

The Hindu Jain Temple

MONROEVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

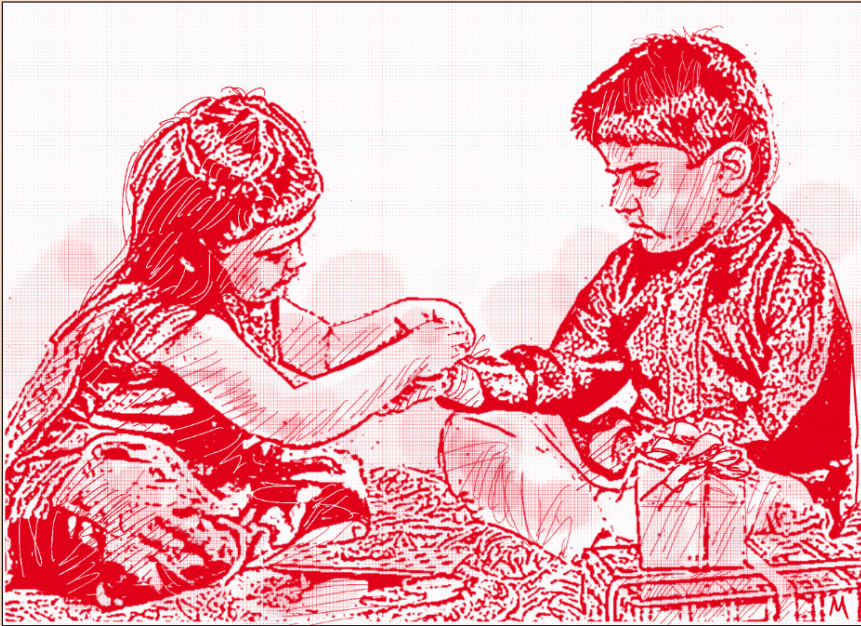


Our Festivals: Our Cultural Heritage

615 Illini Drive, Monroeville, PA 15146 U.S.A.,
Phone: (Priest) 724-325-2073, (Office Secretary) 724-325-2054
Fax: 724-733-7475 • Web: www.hindujaintemple.org

2024

Raksha Bandhan



Raksha Bandhan

Raksha Bandhan falls during the full moon (Purnima) on the last day of Lunar Calendar month of Shraavana (July/August). It is observed as an auspicious social harmony day by Hindus. This festival is a celebration of the love among siblings and family and society members.

History of Raksha Bandhan

- In Mahabharat Draupadi tore off a corner of her sari and tied it on Shri Krishna's wrist to stop bleeding. This created a bond between them, and Krishna promised to always protect her.
- When soldiers would go off for a war, a sister, wife, or a mother would tie a Rakhi on their wrists for their protection as well as symbolizing that they protect the nation.

- In medieval days, in some places when women felt unsafe, they would tie Rakhi's on the wrists of men, regarding them as brothers. In turn men would protect them.

How do we celebrate?

- Sister ties Raksha (also known as Rakhi - sacred thread) on brother's wrist and prays for his health and long life. Brother vows to work for sister's well-being and showers with gifts and happiness.
- Those who wear Janeo aka Yajnopavita (sacred thread) change their Janeo on this day and dedicate themselves to study and preserve Shaastra and serve the society.

Learning

- Raksha means protection and Bandhan means bond of love.
- The festival signifies the creation of bonds and love among family and society members and the promise of protection of each other in challenging times.

How Can We Celebrate Raksha Bandhan

In addition to traditional celebration

- We can perform Puja at home and tie Rakhi to Bhagwan.
- Celebrate with family and friends with sweets and treats.
- Make our own Rakhi, teach young children to make Rakhi.
- You can tie Rakhi to friends, neighbors, and others.

North American Context

Keeping to our tradition of tying Rakhi to our soldiers, we can extend it to our first-line protectors- firefighters, police officers, ambulance drivers, national guards, and veterans. As a community we can invite and honor them at our temple or cultural centers.

JANUARY 2024

Vir Samvat: 2550 • Yugabdh: 5125 • Vikrama Samvata: 2080 • Pausha - Magha

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 New Year Day Havan	2 Sunderkand	3	4	5	6
7 Saphala Ekadashi	8	9 Sunderkand Bhauma Krishna Pradosha	10	11 Pausha Krishna Amavasya	12	13 Lohri
14 Makar Sankranti Uttarayana Pongal	15	16 Sunderkand	17	18	19	20
21 Pausha Putrada Ekadashi Republic Day India Bhavana	22	23 Sunderkand Bhauma Krishna Pradosha	24 Pausha Shukla Purnima Vrat	25	26 Republic Day India	27
28	29	30 Sunderkand	31			

Janmashtami



Shri Krishna Janmashtami

Shri Krishna Janmashtami festival falls on the eighth day of the dark half of the month of Bhadra (August-September) of the Lunar Calendar. Janmashtami is the birthday of Bhagwan Krishna, the eighth-divine incarnation of Vishnu.

History of Shri Krishna's Birth

- Shri Krishna was born to Vasudev and Devki. Kansa, Devki's brother, had a divine proclamation that the eighth son of Devki

and Vasudev would be the cause of his death.

- Kansa had imprisoned Devki and Vasudev. He killed the first seven children of Devki and Vasudev. When Shri Krishna was born in prison, Vasudev placed him in a cradle and took him through the River Yamuna to Gokul, the home of Yashoda and Nand. Thus, Shri Krishna survived and became the adopted son of Yashoda and Nand.

Purpose of Incarnation

- In the Bhagavad Gita (4/7-8) Bhagwan has ordained: "Yada Yada his dharmasya glanir bhavati Bharat.... Dharma Sansthapanarthaya sambhaavami yuge yuge - I incarnate whenever adherence to Dharma declines and evil predominates to establish Dharma and conquer evil."
- As a part of the celebration, we should recollect and imbibe the teachings of Shri Krishna.

How do we celebrate?

- People fast on this day, some observe a water-less fast.
- Temples and homes are beautifully decorated and lit.
- People spend the day immersed in Shri Krishna's glory by reading, reciting, and singing his divine Leela (divine play) especially in the evening.

- At midnight, at Shri Krishna's birth hour, Aarati is performed.
- He is placed, in the form of 'Lala' (child form), in a swing and devotionally offered many food dishes including Maakhan (butter).
- On this day in some parts of India, especially in Maharashtra, youth celebrate the festival by breaking clay pots called Dahi-Handi, filled with curd and butter. The youth form a pyramid to reach the pot and break it just like young Shri Krishna did.

Learning

- The best way to remember and celebrate Shri Krishna's birthday is to follow his teachings as told in the Bhagavad Gita.
- Put your trust in Bhagwan, execute your duties, be helpful to everyone and sanctify your life.
- Dedicate all action to Bhagwan. Work for the higher cause (Shreyas) and experience oneness with Bhagwan.
- Free yourself from the attachment to the results of Karma.

How do we celebrate Janmashtami in our in out Temple

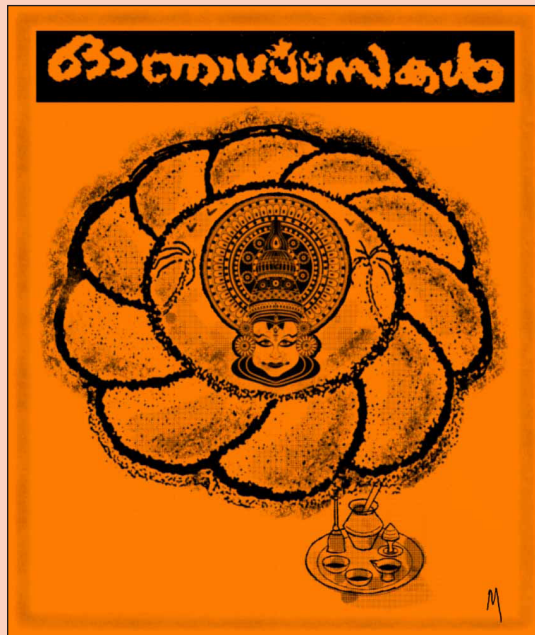
In general, our Temple follows the traditional celebration. This is one of the most attended festivals of the year.

FEBRUARY 2024

Vir Samvat: 2550 • Yugabdh: 5125 • Vikrama Samvata: 2080 • Magha - Phalguna

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4 Havan	5	6 Shattila Ekadashi Sunderkand	7 Budha Krishna Pradosha	8	9 Magha Krishna Amavasya	10
11	12	13 Vasant Panchami Sunderkand	14	15	16	17
18 Bhavana	19	20 Jaya Ekadashi Sunderkand	21 Budha Shukla Pradosha	22	23 Magha Shukla Purnima Vrat	24
25	26	27 Sunderkand	28	29		

Onam



Onam

Onam is an annual festival, which usually falls between August-September, and is celebrated for ten days. In Kerala, Onam is considered the state festival. It commemorates New Year's Day and is also known as a harvest festival. Besides Kerala, it is also celebrated in some parts of Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra.

What is the religious significance of Onam?

For many, Onam commemorates the arrival of King Mahabali. He was the grandson of Prahlad. Like his grandfather he was a devotee of Bhagwan Vishnu. King Mahabali gained power and dominance by defeating the devataa and taking over three worlds. Devataa approached Bhagwan Vishnu. Initially Bhagwan ignored the request since Bali was a loyal devotee and fair leader. However, Bhagwan still

decided to test Bali's devotion. One day when Bali was performing Yagna, Bhagwan appeared as a young cheerful small boy, Vamana, and asked the King for land, measuring his three footsteps. When the King said yes, Bhagwan Vishnu became gigantic and took over all three worlds in two steps. King asked Bhagwan to put his last step on his head, Bhagwan was pleased and sent him to higher loka (plane/planet). At the request of the King's people, Bhagwan granted the King permission to return to his kingdom one day every year. The day of his return, the tenth day of celebration, is officially recognized as Onam.

How is Onam celebrated and what are the symbolisms?

Onam festivities last for ten days. Each day has a unique name and significance.

First Day: Atham - Prepare for the arrival of the King. Pookalam is created, a ring of ten layers, one for each day. Poolakam is like rangoli but more elaborate.

Second Day: Chithira - Cleaning and decorating homes.

Third Day: Chodi - Add another layer to Poolakam, buy new clothes, jewelry etc.

Fourth Day: Vishakam - Athletic competition, artistic performance, Onathallu martial arts performance elaborate Onam meal- Onam Sadya.

Fifth Day: Anizham - Boat races, another layer of flowers is added.

Sixth Day: Thriketta - Family visits, vacation starts.

Seventh day: Moolam - Dances related to festival starts.

Eighth day: Pooradam - Murtis of King Mahabali and Vaman erected in homes and temples.

Ninth Day: Uthradom - Cleaning, decorating homes, buying fruits and vegetables, this the evening the King arrives.

Tenth Day: Thiruvonam - Main celebration day, new clothes, finish poolakam, several competitions, Onam Sadya.

Eleventh Day: Avvittom/Third Onam - King's departure.

Ceremony continues for the next couple of days with Vallamkali or snake boat races and Pikali Tiger races.

MARCH 2024

Vir Samvat: 2550 • Yugabdh: 5125 • Vikrama Samvata: 2080 • Phalguna - Chaitra

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3 Havan	4	5 Sunderkand	6 Vijaya Ekadashi	7	8 Maha Shivratri Shukra Krishna Pradosha	9
10 Phalguna Krishna Amavasya	11	12 Sunderkand	13	14	15	16
17 Bhavana	18	19 Sunderkand	20 Amalaki Ekadashi	21	22 Shukra Shukla Pradosha	23
24 Phalguna Shukla Purnima Vrat Holika Dahan Jain Chaumasi Chaudas	25 Holi	26 Sunderkand	27	28	29	30 Temple Holi Celebration
31						

Paryushan

Paryushan is an 8 to 10 days festival in Jainism observed around August and September, depending on the lunar calendar. Shwetambar Jains celebrate Paryushan for 8 days. Digambar Jain celebrates Das Lakshan, a 10-day festival that occurs directly after Paryushan.

What is Paryushan?

- One meaning of Paryushan is to burn all kinds of Karma, another meaning is to get closer to one's Atma, through introspection, meditation, and austerities.
- Das lakshana name refers to ten virtues that are celebrated during each day of the holiday.
- The end of festival centers on forgiveness. Friends and family say the following phrase to each other -
- Shwetambar Jains - Michhami Dukkadam
- Digambar Jains - Uttam Kshama

Translation - If I have hurt you knowingly or unknowingly, through my thoughts, words, or actions, I humbly ask for your forgiveness.

How do we celebrate?

- The festival is characterized by renunciation, austerities, study of spiritual texts, repetition of holy hymns, meditation and expressing devotion to Paramatma.

- Some perform Atthai - fasting for eight days.
- Samvatsari is the last day of the festival. It is the holiest day of the Jain Calendar.
- Some people fast on this day. The entire day is spent in prayers and contemplation.
- A yearly, elaborated penitential retreat called samvatsari pratikraman is performed on this day.
- After pratikraman they seek forgiveness using the phrases mentioned above.

Learning

The festival inspires Jains worldwide to remember the roots and philosophies of Jainism. It also brings out social purpose. The ritual of Paryushan pushes the followers to abide by the main doctrine of Jainism, five required principles:

- Sadharmik Vatsalya - Love and gratitude not only to all Jains, but to all living beings.
- Amari Pravatan - non -violent in all aspects of one's daily life, includes, thinking and speaking with pure intentions.
- Aththam Tap - Self-control by fasting three days.
- Chaitya Paripati - Pilgrimage to holy places
- Kshamapana - Ask forgiveness from all beings that may have suffered because of one's action.



How do we celebrate the festival in our Temple

In addition to traditional celebration at everyone's home our Jain community celebrate this festival in Temple

- The fifth day of Paryushan is known as The Day of Kalpasutra. On this day, Mahavir Janma Kalyanak is performed. On this day Svapna Ceremony (Mother Trishala Devi's dream) is performed.
- On the last day of Paryushan also called Samavatsari (the Gateway of Salvation). This day is also known as International Forgiveness Day. Pratikraman is performed in the temple followed by Bhavana.

APRIL 2024

Vir Samvat: 2550 • Yugabdh: 5126 • Vikrama Samvata: 2081 • Chaitra - Vaisakha

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 Sunderkand	3	4	5 Papmochani Ekadashi	6 Shani Krishna Pradosha
7 Havan	8 Chaitra Krishna Amavasya	9 Navratri Day 1 Ugadi Gudi Padwa Cheti Chand Sunderkand	10 Navratri Day 2	11 Navratri Day 3 Gauri Pooja Gangaur	12 Navratri Day 4	13 Navratri Day 5 Baisakhi Mata Ki Chowki
14 Navratri Day 6	15 Navratri Day 7 Jain Ayambil Oli Begins	16 Navratri Day 8 Ram Navami Sunderkand	17 Navratri Day 9	18	19 Kamada Ekadashi	20
21 Ravi Shukla Pradosha Mahavir Janma Kalyanak Bhavana	22 Chaitra Shukla Purnima Vrat	23 Hanuman Jayanti Sunderkand Jain Ayambil Oli Ends	24	25	26	27
28	29	30 Sunderkand				

Ganesh Chaturthi

Ganesh Chaturthi is celebrated on the 4th day of Bhadrapada (August-September) month of the Hindu calendar. It is the birthday of Shri Ganesh. It is also known as Vinayaka Chaturthi Festival or Ganesh-Utsava and is celebrated over ten days. Shri Ganesh is worshiped as the bestower of wisdom, prosperity, and good fortune. Shri Ganesh is also known as Vighnaharta: Remover of obstacles.

History of Ganesh Chaturthi

- It is believed that the festival celebration was started by Shivaji Maharaj, the great Maratha Ruler, to promote culture and nationalism.
- This festival was revived by Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak as a public festival to bring the community together and spread the message of freedom struggle during India's freedom fight with British rule.

How do we celebrate?

- Ganesh Chaturthi is a ten-day festival.
- The festival is marked with installation of Ganesha's clay murtis at home or at public places on elaborated pandals (temporary stages). Murti is adorned and decorated with flowers, lights, and new outfits. Modak (Ladoo), a favorite food of Ganesh, is offered.
- Priests conduct Pran Pratistha to invoke Ganesh's presence into the clay deity, after which he is offered formal prayers in 16- step worship called Shodash-Upachara.
- During each day of celebration, prasad or food blessed by deity is distributed to the community members. Followers also meditate on many aspects of Shri Ganesh. Many others choose to observe fast.
- On the last day of the puja, Uttarpuja is performed, a ritual for bidding Ganesh a farewell. Afterwards, he is carried in a public procession with kirtans and bhajans to a nearby body of water, in which the murti is immersed. This custom is known as Ganpati Visarjan. It symbolizes his return to Mount Kailash.



Learning

Ganesh's murti is symbolic:

- Big head - Think Big.
- Large Ears - Listen more and attentively.
- Small Eyes - Concentrate.
- Small mouth - Talk less.
- One Tusk - Preserve Good, also symbol of non-duality.
- Trunk - High Efficiency and adaptability.
- Large Stomach - Peacefully digest all good and bad, other meaning - ever remain content.
- Modak - Get rewards of sadhana (devotion).
- Mouse - Desire. Keep it under control, you ride and control over it.

How do we celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi at our temple

Keeping the tradition, we celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi festival at our temple with puja, prayers, kirtans and mahaprasad. We have elaborated celebration on the first and the last day.

MAY 2024

Vir Samvat: 2550 • Yugabdh: 5126 • Vikrama Samvata: 2081 • Vaisakha - Jyeshtha

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4 Varuthini Ekadashi
5 Havan Ravi Krishna Pradosha Temple Sthapana Day	6	7 Chaitra Krishna Amavasya Sunderkand	8	9	10 Akshaya Tertiya ParashuRam Jayanti	11
12 Mother's Day	13	14 Sunderkand	15	16	17	18
19 Mohini Ekadashi Jain 18 Abhishek - Sthapana Anniversary Celebration Bhavana	20 Soma Shukla Pradosha	21 Mohini Ekadashi Sunderkand	22 Vaishakha Shukla Purnima Vrat	23	24	25
26	27 Memorial Day	28 Sunderkand	29	30	31	

Sarva Pitra Amavasya



Each year during Bhadrapada month (August -September) of Hindu Calendar, Hindus remember their ancestors and make offerings (usually in the form of food and charity) by observing Shrāddha during the 16-day period known as Pitra Paksha. The period extends from Purnima to Amavasya during the month. Shrāddha or Tarpan is performed during this period, irrespective of whether the ancestors passed away during Krishna Paksha (dark lunar fortnight) or Shukla Paksha (bright lunar fortnight).

The word Shrāddha has its roots in Sanskrit word Shraddhā which means reverence, trust, or faith. The term 'Sarva Pitra' means all forefathers or ancestors. Sarva Pitra Amavasya is dedicated to all ancestors, known, or forgotten over time. In Bengal, this day is observed as Mahalaya Amavasya or Sarva Pitra Moksha Amavasya.

Ritual

- On Sarva Pitra Amavasya, Shrāddha rituals can be performed for all ancestors, regardless of their actual tithis (date of departure).
- A priest is invited to home and offered food and gifts.
- A senior member of the family guides rituals.
- Individuals are recommended to wear yellow-colored clothes.
- Individuals offer prayers to their ancestors, with flowers, diya (an oil lamp) and dhoop. A mixture of barley and water is also offered.
- To pray for ancestors, mantras are recited on a continuous basis.

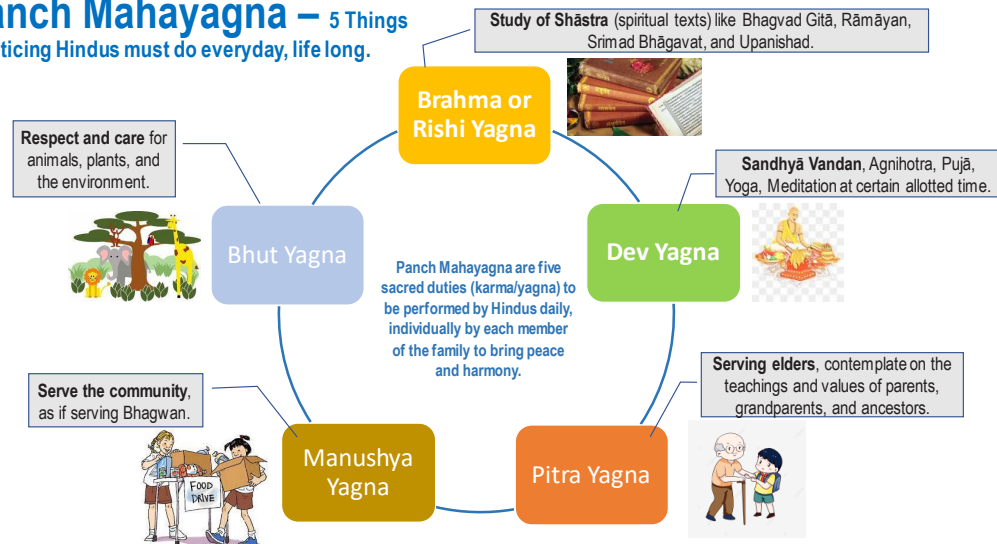
Significance of Sarva Pitra Amavasya

- The ritual is observed to remember the teachings of the ancestors.
- The ritual is observed to attain prosperity, welfare, and blessings as well as to express gratitude to ancestors.

How do we celebrate Sarva Pitra Amavasya at our temple

On this day, a community Shrāddha is performed, officiated by the temple priest. All are welcome to join the ritual.

Panch Mahayagna – 5 Things practicing Hindus must do everyday, life long.



JUNE 2024

Vir Samvat: 2550 • Yugabdh: 5126 • Vikrama Samvata: 2081 • Jyeshtha - Ashadha

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2 Apara Ekadashi Havan	3	4 Sunderkand Bhauma Krishna Pradosha	5 Vat Savitri Vrat	6 Jyeshtha Krishna Amavasya	7	8
9	10	11 Sunderkand	12	13	14	15
16 Father's Day Bhavana	17	18 Nirjala Ekadashi Sunderkand	19 Budha Shukla Pradosha	20	21 Jyeshtha Shukla Purnima Vrat	22
23	24	25 Sunderkand	26	27	28	29
30						

Navaratri

Navaratri is an annual festival observed in honor and worship of Devi Durga, an aspect of Shakti (divine power). It spans over nine nights. Theoretically there are four seasonal Navaratri. However, the post-monsoon autumn festival called Sharad Navaratri is widely celebrated. It usually falls in Ashvin (September - October) month of the lunar calendar. Chaitra Navaratri, also called Vasant or Ram Navaratri which falls in Chaitra (March-April), is also devoted to Devi Durga. The last day is celebrated as Ram Navami, the birthday of Bhagwan Ram.

History

The festival is associated with a prominent battle that took place between Devi Durga and demon Mahishasura. It celebrates the victory of good over evil.

Celebration and Significance

The first three nights are dedicated to Devi Parvati, who is worshiped as Durga, the Devi of action and energy. We invoke Devi Durga to help us annihilate our Tamasic (negative) qualities like sluggishness, laziness, anger, jealousy, hate, ego etc. The buffalo headed Rakshasa (demon) Mahishasura, representing Tamas, was killed by Durga. The color of Tamas is black, and Durga is usually found wearing Black or dark blue.

The middle three nights are dedicated to Devi Lakshmi, the Devi of wealth and prosperity. After cleansing ourselves of our bad qualities, we need to concentrate on true wealth. We invoke Devi Lakshmi to bless with genuine wealth. Lakshmi represents Rajas which means action. The red color represents Rajas. Lakshmi is usually shown standing/sitting on a lotus.

The last three nights are dedicated to Devi Saraswati, the Devi of knowledge, the knowledge not just to earn a living, but how to live and gain wisdom. Devi Sarswati is the Devi of spiritual knowledge



which destroys ignorance. Devi Saraswati represents Sattvic qualities. White represents Sattva and Sarswati is dressed in white. Sattvic qualities are balance of mind, harmony, goodness, purity, holistic living, creativity etc.

Navaratri is celebrated in slightly different fashion in various parts of India. Many people fast for a day or partially each day. In major cities in India and North America, Navratri has become a major spiritual and cultural event. Colorful clothes, garba and dandiya (stick dance) are particularly popular.

How can we celebrate Navaratri?

- Observe Vrat/Upavās/Fast as much as you can.
- Pray to Shakti in her three aspects. Focus on health, wealth, and wisdom to live and lead a meaningful life.
- Celebrate the festival with family and friends.

How do we celebrate at our temple

Temple organizes garba and dance in the temple. Durga puja is also celebrated.

JULY 2024

Vir Samvat: 2550 • Yugabdh: 5126 • Vikrama Samvata: 2081 • Ashadha - Shravana

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 Yogini Ekadashi Sunderkand	3 Budha Krishna Pradosha	4 Independence Day USA	5 Ashadha Krishna Amavasya	6
7 Jagannath Rath Yatra Havan	8	9 Sunderkand	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 Sunderkand	17 Devshayani Ekadashi	18 Guru Shukla Pradosha	19	20 Ashadha Shukla Purnima Vrat Jain Chaumasi Chaudas
21 Bhavana	22 Shravan Begins	23 Sunderkand	24	25	26	27
28	29	30 Sunderkand	31 Kamika Ekadashi			

Vijaya Dashami (Dussehra)

Vijaya Dashami (Dussehra) is an annual festival observed at the end of Navaratri. It is observed on the tenth day of the Ashvin month (September -October). In Sanskrit Vijaya means victory and Dashami means tenth. Thus, Vijaya Dashami means victory on the 10th day.

History and significance

Vijaya Dashami is observed for varied reasons in different regions of Bharat. In eastern and northeastern states, it marks the end of Durga Puja. One of the Asura (demon) called Mahishasura, who looked like a buffalo, grew immensely powerful and created havoc on earth. Since their individual efforts were not adequate, Devas (divine beings) came together and contributed their respective energies to form a collective Shakti (power) to fight and kill Mahishasura. This Shakti took the form of Durga. Devi Durga with weapons and powers of all the devas in her ten hands, riding on a lion, defeated and killed Mahishasura on the 10th day. Durga is a Sanskrit word which means invincible.

In Northern, central, and western states it commemorates Bhagwan Ram's victory over the demon king Ravana. Rama had performed Chandi Homa and invoked the blessings of Durga to kill Ravan. In general, this day is celebrated as a victory of good over evil.



Celebration

In some places Vijaya Dashami celebration includes a procession to the river or ocean front that involves carrying clay murty of Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati accompanied by music and chants, after which the images are immersed in water. In other places towering effigies of Ravana, symbolizing evil, are burnt with fireworks, signifying evil's destruction. The festival also starts the preparation for the celebration of Diwali.

Learning

- Good always prevails over evil.
- Ten heads of Ravan, representing six internal enemies - lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride, and jealousy as well as fourfold inner instrument: mind (manas), intellect (buddhi), memory (chitta), and ego (ahamkara). Destroying internal enemies and control over the mind will be our personal victory.

How can we celebrate?

Celebrate this festival as a social and religious function. While meeting with our friends and families on this occasion let us spread and focus on the message that Good or Satya has always won over evil or Mithya.

How do we celebrate at our temple

Every year an elaborate effigy of Ravan is prepared. Talented local artists work with children and adults. Effigy of Ravan is burnt after the puja. Many local children, their parents and devotees enthusiastically attend this celebration.

AUGUST 2024

Vir Samvat: 2550 • Yugabdh: 5126 • Vikrama Samvata: 2081 • Shravana - Bhadrapada

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 Guru Krishna Pradosha	2	3
4 Shravana Krishna Amavasya Havan	5	6 Sunderkand	7 Hariyali Teej	8	9	10
11	12	13 Sunderkand	14	15 Independence Day India	16 Shravana Putrada Ekadashi	17 Shani Shukla Pradosha
18 Shravana Shukla Purnima Vrat Bhavana	19 Raksha Bandhan	20 Sunderkand	21	22	23	24
25	26 Krishna Janmashtami	27 Sunderkand	28	29 Aja Ekadashi	30	31 Shani Krishna Pradosha Janmashtami Celebration Paryushan Begins

Karva Chauth

Karva Chauth falls in the month of Kartik, on the fourth day of the dark phase of the moon (Krishna Paksha), usually in Oct-Nov. This fast is observed by married women and in many homes by spouse also, for the health, well-being, and long life of their family. Karva Chauth is popular in North India, especially in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and neighboring regions.

In recent years, this Vrat has become immensely popular and well known due to the importance given to it by the entertainment industry and social media.

History and Stories

There are various stories and legends related to this festival. Most popular among them are:

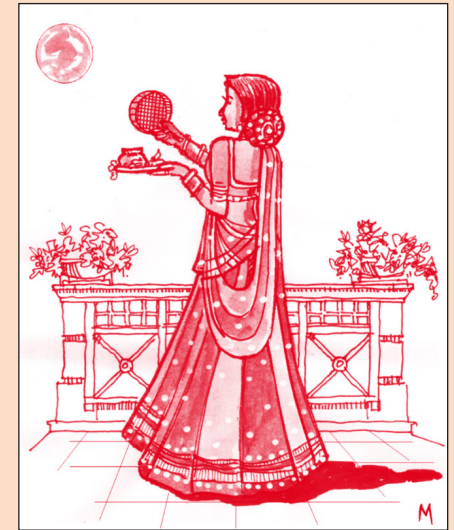
- Story of princess Veeravati, who was married to a king. She was observing Vrat at her parent's place waiting for the moon. She was so weak that her brothers could not bear her plight. They tricked her and made her eat. The king died. Veeravati prayed to Devi Parvati. She revived the king and asked her to take care of the sick king. Veeravati followed her instructions and once again started keeping Vrat tradition every year.
- There is a story in Mahabharat, where Draupadi too observed this fast for Arjun.

- According to another story, during the 17th and 18th centuries, young girls were getting married and going to remote places where their husbands lived. To help and provide support another girl was also married in the same village. Both would become friends and provide support to each other and create a bond. Thus, the festival of Karva Chauth started.

Celebration

Karva Chauth is celebrated differently in different regions of India. In general women begin preparing for Karva Chauth a few days in advance by buying cosmetics, traditional jewelry, Pooja items - Karva pot, mathhi, henna and a decorated thali. On the day of the fast women wake up early to eat and drink a special meal just before sunrise. The fast begins at sunrise. Fasting women do not eat or drink for the entire day. They do not perform any housework either. In the evening, a community ceremony is held. Participants dress in red, gold or orange dresses, wear traditional jewelry and henna. A puja is performed. Women sit in a circle and perform individual pooja in their own thali.

Afterwards, they wait for the moon. It is customary for fasting women to view the moon or its reflection in a vessel filled with water, through a sieve, or through a cloth or dupatta. Water is offered to the moon to secure its blessings. The husband then takes



water from thali and offers it to wife; taking her first sip of water of the day and the fast is now broken.

Learning

- Spiritually, this celebration is an act of Devotion to Devi Parvati, who is venerated for her role as a symbol of family bond, harmony, and longevity.
- Celebration of Karva Chauth creates bonding among women within the community.

How do we celebrate at our temple

Every year the temple celebrates Karva Chauth in the temple. It is a popular event attended by many families, young and old.

SEPTEMBER 2024

Vir Samvat: 2550 • Yugabdh: 5126 • Vikrama Samvata: 2081 • Bhadrapada - Ashwin

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Havan	2 Bhadrapada Krishna Amavasya Labor Day	3 Sunderkand	4	5 Hartalika Teej	6 Ganesh Chaturthi	7 Paryushan Ends Samvatsari
8 Das Laxana Begins	9	10 Sunderkand	11	12	13	14 Parsva Ekadashi Onam
15 Ravi Shukla Pradosha Bhavana	16 Ganesh Visarjan Anant Chaturdashi	17 Bhadrapada Shukla Purnima Vrat Sunderkand Purnima Shraddha Das Laxana Ends	18 Pratipada Shraddha	19 Dwitiya Shraddha	20 Tritiya Shraddha	21 Chaturthi Shraddha
22 Panchami Shraddha	23 Shasti Shraddha	24 Saptami Shraddha Sunderkand	25 Ashtami Shraddha	26 Navami Shraddha	27 Dashami Shraddha	28 Indira Ekadashi Ekadashi Shraddha
29 Dwadashi Shraddha Ravi Krishna Pradosha	30 Trayodashi Shraddha					

Diwali (Deepavali)

Diwali is the Hindu festival of lights and worship of Devi Lakshmi. It is celebrated during the month of Ashvin (October -November) of Hindu lunar calendar. Diwali or Deepavali comes from Sanskrit and means a row or series of lights. Dipa means lamp and Avali means a row or a continuous line. It symbolizes prosperity and spiritual victory of light over darkness, good over evil and knowledge over ignorance. The celebration lasts for five days. First Day is known as Dhanteras, second day is known as Narak Chaturdashi, third day is the Diwali on the darkest night (Amavasya) of the calendar, fourth day is New Year (for some region of India) also known as Govardhan puja, Annakuta, or Bali Pratipada, fifth day is Bhai Dooj, symbolizing brother - sister bond and love. The main celebration is on the third day, known as Lakshmi Puja, where we invite and worship Devi Lakshmi to our homes.

History and significance

Celebration of Diwali, Day 3

- Main reason for celebrating in Northern India and Nepal is to welcome Shri Ram, Devi Sita, and Lakshman from their fourteen yearlong jungle exile after defeating Ravan, to Ayodhya. To welcome them, the citizens of Ayodhya decorated homes and lit oil lamps to illuminate the dark night.
- Devi Mahalakshmi appeared from Ksheer Sagar (ocean of milk) on this day as the devas and asuras churned the ocean.



- In Bengal, Hindus pray to Mother Kali for strength and remember their departed ancestors.
- Jains celebrate this day as Mahavir Swami Nirvan Diwas (attained Moksh).
- Sikhs celebrate this day as Bandi Chhor Divas (prisoner release day). This is the occasion when Guru Hargobind Singh ji was granted release from prison. He refused to leave the prison until 52 Hindu political prisoners were also released by Jahangir.

Celebration

Diwali is celebrated throughout the world. It is a national holiday in India, Nepal, Kenya, Malaysia, Singapore, Fiji, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, Guyana, Suriname, Thailand, Trinidad, and Tobago. It is officially celebrated in UK, Canada, and USA. Diwali day is a school holiday in New York state.

Most commonly, Diwali celebration includes:

- Cleaning and decorating homes and temples.
- Lighting up homes, light diya inside and outside.
- Drawing Rangolis (mandala art) at home and in the temples.
- Dressing up in new and fancy clothes.
- Meeting and greeting friends and family, worshipping, and celebrating together.
- Exchanging gifts and playing fireworks

Learning- Message of Diwali

- The victory of good over evil - Dharma over Adharma.
- The victory of light over Darkness - spiritual wisdom over ignorance.
- Working together for the prosperity of all.
- Auspicious beginning of all ventures.

How do we Celebrate Diwali in our Temple

Diwali is one of the major festivals for our temple.

- Community Diwali Puja is organized on the third day.
- Annakoota and Govardhan Puja is organized on the fourth day.
- Celebration of Bhagwan Mahavir's Nirvana.

OCTOBER 2024

Vir Samvat: 2550 • Yugabdh: 5126 • Vikrama Samvata: 2081 • Ashwin - Kartika

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 Chaturdashi Shraddha	2 Sarva Pitru Amavasya	3 Navratri Day 1	4 Navratri Day 2 Temple Garba	5 Navratri Day 3
6 Navratri Day 4 Havan Mata Ki Chowki	7 Navratri Day 5	8 Navratri Day 6 Sunderkand	9 Navratri Day 7 Jain Ayambil Oli Begins	10 Navratri Day 8 Durga Ashtami	11 Navratri Day 9	12 Vijayadashami
13 Papankusha Ekadashi	14	15 Sunderkand Bhauma Shukla Pradosha	16 Ashwina Shukla Purnima Vrat	17 Jain Ayambil Oli Ends	18	19
20 Bhavana Karwa Chauth	21	22 Sunderkand	23	24	25	26
27	28 Rama Ekadashi	29 Dhan Teras Sunderkand Bhauma Krishna Pradosha	30	31 Kartika Krishna Amavasya Diwali Lakshmi Pooja		

Bhagavad Gita Jayanti



History and relevance

- Gita is part of the history book Mahabharat compiled by Maharishi Ved Vyas.
- Gita is a dialogue between a guru (Shri Krishna) and a disciple (Arjun).
- Since it was recited as a song (Song = Geet) by Bhagwan himself, it is known as Bhagavad Gita.
- The dialogue started before the beginning of Kurukshetra war. After several attempts by Shri Krishna himself the reconciliation between Pandava's and Kaurava's failed, the war became inevitable. It was the war between cousins.
- Arjun asked Shri Krishna to take the chariot in the middle of the fighting armies. Seeing the opposing side consisted of his relatives, teachers and friends, Arjun felt highly troubled by a moral dilemma about fighting the war. He was confused, deluded, full of emotions, in short, his spirit as a warrior was broken. The conversation that ensued Shri Krishna's advice, message and teaching to Arjun is known as Bhagavad Gita. The message is so profound that it is equally relevant to all of us even today.

Gita Jayanti, also known as Mokshada Ekadashi, is the observance that marks the day Bhagavad Gita dialogue occurred between Arjun and Shri Krishna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. It is celebrated on Shukla Ekadashi, the 11th day of the waxing moon of lunar month Margashirsha (December -January) of the Hindu Calendar.

Celebration

Gita Jayanti is celebrated by the Temples, individuals or organizations dedicated to promoting Bhagvad Gita and its message. On this day, a special puja is performed. Some of the verses of Bhagavad Gita are recited, with translation and discussion. The celebration is concluded with Gita Aarti. In India, some people go to Kurukshetra for a pilgrimage.

Learning

- We are not body, mind, or intellect (BMI), but Chaitanya Atma, however, because of maya we cling to BMI and live our lives as limited beings. This ignorance (sense of limitation) is the cause of suffering.
- Gyan Yoga (Discipline of knowledge): Enquiry into the real nature of the Atman (individual self) and Brahman (universal Self) - they are essentially the same.
- Karma Yoga: Perform your duties steadfastly, giving up the clinging to karma-phal (fruits of action) and be even-minded in success and failure (in karma and karma-phal). This evenness of mind is called Karma Yoga.

How do we Celebrate in our Temple

Temple organizes and celebrates Gita Jayanti every year. After an initial puja, a selected chapter or verses are recited and discussed. The celebration is concluded with Gita Aarati and prayer.

The Essence – Sārānsh – सारांश

Uniqueness of Hindu Festivals:

- They are spiritual in nature and mostly aim at self-purification (Atma-Shuddhi - आत्म-शुद्धि).
- Mostly worship a particular deity or an aspect of mother nature.
- The festivity is always preceded by puja, visit to a temple and honoring of elders.
- Reinforce voluntary self-discipline – fasting, silence etc.
- There is always a cultural component associated with a celebration.
- They bring social harmony and aim at universal well-being (Lok-Samgrah - लोक-संग्रह).

Compilation: Navin Kadakia, Sanjay Mehta, Mahendra Shah, Ram Bajaj.

NOVEMBER 2024

Vir Samvat: 2551 • Yugabdh: 5126 • Vikrama Samvata: 2081 • Kartika - Margshirsh

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 Gowardhan Pooja Mahavir Nirvana Kalyanak	2 Bhaiya Dooj
3 Havan	4	5 Sunderkand	6 Jain Gyan Pancham	7 Chhath Pooja	8	9 Temple Diwali Dinner
10	11	12 Devutthana Ekadashi Sunderkand	13 Budha Shukla Pradosha	14 Jain Chaumasi Chaudas	15 Kartika Shukla Purnima Vrat Guru Nanak Jayanti	16
17 Bhavana	18	19 Sunderkand	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 Utpanna Ekadashi Sunderkand	27	28 Thanksgiving Day Guru Krishna Pradosha	29	30 Margashirsha Krishna Amavasya

The Hindu Jain Temple

Dear Temple Devotees,

Namaste and Happy New Year.

I feel blessed and fortunate to get this opportunity to serve our beautiful Hindu Jain Temple as President once again. I thank you for your continued love and support you have given me in the last many years. This has given me encouragement and energy to work even harder each day for our Temple and community. Our Executive Committee started its second term of office on July 1, 2023, with the presence and blessings of Pujya Swami Shri Chidanand Saraswati ji (our beloved Muniji) and Pujya Sadhvi Bhagvati ji. We feel grateful for this auspicious beginning.

I wish you all a very Happy New Year. I pray to God that the year 2024 will continue to bring good health, peace, and prosperity to our lives. The year 2024 is very special for all of us as it is **the 40th Anniversary year of our Temple**. We will make it memorable by huge celebrations throughout the year with your support as always.

I am very thankful to our Temple devotees for their awesome support to make 2023 hugely successful. We witnessed a very large turnout when we celebrated in person in the Temple, Sthapana Day, Krishna Janmashtami, Ganesh Chaturthi, Mahavir Jayanti, Paryushan Purva, Navratri – Mata Ki Chauki, Temple Garba, Dussera and Ravan Dahan. Diwali Lakshmi Pooja and Annakut were also attended by hundreds of devotees and made them extremely successful. The Grand Diwali Dinner was very well planned and executed by the Executive Committee. My special thanks to all my EC officers and members for their dedicated hard work for the many successful events of 2023. Congratulations to all the recipients of the 2023 Temple awards. Our beloved priest Shri Jagdish ji who had completed 25 years of service to the Temple was honored with the prestigious **“Temple Ratna Award”**. Mrs. Krishna Sharma and Dipen & Hemal Shah were honored with **“Lifetime Achievement Awards”** for their lifetime of outstanding leadership, contribution and dedicated services to the Temple.

We have a clear vision for our Temple development. We are working on to unite our community on the platform of Hindu Jain Temple and boost the temple membership. Our mantra is - **“One Temple, Best Temple”**. We are able to bring Temple membership to 640 families in 2023, which were around 500 for the last few years. We have set the goal to cross 700+ members in 2024. The Murti Restoration Project was completed in 2023. The beautiful murties that you all have witnessed now make the Temple look like a totally new Temple. We have finished the outside Temple brick restoration, which was a major project led by Nick Patel. There are no loose bricks to be found on the outside temple wall. The Temple front entrance is now open for devotee's entry.

We are committed to providing the best priest services to our devotees at your home as well as at the Temple. We appreciate your support to accept the few changes made for priest services. Please send your online request for priest service as well as community hall booking beginning January 1st, 2024. We have made few changes to streamline our Temple operations to run the Temple more smoothly and efficiently. Accountability and transparency is our top priority. From January 2023, our Temple account has been reconciled and is now completely accurate and transparent. Special thanks to Dipen Shah, Ramani Yedla and Bharathi Ravada for their hard work, spending hundreds of hours in the last 8 months to fix all the accounting inaccuracies for the last 39 months (Oct-2019 to Dec-2022).

We look forward to your continued support and encouragement. Your positive and constructive suggestions are always welcome.

Yours truly,
Chetan Patel
President, Hindu Jain Temple

DECEMBER 2024

Vir Samvat: 2551 • Yugabdh: 5126 • Vikrama Samvata: 2081 • Margshirsh - Pausha

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Havan	2	3 Sunderkand	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Sunderkand	11 Mokshada Ekadashi Gita Jayanti Jain Maun Ekadashi (Agiyaras)	12	13 Shukra Shukla Pradosha	14 Margashirsha Shukla Purnima Vrat
15 Bhavana	16	17 Sunderkand	18	19	20	21
22	23	24 Sunderkand	25	26 Saphala Ekadashi	27	28 Shani Krishna Pradosha
29	30 Pausha Krishna Amavasya	31 Sunderkand				



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chairperson: Shubha Mullick

Vice Chairperson: Nick Patel

Secretary: Parminder Sharma

Past Chairperson: Surendra Sethi

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: Chetan Patel

Vice President: Madhu Verma

Secretary: Sumedha Nagpal

Treasurer: Amit Ghosh

Past President: Rajeev Agarwal

EC Members

Gauttam Patel

Gopal Patel

Ashtosh Ganjoo

Alka Jhaveri

Lakshmi Gopi

Sushil Shinde

Sunil Deoras

Shailendra Varshney

Bharati Shah

Dhruv Ohaja

Neelam Brahmhatt

Alkesh Patel

Neeta Maheshwari

Jatin Patel

Sunil Maheshwari

Swamiji

Swami Chidanand Saraswati (Muniji)

Priests

Shri Suresh Chandra Joshi

Shri Vinod Kumar Pandey

Shri Jagdish Chandra Joshi

Temple Administrator: Bharathi Ravada

Temple Accountant: Ramani Yedla

Calendar Committee: Navin Kadakia,
Mahendra Shah, Madhu Verma,
Sanjay Mehta, Chetan Patel



