



## It's an all Burt Bacharach Purim Spiel

By Mike Pardo

On Saturday, March 23, Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom is having its eighth Purim Spiel.

Writer/director Mike Pardo has decided to pay homage to the recently departed '60s songsmith Burt Bacharach by crafting a musical comedy extravaganza celebrating his iconic songs. It will be a wild night of extreme silliness that is sure to delight every member of your family.

We will start our Purim holiday in the temple sanctuary at 6 p.m. with a reading of the megillah. This portion of the evening should last about 45 minutes and is not recommended for small children.

Our Purim spiel performance will begin in the sanctuary at 7 and should last about an hour, followed by an oneg in our social hall featuring everyone's favorite Purim dessert — hamantashen!

Members of "Mike's Mishegoss Players" will be returning to entertain you, led by spiel veteran Vicki Graff as the beautiful Queen Esther.



*Don't miss the final bow of the Mike Pardo Purim Spiel tradition at RCOS on March 23.*

Galen Newman steps into the evil shoes of the villain, Haman. Jessica Leisawitz will be playing Cousin Mordechai.

Mike is delighted to welcome back Ron Berman who hasn't been in an RCOS Purim spiel since our very first one way back in 2016. Ron will be playing the drunken King Ahasuerus with spiel newcomer Karen Kabakoff as his kvetchy wife, Queen Vashti. As the two Evil Plotters, we have Ellen Azrael and Marj Shearer. Rounding out the

cast will be Judith Kraines, Neil Hoffman, Mike and some special guest actors.

Noisemakers will be provided to blot out the dreaded name of the evil "H-Man." Guests are also encouraged to come to the event in costume.

One final note ... this will be Mike's last RCOS Purim spiel. He will be moving out of the Reading area this summer to a senior community in Maryland to be closer to his daughter, Sarah, and her family. It would make Mike

very happy to have a really large turnout for his last spiel.

So, reserve March 23 for an unforgettable evening of fun and frivolity. As previously stated, Purim falls on a Saturday this year. It's not a school or work night, so bring all the kiddies and have a ball.

The play is suitable for the entire family, so we're hoping to see everyone there! And by "everyone," we mean EVERYONE! The spiel is open to one and all, whether you're an RCOS member or not.



### JOIN OUR SALUTE TO STEVEN LEVINE

**RCOS will be honoring Steven Levine with the Ruth & Irvin Balis Volunteer Appreciation Award on Saturday, April 13 at 6 p.m.**

**RSVP deadline is March 29.**

**See back page for more information. We hope to see you there!**

# Learning the 'Bible stories' that aren't in the Bible

By **Holly Michelson**  
*Religious School Director*

Congratulations to our 2nd/3rd grade students who led our services so beautifully in February. During the (typically) sermon portion of the service, the students did skits to illustrate two of the values, Gevurah (strength) and B'tzelem Elohim (the idea that we are all made in the image of God) that they learned this year.

A month or so ago, I was visiting with this same 2nd/3rd grade class. Their teacher, Rebecca, was teaching the students about the Jewish body of literature known as Midrash. I happen to really like Midrash and joined in the conversation. For reference, there are several stories with which you might be familiar that you likely think are from the Torah/Bible (I did), but they are not. One of them is the story about Abraham and the idols. Another story is about Moses and how he reached for the hot coals and not the shiny jewels that Pharaoh offered him as a child. I was quite confused the first time I actually sat down to read a translation of the Torah and found these well-known stories missing. I learned they are often taught to children as "Bible stories" and found them in many children's books marked as such.

So, Rebecca explained that



*The 2nd/3rd grade Religious School class leads Shabbat services.*

what is contained in Midrash are the stories that "fill in the blanks." Moses' story about the hot coals and how he brought one to his lips was created to explain why he stutters. The story of Abraham and the idols sheds light on Abraham as a child and shows him having

an understanding of One God from a young age.

After listening to this explanation, one of the students put it more succinctly. Her eyes got wide and she responded, "Oh, it is the back story." Yeah, that works.

Coming up we have our Community Shabbat at the

beginning of March and then after a few changes needed to be made, our Gan class and our 4th/5th grades classes will both be leading us in our Shabbat services in April.

Watch for information about the Purim Carnival, scheduled to take place on Sunday, March 24.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP WITH STREAMING

Did you ever wonder how RCOS provides live video of its events on YouTube? Artificial Intelligence? Smart Phone App? Magic? No, there are four volunteers who make this happen. Streaming requires very basic computer capabilities plus the willingness to give some of your time (~1.5 hours). We need a few more volunteers. Old or young doesn't matter, just a desire to help out. After about an hour of personalized training schedule at your convenience, you too can become a stream producer and take a turn at broadcasting our events.



***If interested, contact Steven Levine at [levkom2@verizon.net](mailto:levkom2@verizon.net) or 484-332-8726.***



## From the Rabbi's Study

# Scholar visit one of several big upcoming events

We have some exciting opportunities coming shortly that I want to make sure you know about.

The weekend beginning Friday, March 9, we will be hosting Shoshanna Nambi. Shoshana is a rabbinical student at the Hebrew Union College in New York. She is the first woman from her home community in Uganda to be trained as a rabbi. Once she completes her studies, she will be returning to Uganda to serve the Jewish community there.

On Friday, March 9 at our 7:45 p.m. service, Shoshana will be

joining me for services and will be sharing some of the history and practices of her home community.

Shabbat morning, she will meet with the Tot Shabbat children and families to highlight a children's book she wrote about the Ugandan Jewish community.

Finally, on Sunday she will be working with our Religious School students. Shoshana's current student placement is at Congregation Rodeph Sholom, where she works with our daughter Gabriella. This will be a memorable weekend, and I encourage you to put these dates on your calendar and join us.

A little later this month, we will celebrate the feast of Purim. On



Shoshana Nambi

Saturday night, March 23 at 7: p.m. will be our annual Purim Spiel created by our own Mike Pardo. If you have attended in the past you know how much fun these shows are and if not, don't miss your chance to see a Pardo Spiel. This will be Mike's last Purim with us as

he relocates to Baltimore to be closer to his daughter, Sarah, and her family. This year's spiel features the music of Burt Bacharach. Before the performance, join us at 6:15 for our Megillah reading. There will be a special surprise to anyone who shows up in costume. (I don't want to be the only one who looks crazy.)

Finally, a little further out, on Friday, April 19, at 6 p.m, we will be having a special Musical Shabbat featuring our cantor and choir, followed by a Shabbat dinner. I know this is a date you will want to put on your calendar.

We have lots of great things happening. I hope to see many of you at these and other events at RCOS.

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## About our bulletin

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**Deadline for April issue: March. 5**

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### March 1-9

Betty Herman  
Roy P. Hirshland  
Rachel Loeb  
Bessie Meyer  
Hedy Miller  
Irving Popkin  
Adeline Reidenberg  
Isaac L. Scherck  
Frances Silberstein

### March 10-16

Jeanette Miller Brenner  
Jean Gilbert  
Kathryn H. Soltan  
Rachel Loeb Stein

### March 17-23

Esther Aal  
Emanuel Hammel  
Jane Henry  
Lee Katz  
Solly L. Katz  
Sara Latman  
Henry Loeb  
Eugene H. Meyer  
Harold I. Miller  
Solomon John Pollock

### March 24-31

Hilde Gernsheimer  
Raymond Hammel  
Marcia Horowitz  
Evelyn Imber  
Jochen Jaschek  
Lucy Jaschek  
Hilda Klevansky  
Joseph Schlanger  
Joseph Schlanger  
Darcy Lou Spinrad  
Alan Weitzman  
Rose Goldrich  
Jettchen Katz

## **ANNIVERSARIES**

Sue & Alan Weisberg  
Laurie & Andrew Waxler  
Jenn & Randolph Grabiak

March 5  
March 14  
March 19

Monica Tulay & Frank Bedo  
Roberta & Paul Kozloff

March 20  
March 28

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Bruce Cohen March 2  
Mark Nemirow March 3  
Allen Zimmerman March 4  
Kaye G. Ullman March 5  
Anita Harrison March 6  
Esther Bratt March 8  
Wendy Babitt March 9  
Sandra Fishman March 10  
Elizabeth Merin March 10

Marshall Azrael March 11  
Barbara Bender March 13  
Jenna Grabiak March 16  
Seth Rosenzweig March 16  
Ronald Berman March 18  
Michael Schiffman March 18  
Mindy Small March 18  
Norma Beckerman March 21  
Scott Stein March 23

Judith Synnamon March 23  
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Sharon Scullin March 26  
Lisa Carlson March 28  
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# March 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>25</b> 9:30 AM Religious School	<b>26</b> 12 PM Torah Study 7 PM RCOS Board Meeting	<b>27</b> 3:30 PM Hebrew school	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1</b> 6 PM Community Shabbat Service	<b>2</b> 10 AM Bar Mitzvah of Gavin McManimen
<b>3</b> 9:30 AM Religious School	<b>4</b> 12 PM Torah Study	<b>5</b> 10 AM Lunch & Learn @ The Highlands 3:30 PM Hebrew school	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 7:45 PM Shabbat Service w/ Shoshana Nambi	<b>9</b> 10 AM Tot Shabbat w/ Shoshana Nambi 4 PM American Scripture
<b>10</b> 9:30 AM Religious School	<b>11</b> NO Torah Study 7 PM Executive Committee Meeting	<b>12</b> 3:30 PM Hebrew school	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 6 PM Shabbat Service	<b>16</b> 10:30 AM Bar Mitzvah of Silas Platt
<b>17</b> 9:30 AM Religious School	<b>18</b> 12 PM Torah Study 7 PM Finance Committee Meeting	<b>19</b> 3:30 PM Hebrew school	<b>20</b> 4 PM Judaism Lecture @ Wyomissing Library	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 7:45 PM Shabbat Service w/ Cantor Stuart Binder	<b>23</b> 6 PM Megillah Reading 7 PM Purim Spiel
<b>24</b> 9:30 AM Religious School 1 PM Purim Carnival	<b>25</b> 12 PM Torah Study 7 PM RCOS Board Meeting	<b>26</b> 3:30 PM Hebrew school	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 7:45 PM Shabbat Service	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> NO Religious School	<b>1</b> 12 PM Torah Study	<b>2</b> 10 AM Lunch & Learn @ The Highlands 3:30 PM Hebrew school	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 6 PM Shabbat Service	<b>6</b> 10 AM Haftarah study



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## Purim Spiel

Enjoy a rollicking  
"ALL BURT  
BACHARACH"  
musical comedy  
retelling of the  
Book of Esther—  
open to the  
entire Jewish  
community!

**Saturday, March 23,  
2024 at OHEB SHOLOM:**

**6:00 pm — Megillah reading**  
(Not intended for young children)  
**7:00 pm — Purim Spiel**

**Stay after the spiel for  
some tasty hamantashen  
& coffee & schmoozing!**



Come hear  
all of your  
favorite '60s,  
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AFTER GRADUATING FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF KAMPALA IN 2011, SHE WORKED THREE SUMMERS AS A CAMP COUNSELOR AND TEFILLAH (PRAYER) COORDINATOR AT URJ CAMP COLEMAN IN CLEVELAND, GA. LEARNING MORE ABOUT JUDAISM THERE PAVED THE WAY FOR HER DREAM OF BECOMING A RABBI. AFTER A YEAR OF STUDYING HEBREW AND JEWISH TEXTS AT THE PARDES INSTITUTE OF JEWISH STUDIES IN JERUSALEM, SHE WAS OFFERED ADMISSION TO THE HEBREW UNION COLLEGE-JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION IN NEW YORK CITY.



SHOSHANA WILL BE JOINING US FOR SERVICES ON FRIDAY, MARCH 8 AT 7:45 PM WHERE SHE WILL HELP LEAD THE SERVICE AND SHARE WITH US ABOUT HER HOME COMMUNITY. ON SATURDAY, MARCH 9 SHE WILL JOIN TOT SHABBAT TO SHARE A CHILDREN'S BOOK SHE HAS WRITTEN. ON SUNDAY, MARCH 10, SHOSHANA WILL WORK WITH OUR RELIGIOUS SCHOOL STUDENTS.

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