

THE UNITED JEWISH CONGREGATION OF HONG KONG

Celebrating 20 Years of Progressive Judaism in Hong Kong

SHABBAT SHALOM

5 – 6 March, 2010

19 Adar 5770

Parashat Ki Tisa
(Exodus 30:11-34:35)

Rabbi Stanton M. Zamek
Cantorial Soloist Shani Ben Or

From the Rabbi's desk

I am pleased to inform you that we had record attendance at the Purim schpiel and at Cirque d' Purim, the UJC Purim carnival, this past weekend. More than 10,000 people came through our doors to join in the Purim revelry. Since then, the office has been swamped with phone calls and emails wanting to know more about these blockbuster events. I am offering the following FAQs to relieve the burden on the office.

Q: I was at the Purim schpiel last Saturday night. Seldom have I seen such a concentration of awesomeness. Just who was in the schpiel?

A: Here is the cast list.

Amy Cohas: The King
David Zeiden: Esther
Shani Ben Or: Haman
Barbara Thomas: Mordechai
Joshua Goldman Brown: Patsy, the Eunuch
Joshua Cohen: Zeresh and various roles
Oliver Hurrter: Vashti, Esther's Minstrel, and various roles
Susan Reingold: Esther's Minstrel and various roles
Ayelet Zamek: Esther's Minstrel and various roles
Sharon Ser: Prof. Hebreus W. Jewington, narrator
Stanton M. Zamek: Brother Maynard, narrator
With Special Appearances by: Jordan Potash and Adam Nelson
Musical Director/Accompanist: Swing (Sze Wing Lau)

Mazal tov to the entire cast for an indescribable performance. Many thanks for being such good sports and devoting so much of your time to rehearsals.

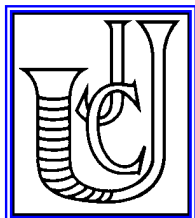
Q: Can I be in the Purim schpiel next year?

A: Absolutely. Make sure to sign up when the call for cast members goes out next year. Being part of the UJC Purim schpiel is always a smart move. At least half of our former schpielers have gone on to have moderately productive lives.

Q: Who wrote the schpiel?

A: The author's name is S. Zamek, although this may be a pseudonym.

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From the Rabbi's desk (con't)

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Q: I attended Cirque d' Purim on Sunday. The Sanctuary looked terrific. Who painted those amazing posters?

A: Our Shorashim madrichim under the direction of Shani Ben Or. They worked for weeks after Shorashim to create the festive circus atmosphere.

Q: The activities at Cirque d' Purim were great. Can you tell me what was involved in putting on such an extravaganza?

A: Rabbi Martha and Shani put in an enormous amount of time planning and setting up the carnival. Our Shorashim teachers and madrichim manned the booths, assisted by Shani's B'nai Mitzvah class. Being ready for the carnival on Sunday meant doing set-up both before and after the Purim schpiel. Many thanks to Joshua and Lauren Goldman-Brown, Jordan Potash, Adam Nelson, Susan Reingold, Eli Cohen, and Rachel Fleishman for coming to the aid of the professional staff. Thanks also to Patrolman Bob Cooper who coordinated the delivery of the popcorn and cotton candy machines.

As always, Charlene Hsia and Nancy Lui used their near magical skills to make our jobs much easier. Many thanks too to our amazing helper Ann Miranda who worked as hard as anyone on Purim weekend.

Q: This is the first time I have ever been to a Purim schpiel or Purim carnival. Is Purim always like this?

A: Well, no. This Purim was something special and not just because of the amount of work that went into it. People came with the right spirit. I have never seen a better audience for a Purim schpiel. Y'all were meshugeh. And what a large, appreciative crowd we had for Cirque d' Purim! The only way the day could have gone better was if our security patrol had allowed Jonathan Kriegel to do his fire juggling routine. Thanks to the whole UJC family for making this Purim truly sameach.

All Blessings
Rabbi Z
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4th March, 2010