



Bet Israel Bulletin  
לארשי תיב ק"ק לש זועבר

בית הכנסת המסורתי בנתניה

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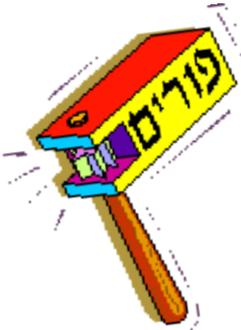
March 2012

Purim 5772

פורים: אדר תשע"ב

פורים - קריאת המגילה

ביום ד' 7 במרץ בשעה 17:30



Purim - Megilla Reading

Wednesday 7 March at 5:30pm



Followed by

ומיד לאחר מכן

Party  מסיבה

Purim songs, led by Batya Fonda, hamentaschen and drinks

*Please come in costume*

*נא לבוא בתחפושת*

**Thursday Morning 8 March at 8am: Purim – Shacharit and Megilla**  
**יום רביעי 8 במרץ: פורים – שחרית עם קריאת המגילה בשעה 08:00**

Bet Israel Masorti Congregation of Netanya  
19 Yehuda Hanassi St.

P.O.Box 437, 42103 Netanya, Israel

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Tel: 09-862-4345 Fax: 09-882-5210

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## ***From the President's Desk*** Purim 2012

As we munch on Humentashen or Oznei Haman this Purim... let us reflect on the myriad of achievements of which this Kehilla can be proud.

We have maintained the distinction of being possibly the only Masorti congregation in Israel to consistently have morning minyanim. Kol Hakovod to the faithful Minyanairs, led by Morrie Levin who donates and supplies the after services coffee klatch. Yashar Koah to Sid Kronenburg, Alan Tobias, Lenore Levin, Sara Bordowitz, Alan Stein, Batya Fonda and Rabbi Ervin Birnbaum... and others...who help in leading the services. Many thanks also to Mo Burg for her recruiting endeavors.

Our Oneg Shabbat dinners are consistently sold out and thoroughly enjoyed by all participants. Kudos to BICA officers who plan all the arrangements so brilliantly...Helen, Edith, Rita, Gloria, Joyce and others who help in every way.

Heartfelt thanks to Eileen Cohen and her crew of dedicated Russian-speaking volunteers without whom our kiddushim would not be the delightful culmination to our Shabbat services that they are. Special mention to Claudia Khenkin on her achievement of organizing the Russian speakers into the effective, important and productive members that they have become.

Our Shabbat and holiday services, led by Mike Garmise, with Torah readings by Mordecai Kowalsky, ... as well as volunteer readers such as Sydney Itzkowitz, Alan Stein, Batya Fonda, Rachel Holman and others have been outstanding.

Special mention goes to Harvey Bordowitz who steps in so admirably when we have been in need. Benny Selezky is the magician who, besides chanting preliminary services, controls the flow of people to and from the bima and apportions the aliyot so sweetly and efficiently.

All of the above is indirectly and directly produced and directed by our own Rabbi Birnbaum, who is always available to us with his help, innovative ideas and advice.

To my co-chairwoman, Rachel Holman, Yasher Koach on becoming one of our outstanding leaders of all of our services. Rachel's Friday night chanting of Kabbalat Shabbat is one of the highlights of the week.

The coordination of all activities taking place in the synagogue could not have been as effective as they are without the dedicated efforts of our secretary Sara Bordowitz, my right hand woman.

A long, long time ago in Shushan a miracle that we call Purim took place. As we celebrate Purim today, let us work together and pray for the miracle of an ever growing and flourishing Bet Israel in our beloved land of Israel.

לֹא יִשָּׂא גּוֹי אֶל גּוֹי חֶרֶב וְלֹא יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה. (ישעיהו ב' ד')

**Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.  
(Isaiah 2:4)**

Chag Sameach.

Morrie



## Singing with a Smile

By Batya Fonda - [www.jewishfolksongs.com](http://www.jewishfolksongs.com)

Laughter and singing have always been important in Jewish life. Laughter expresses joy and alleviates tears and hardship: "Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing" (Psalms 126:2). It also has many facets, from happiness and mirth to satire and mockery: "He that sitteth in heaven laugheth; the Lord hath them in derision." (Psalms 2:4)

When it was announced that a baby would be born to our very elderly patriarchs, both Sara and Abraham laughed, and their son was consequently called Yitschak [he will laugh]. The significance of Sara's miraculous pregnancy and her laughter has been discussed in many Talmudic midrashim. A more modern explanation can be heard in the "medresh" of Yitschak's namesake, the Yiddish folk poet Itsik Manger, many of whose poems have been set to music. According to Manger, when Sara pleaded that her husband do something about having a child before it was too late, Abraham calmly quoted the Yiddish proverb, "*Az der eybeshter vil, shist afile a bezem oykh*" [When God wills it, even a broom can shoot]. (And he was proved right!)

Many of Manger's wise and witty interpretations of Biblical characters, spiced with anachronisms and double-entendres, are preserved in song. His "Megile" tells the bitter-sweet Purim story through the eyes of Fastrigosso, the tailor apprentice, who is doomed by his love for the future queen Esther. Together with the tailors, we all make fun of the gauche King Ahashueros and dream of social upheaval. Laughter is the weapon of the weak against the mighty, the minority against the majority. Purim, of course, is the epitome of reversal – "*hafuch al hafuch*"; it is a festival which encourages our imagination to run wild – "*chayav inish liv'sumei*" – as a means of coping with frustration.

What else do Jewish songs tell us about Jewish humour? Who else do the Jews laugh at (or with)? Well, we actually laugh at ourselves: at members of our family (especially mothers) and, of course, at in-laws (especially mothers-in-law). We also laugh at – or with – the "*rebbes*", without realizing that most of the "*rebbe*" songs began life as anti-Hasidic satires. Poverty is no reason not to laugh and hard work is no guarantee of riches - we know this from the many tailors' songs. We complain about the woes of destitution by singing gaily about how to make something out of nothing and by dreaming about dishes for the rich in contrast with scraps eaten by the poor.

Last but not least are the many thinly-veiled bawdy songs. Not a crude word is actually uttered, but it doesn't take much of a feat of imagination to understand what is implied. Examples of these in the Sephardic repertoire are wedding songs and songs of dentists and tinkers who "take care" of their female clients. Rebbes and their wives also suffer the effect of double-entendres. And moralizing about adulterers provides a satisfying sense of righteousness across all ethnic communities – witness the *romansa* "*La adultera*" in which the wife's lover is caught out sneezing! The moral, says the cuckolded husband, is to watch over your wife carefully, especially if she is good-looking!

When mustn't we laugh? On *Tisha b'Av* (the 9th of Av), the saddest day in the Jewish year, marking many tragic events in Jewish history. One of the *endechas* [laments] that are sung traditionally by Sephardic Jews is a "lament" for a dead cat, "*Señor Don Gato*" – a funny children's song. It has to be sung solemnly because "if you laugh on Tisha B'av you will weep on Rosh Hashanah [New Year]".

As we all know, it is God who has the last laugh: "Mentsh trakht, un got lakht" – "Man proposes, and God disposes". The best we mortals can do is to come along to the musical lecture and "sing these songs with a smile".

Looking forward to seeing you at Bet Israel on Tuesday March 13th, at 7:30 pm.

This year Purim celebrations begin Wednesday evening March 7 with the reading of the Megilla at 5:30pm, so that once again the story will be told of how Esther and Mordecai were able to convince King Ahasueros that Haman was evil, and in the end Haman and all his sons were hung.

As in the past several years, the Jews have had to cope with a current Haman , Ahmadinejad, the evil president of Iran. This tyrant has threatened to wipe out our land and people of Israel from the face of the earth. May prayers, faith, hope and proper diplomatic, military, political actions or decisions be the Mordecai and Esther to save us in the present and in the future.

Despite the hard times we're facing, Purim is supposed to be a happy time and we are told to drink until we can't distinguish between Mordechai and Haman! Well, I don't know about drinking, but I know that we at BICA have a busy March this year and after reading the Megilla on Wednesday evening at 5:30 we will be eating hamentashen and singing songs with Batya Fonda. Then on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> of March at 7:30pm, again together with Batya, we will be "Singing with a Smile" in Yiddish, Hebrew, Ladino, and English. So come and join us!

Before the end of March, on **Tuesday and Wednesday March 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>** , we have our ever-popular **BICA Annual Bazaar**. Once again our guests will have a chance to pick up "chachkes", treasures, bargains, and have a nash at the same time. So bring in your bric-a-brac to the office --- we're busy collecting! And I look forward to seeing you at the bazaar!

**Helen Brawer**



## **Havurah-- for Hebrew-speaking families with young children**

The Havurah is gaining momentum! At the last meeting, on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February, there were 8 families with 12 children among them, ranging in age from 4 to 8 years old. The theme of the afternoon was Purim, and all the children made costume accessories and painted faces before gathering with Elizabeth and Batya for songs, a story and a game. As always the meeting ended with lighting the Shabbat candles, Kiddush and hamotzei over the challot.



**We meet once a month and the next meeting to be on Friday 30 March, at 4pm.**

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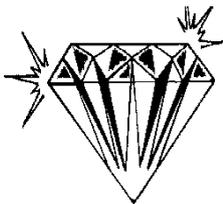
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