of the Kehillah Chadascha e. V. (Kehilla Chadasha Association), the first formal organization.

### **Since 1995**

Regular yearly nationwide meetings of liberal Jewish groups in the Evangelischer Akademie in Arnoldshain. After much discussion, the Frankfurt group decides not to join the other groups in the Union of Progressive Jews in Germany, opting instead to develop its own style of prayer based on Frankfurt's liberal tradition, while remaining part of the Jewish Community of Frankfurt.

### **1996**

Ignatz Bubis, z"l invites the group to meet in the Jewish Community Center in Frankfurt.

### **October 1998**

The group begins to meet in the Jewish Community Center.

### **2000**

Daniel Kempin becomes officially recognized worship leader for the Friday evening services.

### **October 2000 – August 2001**

Restructuring of the group into the Egalitarian Minyan in the Jewish Community Frankfurt and founding of the association Freunde des Egalitären Minjan e. V. (Friends of the Egalitarian Minyan e. V.).

**April 2004**

The Egalitarian Minyan Frankfurt celebrates its tenth anniversary with a special service and a podium discussion. Guests and participants: Cantor Avitall Gerstetter and Rabbi Elisa Klapheck, Berlin; Dr. Jan Mühlstein, Munich; Prof. Micha Brumlik, Dr. Rachel Heuberger and Dr. Susanna Keval, Frankfurt am Main.

**2005**

Rabbi Elisa Klapheck initiates a monthly program of services and shiurim.

**June 2006**

The Egalitarian Minyan Frankfurt celebrates its twelfth anniversary with a 'cultural Bat Mitzvah.' Together with Rabbi Elisa Klapheck, nine women of the Minyan prepare and lead the shacharit service on Saturday, June 10. Approximately 300 guests are present. Shortly thereafter, the board of the Jewish Community of Frankfurt decides to give the former weekday synagogue in the Westendsynagogue complex to the Egalitarian Minyan.

**April 2007**

For the first time, the Egalitarian Minyan Frankfurt holds two Pesach Seders in its new home. Renovation is still in progress, but the Shiur Room is nearly finished and the Minyan begins the process of moving from the Senior Citizens' Club in the Community Center.

**June 2007**

The Egalitarian Minyan Frankfurt celebrates its thirteenth anniversary with a 'cultural Bar Mitzvah.' Together with Rabbi Elisa Klapheck, eight men of the Minyan prepare and lead the shacharit service on Saturday, June 16.

**October 5 – 7, 2007**

The Egalitarian Minyan Frankfurt officially opens its new home with a weekend of services and events.

**September 2009**

Rabbi Elisa Klapheck is inaugurated as the official rabbi of the Egalitarian Minyan. The event draws widespread attention. One of the speakers is the president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, Dr. Dieter Graumann, who announces his support for a pluralistic future for Jewish life in Germany.

**January 2015**

Daniel Kempin receives *s'micha* (ordination) as cantor.

**March 2015**

The Egalitarian Minyan celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The celebration reflects the good standing of the Minyan in the Jewish Community of Frankfurt and its significance within the greater Jewish world of Germany. Among the honorary speakers are Rabbi Henry G. Brandt, Chairman of the General Rabbinic Assembly, the Lord Mayor of the City of Frankfurt, Peter Feldmann, who himself is a member of the Jewish Community, Barbara Traub, Executive Member of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, and Marc Grünbaum, Board Member of Frankfurt's Jewish Community.

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**Past worship leaders, guest rabbis and cantors:**

Cantor Jalda Rebling, Berlin (2005, 2006)  
Rabbi Dr. Elisa Klapheck, formally Berlin - Amsterdam (from 2004)  
Prof. Dr. Allmuth Bruckstein, Berlin – Jerusalem (2000, 2004)  
Cantor Avitall Gerstetter, Berlin (2001, 2004)  
Prof. Dr. Jossi Schwarz, Tel Aviv (2004)  
Cantor François Lilienfeld, Narbonne (2003)  
Rabbi (COL, US Army [ret]) Kenneth Leinwand (2001)  
Prof. Dr. Channa Safrai (2001)  
Rabbi Prof. Eveline Goodman-Thau (2001)  
Rabbi Andy Steiman, Frankfurt am Main (2001/2002)  
Rabbi Izchak Marmorstein, Vancouver (2000)  
Rabbi Dr. Daniel Katz, Essen (1997 / 1998 / 1999)  
Rabbi Dr. Mosche Zemer, Tel Aviv (1995 / 1996)  
Rabbi Dr. Johann Barta, Stuttgart (1994)