



आराधना

Aradhana

A Publication of the Hindu Society of Greater Cincinnati
Devdham of North America™

Kartik / Margashirsh
Vikram Samvat, 2068 / 2069
December, 2012



Happy Geeta Jayanti

Happy Holidays



<http://www.cincinnati temple.com>
Email: hindusociety@fuse.net
Phone: (513) 528-3714

Geeta Jayanti Celebration

Sunday, Dec. 23rd 2012

Hindu Temple of Greater Cincinnati



10:00 am

Shri Krishna Puja

10:30 am - 12:30 pm

Geeta Path (Whole Geeta Recital)

12:30 pm

Pravachan on Geeta

1:00 pm

Aarti & Prasad

Devotees may consider to sponsor Geeta path (Recital) in memory of their loved one. It is very auspicious to recite or listen the whole Geeta on the occasion of Geeta Jayanti.

Geeta 18:70-71 **Whoever earnestly studies this sacred dialogue of ours –I consider that person to have honored me by making an effort to understand my words. Even the one who simply listens to these words in good faith is liberated and attains the happier worlds of the righteous.**

Please call for more details Acharya Kailash Sharma 652-5382, Koti Sree krishna 290-3064, Kiran Dayal 474-4051 Sangita patel 791-0855, Temple 528-3714.

ANURADHA PAUDWAL SHOW Saturday, Dec. 15th

The famous Bollywood Playback and Devotional Singer, Anuradha Paudwal, is performing in Cincinnati on Sat, Dec 15th for the fund raising concert for the Marg Project. Please contact any of the EC members and secure your tickets TODAY.
(Detailed Flyer inside)

If you or someone you know, is not receiving ARADHANA, or if you need a change of address, please contact Mohan Chopra at 859-331-2416 or Nandkumar Khemchandani : asiindian@aol.com / 513-779-1043
Aradhana (past and present) is also available at temple website: www.cincinnati temple.com
Deadline for submission of articles for next Aradhana is December 10th

TEMPLE INFORMATION

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 2012

President

Deepak Dixit (513) 400-4258
dndixit@hotmail.com

Vice President

Ambikaipakan Balasubramaniam
(513) 204-0213
balasua@yahoo.com

Secretary:

Pradeep Gupta (513) 342-2005
pguptamail@gmail.com

Treasurer:

Prasad Megada (Chair) (513) 779-4582
prasadmegada@yahoo.com

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Pooja Committee:

Kiran Dayal(Chair): (513) 474-4051
kdayal2@yahoo.com

Communications/Editor:

Sandeep Gupta (513) 336-8782
sandeep.guptas@gmail.com

Membership & Fundraising:

Manish Srivastava (513) 503-2825
mansriva@hotmail.com

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Rakesh Patel (513) 892-1830
rockypatel1968@yahoo.com

Cultural Activities:

Asit B. Saha (Chair) (513) 489-5720
absaha09@gmail.com

Religious Education & Youth Activities:

Vinit Rastogi (513) 398-3216
rastogivk@gmail.com

Long Range Planning

Jeetu Patel (513) 836-0606
jpatel5@live.com

Youth Member:

Mahima Devarajan (513)-646-9311
arcubedgd@yahoo.com

Priests:

Acharya Kailash Sharma, Chief Priest
(513) 770-0705
Acharya Chakreshwar Sharma
(513) 528-0901
Pandit Srinath Bhattar
(513) 488-2986

Religious Counselor

Dr. Koti Sreekrishna (513)-290-3064
tatachar@aol.com

RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE

Sundays 12:15 - 12:45 PM

First Sunday : Upanishads

Second Saturday : 1008 Gayatri Jaap

Second Sunday : Children Program

Third Sunday : Sunder Kand Path

**Fourth Sunday : *Shri Ganesh*
*Atharvshirsha Path***

Fifth Sunday : Jagannath Puja

Members of the community are invited to speak on topics related to Hindu religion, philosophy, culture, reformation, Gurus, self-preservation, etc. If you would like to talk or like to suggest someone who may be interested, please contact Kiran Dayal.

Devotees are requested to sit-in Sunday Pooja as well as bring Prasad and Lunch. You may wish to use this occasion to celebrate important events such as wedding anniversaries, birthdays, ishta devata pooja, graduation and other memorable days. Events can be hosted by individuals, families, group of families or organizations. Please reserve your Sunday of choice ASAP by putting your name and phone-no in the calendar at the temple & calling pooja committee members Kiran Dayal or Meena Sondhi.

TEMPLE SCHEDULE

Monday - Friday : 9:00AM-12:00 Noon
5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Saturday, Sunday
& US Holidays: 9:00 AM - 8:00 PM

SPECIAL PROGRAM ON WEEKENDS

9:15 - 9:30 A.M.

Suprabhatam

9:30 - 11:00 A.M.

Daily Pooja of Temple Deities

11:00 - 11:30 A.M.

Sponsored Pooja

11:30 - 12:15 A.M.

Bhajan

12:15 -12:45 P.M.

Religious discourse

12:45-1:00 P.M.

Birthday and Anniversary pooja and announcements

1:00 P.M.— Aarti

Attorney: Aronoff, Rosen & Hunt
(513) 241-0400

Accountant: Open

2012 POOJA COMMITTEE & RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES MEMBERS

Kiran Dayal (Chair	474-4051
Amita Gupta (Co-Chair):	336-8782
Sangita Patel (Co-Chair)	791-0855
Swarna Choudhury (Co-Chair)	232-2343
Acharya Kailash Sharma	770-0705
Acharya Chakreshwar Sharma	528-0901
Pandit Srinath Bhattar	528-3714
Meena Sondhi	831-9788
Manju Gupta	232-3331
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Meena Karamchandani	683-9454
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Vasundhra Dasari	777-3353
Suchitra Mishra	573-9775
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Vilas Patel	947-0861
Triveni Dave	859-371-9645
Mangal Nemade	234-8373
Shanti Sumkherjii	755-6009

TREASURER Co- Chair

Amar Sharma 777-5771

Temple Manager's Committees

LaxmiS.Srivastava, Temple Mgr 474-0533
Raj Bodalia, ,Chair Special Activities583-0184

1.Office Manager Mohan Chopra	9. I/C Temple Web site Bharat Vala
2. I/C Swami Lectures Vinay Kumar Meena Mehta Koti Sreekrishna	Sudhakar Vinod
3. Temple Data Base Nandkumar Khemchandani Raj Bodalia Meena Mehta	10. I/C Temple Calendar Meena Mehta
4. Anniversary & Birthday Data Raj Agarwal Shakuntala Agarwall	Ashvin Mehta Achaya Kailash Sharma
5. E-mail .Data Pradeep Goyal Nandkumar Khemchandani	11. Volunter Services Rajan Odayar Kedarnath Nambori Dilip Patel
6. Gift Shop Meena Sondhi Madhu Sharma	Vijay Kumar Sharma
7.Security (ADT) Meena Mehta Vinay Kumar Ramesh Sondhi Kailash Sharma	12. Temple Photographers L. Ram Kumar Naba Mishra VG Ramaswamy
8. Financial Data Amar Sharma Raj Bodalia Laxmi S. Srivastava	13. Mela Committee Anil Jindal Jyoti Desai Raneshwar Gupta Krutarth Jain

Please Donate Generously

Your Temple needs
1. Sponsors for flower \$50/week
2. Sponsors for Sunday pooja
3. Your support

Aradhana is Published Monthly . Circulation: Approx. 1750 Families. **Advertising Rate:** Full Page \$300; Half Page \$150; Quarter Page \$100. and one eighth page \$50. A 10% discount is given for 12 consecutive repetitions of the same advertisement. **Hindu Society of Greater Cincinnati (HSGC)** is a non-profit organization that caters to the needs of a large community. **The views expressed by individual authors in Aradhana are their own and may not reflect the policies of HSGC.**

Pooja Information

RATES FOR POOJA & PRIEST SERVICES

SERVICES	IN TEMPLE	OUTSIDE TEMPLE
Abhishekam (All Deities)	\$101.00	—
Aksharabhyas	\$101.00	\$151.00
Anna-Prashanam	\$101.00	\$151.00
Ashta Prakari Pooja*	\$101.00	\$151.00
Ashtottharam (108) Archana	\$21.00	—
AyushyaHomam/B'day Celebra.	\$101.00	\$151.00
Ground Breaking Ceremony	—	\$151.00
Griha Pravesh	—	\$151.00
Kalayana Uthsava (Lord Ram/Sita)	\$121.00	---
Kesh Khandan (Churakaran)	\$101.00	\$151.00
Naam-Karan	\$101.00	\$151.00
Navagraha Pooja	\$101.00	\$151.00
Nischitartham (Engagement)	\$151.00	\$251.00
Baby Shower Pooja	—	\$151.00
Nitya (1 Day) Kainkaryam (Seva)	\$101.00	---
Poolangi Seva (With Flowers)- (Only During Off Winter Season)	\$101.00	---
Regular Archana	\$11.00	—
Sahasranama (1008) Archana	\$51.00	---
Sathyanarayana Pooja	\$101.00	\$151.00
Seemantham	\$101.00	\$151.00
Devi Jagaran	\$75.00	\$101.00
Akhand Ramayan Paath	—	\$151.00
Shashti Poorthi (60th B'day Celeb.)	\$101.00	\$151.00
Anniversary celebration	\$101.00	\$151.00
Suprabhat Seva	\$21.00	---
Unjal (Swing) Seva	\$31.00	---
Upakarma (Thread changing)	\$51.00	---
Upanayam/Brahmopadesham/ Thread Ceremony	\$151.00	\$251.00
Vahan Pooja	\$51.00	----
Yearly Shradham (Barkhi)	\$101.00	\$151.00
Wedding	\$301.00	\$501.00

SPECIAL POOJA RATE

Rates for Mata Ki Chauki performed at another temple will be 15% of the money collected at the temple or a minimum of \$ 501.00.

1. Poojas performed by priests outside the temple will be rated according to the number of poojas performed.
2. 50 Cents/Miles for Travel expense to the Priest to perform pooja at your home.

Rates are subject to change without notice. Rates of Poojas out of Greater Cincinnati will be \$100.00 more than the rates of outside pooja within greater Cincinnati area.

CHECK-OUT

<http://newbhagavadgita.blogspot.com/2010/04/shock-treatment-in-bhagavad-gita.html>

Temple Rental: Lower Floor Only

	Full day	Half day
Monday -Thursday (except holidays)	\$301	\$151
Friday, Saturday & Holidays	\$501	\$351
Sunday after 3PM only	—	\$351

Note: For half day select one of the two:

8:00 AM to 2:00 PM **OR** 4:00PM to 11:00 PM

USE OF KITCHEN \$ 51

Use of Paper Supplies (PS) \$ 101

Use of Kitchen and PS \$125

Temple rental applies to all private reservations for those events/poojas that are performed by private parties and not announced in the temple.

Security/ Cleaning deposit: \$151 required.

This deposit will be forfeited if the basement hall bathrooms and kitchen area are not cleaned by the party renting the place.

NOTE: To schedule a Pooja please contact Pooja Committee :

Kiran Dayal 474-4051 or to rent a temple hall (lower level)

Raneshwar Gupta 232-3331

Pooja Committee Announcement:

To schedule a Pooja **or to rent a temple hall (lower level)** please contact Kiran Dayal 513-474-4051 **or to rent a temple hall (lower level)** Raneshwar Gupta 232-3331

If you have any question or suggestion about temple activities contact Kiran Dayal 513-474-4051, any EC Members or Temple at 528-3714.

1. **Archana** performed during temple hours by sponsorship. No Archana on Sundays between 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
2. **Outside Poojas** and other religious services will be conducted by appointment only.
3. To **schedule any poojas** please contact Pooja Committee chairperson at least one week in advance.
4. If you would like to bring **food and prasad** in the temple, Please contact Pooja Committee chairperson .
5. **Cancellations** of pooja should be done 3 days in advance or else the full fee for the pooja will be charged.

POOJA SAMAGRI

For convenience of Devotees, Temple can now provide Pooja Samagri for all inside and outside Poojas.

Donation for Puja Samagri is as follows

\$ 21 for any Pooja

\$ 31 for any Pooja including Havan/Homam

For more details please contact

Kiran Dayal 513-474-4051



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT
SUNDERKAND CD (sung by **Acharya Kailash Sharma**)



AVAILABLE in Temple Gift Shop for **\$ 10.**

The money raised will go to temple.

Regular Weekly & Monthly Events at the Temple

Monthly Navgrah Pooja

Every first Saturday of the Month
Sponsors needed for Pooja \$51.00

For Details call

Kiran Dayal at 474-4051; Temple priests: 528-3714



Monthly Murugan Abhishekham / Pooja

Every second Sat of the Month
Sat 4pm Sponsor Murugan Group. Kiran Dayal 474-4051; Temple priests: 528-3714

Monthly ABHISHEKAM/KALYANOTSAVAM FOR LORD SRI VENKATESWARA

4th Saturday of each month ,
from 10:30 AM-12:30PM.

To sponsor and details please call any of the following:

Anand Konda: 481-4119; Vasundhara Dasari: 777-3353

Suseela Paturi: 481-8591; Surendra Hanumanthanna: 661-8733

Pandit Sri Srinadh Bhattar: 488-2986

1008 Gayatri Jap

Second Saturday of each month at 9.30AM

For details please contact temple priest 528-3714 or
Kiran Dayal 474-4051



Monthly Satya Narayan Pooja

On Every Purnima of the Month

6:30 pm

Sponsorship \$ 51.00

To sponsor pooja call Kiran Dayal 474-4051
Temple priests: 528-3714



Weekly Shiv Mahlman Stotram

Every Monday at 6:30 pm



Weekly Hanuman Chalisa Path

Every Tuesday at 6:30 p m To sponsor call Kiran Dayal 474-4051 or Temple Priests 528-3714

Shri Ganesh Pooja & Shri Ganesh Atharvshirsha Path

Every 4th Sunday of the month 10:30AM

This pooja is dedicated to each month's

Sankashti Chaturthi to Lord Ganesh. For more information &

Sponsor the pooja please call

Jyoti Divekar : 204-8037

Mangal Nemade : 234-8373

Kiran Dayal : 474-4051

Temple Priests: 528-3714

Weekly Vishnu Sahasranaam Parayana

Vishnu Sahasranaama Parayana (chanting) will now take place

Every Thursday at 7:00 pm . Please join us for the chanting.

Please contact Ganesh Sundaresan 513-752-4025

Weekly Venkateswar Pooja

Every Friday at 6:30pm

To sponsor pooja please call Kiran Dayal 474-4051;

Temple priests: 528-3714

Govardhan Pooja & Annakut Mahotsav



DECEMBER 2012 EVENTS

Dec	1 st	Sat	108 Hanuman Chalisa Path 2pm to 7:30pm Sponsored by Satish & Usha Agrawal family
Dec.	1 st	Sat	Navgrah Puja 3pm Sponsorship \$51.00
Dec.	8 th	Sat.	1008 Gayatri japa & Homa 9:30am
Dec.	8 th	Sat.	Murgan Abhishekam 4pm Sponsorship \$101
Dec.	9 th	Sun	Ganesh Puja/Atharvashirsh Path 11am
Dec.	15 th	Sat.	Dhanur Maas Begins
Dec.	16 th	Sun	Sunderkand Path 10:30am <i>Sponsored by- Narendra & Panna Patel. Deepa Bhatt & family.</i>
Dec.	22 nd	Sat.	Venkateshwara Kalyanam 10am Sponsorship \$51.00
Dec.	22 nd	Sat.	Mata Ki Chauki 4pm to 8pm Sponsored by- Rajvir Minhas, Renu Kotwal, Puja, Gaurav Mantro & their family.
Dec.	23 rd	Sun	Geeta Jayanti celebration Geeta Path 10am
Dec.	28 th	Fri	Purnima Satya Narayan Puja 6:30pm Sponsorship \$51 Puja Samagri will be provided, Please bring Fruits, Prasad, and 1 coconut.
Dec.	30 th	Sun	Jagannath Puja 11am

JANUARY 2013 EVENTS

Jan	1 st	Tue.	New Year Havan 11am
Jan	5 th	Sat.	Mata Ki Chauki 4pm to 8pm Sponsored by- Dr. Prem Sankar & Kiran Verma, family
Jan	5 th	Sat.	Navgrah Puja 3pm Sponsorship \$51.00
Jan	12 th	Sat.	1008 Gayatri japa & Homa 9:30am
Jan	13 th	Sun.	Sunderkand Path 10:30am
Jan	14 th	Mon.	Makar Sankranti/Pongal /Uttarayan,
Jan	20 th	Sun.	Makar Sankranti/Pongal Celebration, Murgan Abhishekam 10am, Event Sponsored by Murgan devotees
Jan	26 th	Sat.	Purnima Satya Narayan Puja 6:30pm Sponsorship \$51 Puja Samagri will be provided, Please bring Fruits, Prasad, and 1 coconut.
Jan	26 th	Sat.	Venkateshwara Abhishekam 10am Sponsorship \$51.00
Jan	27 th	Sun	Ganesh Puja/Atharvashirsh Path 11am



Kartik Somvar Shivbhishek

Every Monday in Kartik Month at 6:30pm

Dec. 3rd & 10th . Sponsorship \$101



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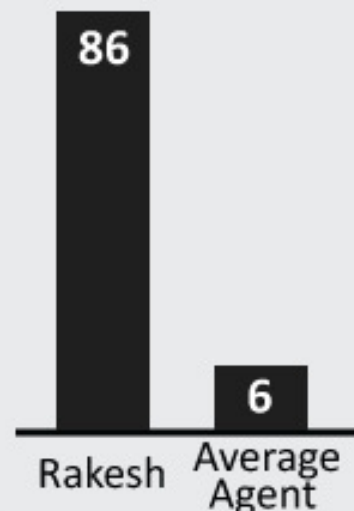
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108 HANUMAN CHALISA PATH

Dec. 1st Sat. 2pm to 7pm

We will recite 108 times HANUMAN CHALISA from 2:30pm to 7:30pm followed by Aarti prasad & Lunch.

Event Sponsor Needed Satish & Usha Agrawal family.



MATA KI CHOUKI Dec. 22nd Sat. 2012

4pm Devi Durga Puja
5pm First Aarti
5:15 Mata Bhajans /Bheten
7:30 KANYA PUJA
8PM BHOG , AARTI , Prasad & dinner

Sponsored by- Rajvir Minhas ,Renu Kotwal, Puja , Gaurav Mantro & their family.



VAIKUNTHA EKADASHI CELEBRATION Dec. 23rd Sun. 2012 9:30am to 10:30am

Sponsorship \$51, \$11, For details please call Temple 518 3714 ,
Sri Srinath Bhattar 488- 2986.

NEW YEAR CELEBRATION Jan. 1st Tuesday 2013



11am Ganpati Havan /Homam
12:30pm Aarti
6pm Bhajans followed by Tuesday Hanuman Chalisa path
7:30pm Aarti
Sponsorship \$51.00, Event Sponsors Needed.

MATA KI CHOUKI Jan. 5th Sat. 2013



4pm Devi Durga Puja
5pm First Aarti
5:15 Mata Bhajans /Bheten
7:30 KANYA PUJA
8PM BHOG , AARTI , Prasad & dinner
Sponsored by- Dr. Prem Shankar,
Kiran Verma & their family.

HSGC – Executive Committee

Meeting Minutes– October 7, 2012

Executive Committee: Deepak Dixit (President), Ambi Balasubramaniam (Vice President), Prasad Megada* (Treasurer), Pradeep Gupta (Secretary), Asit Saha (Cultural Committee), Jeetu Patel* (Long Range Planning), Kiran Dayal* (Pooja Committee), Manish Srivastava (Fundraising Committee), Rakesh Patel (Maintenance Committee), Sandeep Gupta (Editor-Aradhana), Vinit Rastogi (Religious Education Committee), and Mahima Devarajan* (Youth Member)

(*Not present)

Meeting Minutes:

1. The October meeting of the HSGC Executive Committee was held on October 7, 2012 at 10:30am. This meeting was focused mainly on Mela/Naach Sitare results and upcoming Aradhana fund raising concert. Mrs. Swarna Chaudhary represented Pooja Committee.
2. The EC members did not meet in September 2012 due to Mela and Naach Sitare event preparations.
3. Anuradha Paudwal – A temple fundraising Musical Event by Anuradha Paudwal has been scheduled for November 3, 2012 at the Atrium. The funds are being raised for the HSGC temple and specifically for the Marg Project.
 - a. All EC members have been asked to participate in promotion of this concert and getting donations.
 - b. There will be child care facility if someone has to bring their children to the event.
4. Mr. Rajaram has agreed to donate remaining \$1500 required to complete the Flag project.
5. EC has approved placing large containers for collecting food cans for the Gandhi Food Drive.
6. Road resurfacing – The project started in 2009, funds were raised and the work finally started. The work was completed ahead of the Mela. The resurfaced road is expected to be good for at least 5 years.
7. Mela/Naach Sitare - It was a great success and the temple raised approximately \$20,000, although the exact figure is yet to be determined. Except few minor issues, the Mela/Naach Sitare event was well organized and executed. The Executive Committee, on behalf of Temple and the community specially thanks to Anil Jindal and Anisha Jindal. They did a fantastic job in organizing the event and executing in a very professional manner in spite of rain and parking issues. However, for the future programs of such magnitude, following items were identified must be improved or addressed ahead of time.
 - a. It was suggested that Mela must be scheduled for early part of the year because of rain. After further discussions, the EC agreed not to take any action on this issue.
 - b. There were some complaints about some vendors not getting booths. EC believes it was due to some confusion in assigned responsibilities. Next year, precautions will be taken to avoid such scenarios.
 - c. Advertisement on TV Fox 19 was a major contributor for a big turnout.
 - d. Attending police officer recommended having 3 officers next time if we are going to have an event of such a large scale.
 - e. The fire brigade captain has asked to have an expanded parking lot for such large events in the future.
 - f. Possibility of utilizing some nearby churches for parking with having a shuttle service to Temple.
 - g. Deepak will send a "Thank You" letter to Fire and Police Chiefs as an appreciation token.
 - h. Better guidelines on Mela and Naach Sitare or such programs shall be established, certainly prior to the next year's Mela / Naach Sitare program.
 - i. Deepak suggested meeting in 2-3 weeks to kick start this activity.
8. From the Mela / Naach Sitare, we learnt that the following projects must be given priorities:
 - ◆ Additional Parking Lot
 - ◆ New Road
 - ◆ Medical Emergency Contingency Plan
 - ◆ Traffic / Parking Control
9. Agrani plans on donating about \$8,000.00 to the temple during Durga Pooja celebrations scheduled for October 28, 2012. The program organizer will have details planned out ahead of the event.
10. The EC committee also approved advertisement of Vikas Sondhi's DJ business in Aradhana for three months in return for free sound system and DJ service during the Mela/Naach Sitare.
11. Wellness Program – Manish suggested combining Wellness program with the similar program offered by Ankur Samaj at their location. It was suggested to have the combined program on Sunday from 4-6pm at Ankur's location.
 - ◆ Other possible meeting locations could be schools, community centers, parks, churches etc.
 - ◆ In the future, HSGC will work towards bringing all communities together through programs such as the wellness program.
 - ◆ Deepak will speak with Krutarth Jain about related Red Cross community programs
 - ◆ We will meet more frequently and publish activities in Aradhana.
12. Wellness Center for Senior Citizens– Dr. Prakash Goel has agreed to coordinate the program for seniors, details to be worked out.
13. Expenses – All expenses must be authorized by EC in advance before committing. It was also emphasized that no contract should be awarded prior to Executive Committee approval.
14. Diwali Program – Diwali program has been scheduled for November 13, 2012. Following were recommended to be addressed. Deepak will address solutions in next meeting.

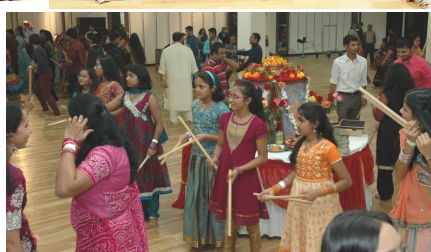
- ◆ Parking and Traffic Issues
- ◆ Sweets will be managed by Raneshwar Gupta
- ◆ Hire two policemen for traffic management
- ◆ Control of crowd on the first or Main floor of the temple – floor capacity issue
- ◆ Prasad distribution

15. Finances –The Hundi collections are low in last few months. It must be increased as soon as possible. Temple will provide food donation receipt if you are sponsoring food at Temple.
16. Membership issue was brought back again and needs to be discussed. Deepak and Pradeep will meet soon.
17. Main stairs Tiles are breaking apart – they were recently installed. It will be looked at.
18. EC was encouraged to support Navaratri Pooja starting November 19th. Deepak will be available on 10/19, and Rakesh on 10/20.
19. Lessons to be learned from Indianapolis Temple Adult Camp – 400 student participated (can you provide the context?)
20. Next meeting will be on November 4, 2012 at 10:30am.

DIWALI CELEBRATION



Navratri, Garba & Dandiya





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2013

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5th Annual NYE Party
hosted by:

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TICKETS:

	ADULT	CHILDREN
BEFORE 12/20:	\$45	\$15
BEFORE 12/30:	\$55	\$20
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Hindu Rituals and Routines and why do we follow them?

Paraphrased from:

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/103846498/Swami-Chinmayananda-Hindu-Rituals-and-Routines>

Why do we light a lamp?



All auspicious functions commence with the lighting of the lamp, which is often maintained right through the occasion. Light symbolizes knowledge, and darkness, ignorance. The Lord is the "Knowledge Principle" (chaitanya) who is the source, the enlivener and the illuminator of all knowledge. Hence light is worshiped as the Lord himself.

Why not light a bulb or tube light? That too would remove darkness. But the oil lamp has traditional value (like people light candles in Cathedrals during worship) and further spiritual significance. The oil or ghee in the lamp symbolizes "vasanas" (our past karmas carried over from countless previous lives) and the wick, the ego. When lit by spiritual knowledge, the "vasanas" get slowly exhausted and the ego too finally perishes. The flame of a lamp always burns upwards. Similarly we should acquire such knowledge as to take us towards higher ideals.

Whilst lighting the lamp we thus pray: *Deepajyothi parabrahma, Deepa sarva tamopahaha, Deepena saadhyate saram, Sandhyaa deepo namostute* (I prostrate to the dawn/dusk lamp; whose light is the Knowledge Principle (the Supreme Lord), which removes the darkness of ignorance and by which all can be achieved in life).

Why do we have a prayer room or at least an altar?



Most Hindu homes have a prayer room or altar. A lamp is lit and the Lord worshipped each day. Other spiritual practices like *japa* (repetition of the Lord's name), meditation, *paaraayana* (reading of the scriptures), prayers, and devotional singing etc is also done here. Special worship is done on auspicious occasions like birthdays, anniversaries, festivals and the like. Each member of the family – young or old – communes with and worships the Divine here. The Lord is the entire creation and the true owner of the house we live in too. To remind us that God resides in our homes with us, we have prayer rooms.

Each room in a house is dedicated to a specific function like the bedroom for resting, the drawing room to receive guests, the kitchen for cooking etc. The furniture, decor and the atmosphere of each room are made conducive to the purpose it serves. So too for the purpose of meditation, worship and prayer, we should have a conducive atmosphere – hence the need for a prayer room.

Why do we do *namaste*?



Hindus greet each other with *namaste*. The two palms are placed together in front of the chest and the head bows whilst saying the word *namaste*. This greeting is for all – people younger than us, of our own age, those older than friends, even strangers and us.

There are five forms of formal traditional greeting enjoined in the *shastras* of which *namaskaram* is one. This is understood as prostration but it actually refers to paying homage as we do today when we greet each other with a *namaste*.

Namaste could be just a casual or formal greeting, a cultural convention or an act of worship. However there is much more to it than meets the eye. In Sanskrit *namah + te = namaste*. It means – I bow to you – my greetings, salutations or prostration to you. *Namaha* can also be literally interpreted as "*na ma*" (not mine). It has a spiritual significance of negating or reducing one's ego in the presence of another.

The real meeting between people is the meeting of their minds. When we greet another, we do so with *namaste*, which means, "may our minds meet," indicated by the folded palms placed before the chest. The bowing down of the head is a gracious form of extending friendship in love and humility.

The spiritual meaning is even deeper. The life force, the divinity, the Self or the Lord in me is the same in all. Recognizing this oneness with the meeting of the palms, we salute with head bowed the Divinity in the person we meet. That is why sometimes, we close our eyes as we do *namaste* to a revered person or the Lord – as if to look within. The gesture is often accompanied by words like "Ram Ram", "Jai Shri Krishna", "Namo Narayana", "Jai Siya Ram", "Om Shanti" etc – indicating the recognition of this divinity.

When we know this significance, our greeting does not remain just a superficial gesture or word but paves the way for a deeper communion with another in an atmosphere of love and respect.

Why do we prostrate before parents and elders?

We prostrate before parents, elders, teachers and noble souls by touching their feet. The elder in turn bless us by placing his or her hand on or over our heads. Prostration is done daily, when we meet elders and particularly on important occasions like the beginning of a new task, birthdays, festivals etc. In certain traditional circles, prostration is accompanied by *abhivaadana*, which serves to introduce one-self, announce one's family and social stature.

The good wishes (*Sankalpa*) and blessings (*aashirvaada*) of elders are highly valued in India. We prostrate to seek them. Good thoughts create positive vibrations. Good wishes springing from a heart full of love, divinity and nobility have a tremendous strength. When we prostrate with humility and respect, we invoke the good wishes and blessings of elders which flow in the form of positive energy to envelop us. This is why the posture assumed whether it is in the standing or prone position, enables the entire body to receive the energy thus received.

The different forms of showing respect are :

Pratuthana – rising to welcome a person.

Namaskaara – paying homage in the form of *namaste* (discussed separately in this book).

Upasangrahan – touching the feet of elders or teachers.

Shaashtaanga – prostrating fully with the feet, knees, stomach, chest, forehead and arms touching the ground in front of the elder.

Pratyabivaadana – returning a greeting.

Rules are prescribed in our scriptures as to who should prostrate to whom. Wealth, family name, age, moral strength and spiritual knowledge in ascending order of importance qualified men to receive respect. This is why a king though the ruler of the land, would prostrate before a spiritual master.

.....To be continued

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next General Body Meeting and the elections for the 1013 Executive Council will be held on Sunday, December 2nd 2012 at 12 Noon.

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Whereas, The Hindu faith has multiple important events converging at the time of the festival of Diwali, meaning the Festival of Lights, that represent the universal concepts of victory of good over the evil, ushering in of brightness replacing darkness, affirmation of family values, and social harmony; and

Whereas, The Hindu community has been a very responsible, productive, and peace loving community in the Greater Cincinnati area; and

Whereas, The Hindu community has contributed very significantly to the vitality of the Greater Cincinnati area over last 50 years in terms of economic, educational, social, cultural and charitable contributions

Whereas, The festival of Diwali is celebrated around the world with great enthusiasm, spirit, generosity, and piety.


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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have
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of the City of Cincinnati to be affixed this
fourth day of May in the year Two
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Mark Mallory, Mayor
City of Cincinnati

HSGC would like to Thank Mr. Krutarth Jain, former HSGC president, for his efforts in getting the proclamation approved from the City of Cincinnati.

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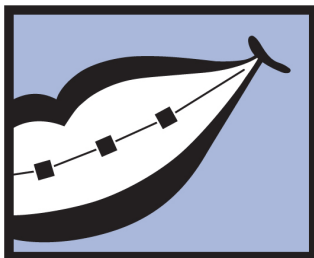


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Update from President

Namaskar,

This will be my last update to you. The new Executive Committee will be elected in first week of December. I feel good about the accomplishments of the EC of 2012 and the overall progress that we have made at the temple.

We started the year with a significant amount of outstanding maintenance work for the temple building and roof. While this maintenance work has restored the building to a great extent, some more work still remains to be done. Also, the cost of the building maintenance was quite significant and it severely depleted our general funds. However, we slowly worked through the issues and I am happy to say that we are almost back to normal now. Even when we faced extremely tight financial situation, we still managed to complete a lot of important and much needed initiatives. A partial list includes:

- installation of new tiles outside the temple
- new lighting with installation of two electric poles with brightly lit surroundings
- resurfacing and resealing of the existing road from the Klatte Road entrance
- clearing of the trees from the proposed Barg Salt Road entrance for the Marg project

In addition to these construction activities, we also saw completion of the flag project done by a boy scout, Aman Kumar, for his Eagle Scout project. We are very proud of Aman. We also had a record-breaking event when we had the combined Mela and Naach-Sitare in September. In addition to this event, we have had many events at the temple with 1000+ devotees in attendance.

The ever increasing attendance at the temple should make us think of the future. As I have mentioned it several times in this column that we need to address the following needs urgently. These needs are: the Marg project giving us a two-lane access road from Barg Salt Road, an expanded parking lot, elevator, a community hall, and children's education program.

Many of these needs can be addressed through a comprehensive plan of action. The long-range committee has been thinking through the various options. A concrete plan will be presented to all members of HSGC in near future. So please stay tuned and participate actively in the collective decision making.

In brief, I feel that the temple is in a strong position and we are now ready for our next phase of growth. I feel truly blessed and privileged to have been the president of HSGC and contributed in my small ways. It would not have been possible without the support of my fellow EC members, countless dedicated volunteers, our exceptionally devoted priests, and most of all, all the members and devotees. So thanks to you all. Please continue to support the temple with the same devotion, passion, and vigor and preserve and grow the relevance and vitality of this temple.

Sincerely,

Deepak Dixit
President, HSGC

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