

S.V. Temple Newsletter



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Navavidha Bhakti - The Nine Forms of Devotion to Attain Supreme Lord

Compiled and written by Gayathri Vempati

What is Bhakti?

The word Bhakti is a derivative of the Sanskrit root bhaj which means 'to worship'. Bhakti, (Sanskrit: "devotion") was originally used in Hinduism, referring to the mutual intense emotional attachment and love of a devotee toward a personal god and of the god for the devotee. It is a mixed feeling of love and respect that an individual show or display towards his/her chosen deity (any form such as Vishnu, Shiva, Devi.). It means "surrender, fondness for, loyalty, faithfulness, love, worship, purity, attachment and devotion". A



person who is attached to bhakti is called bhakta. So, we can say that **bhakti is a medium that unites a Bhakta with Bhagavan.** According to our Hindu religious text 'Bhagwad-Gita, the path of bhakti or bhakti-marga, is superior to two other religious approaches, the path of knowledge (jnana) and the path of ritual and good works (karma).

Ramayana and Srimad Bhagavatha elaborates the nine-fold approach Navavidha bhakti which, if cultivated and practiced regularly will no doubt lead us closer to the Supreme. To know the names of these nine types of devotion let us consider the sloka:

**Shravanam Keertanam Vishnoh Smaranam Paadasevanam
Archanam Vandanam Daasyam Sakhyam Aatmanivedanam**

The above sloka was (Srimad Bhagavatham 7.5.23) told by Prahalada, one of the greatest devotees, for whose protection Lord Vishnu came in Narasimha Avatar. Let us look in detail at each of these nine forms:

1. SHRAVANAM – Listening to the glories of God.

This is the first and the foremost among the nine forms of the devotion. The literal meaning is 'listening', and it can be Listening to anything that is about the Lord.

To cultivate shravanam, three qualities are needed – yearning to listen, listening with total faith and putting into practice what has been listened to. The act of listening will begin subconsciously in developing love and

reverence for Him and that itself becomes the worship. By hearing the names and divine glories of the lord pertaining to His forms, qualities, *leelas* or divine plays, His miracles and His spoken words as Bhagavad-Gita, the devotee's mind becomes purified from bad qualities like lust, anger, greed and envy.



The story of King Parikshit given in Srimad Bhagavatham is an example of a devotee who exemplified shravanam. Due to a curse, Parikshit had only a week to live, but he attained salvation by listening to the glories of Krishna in the form of Srimad Bhagavatham narrated by Sage Suka in the forests of Naimisharanya.

2. KEERTANAM – Chanting the glories of God.

Keertanam is the second form of devotion which involves 'singing' the praises of the Lord with heartfelt devotion.



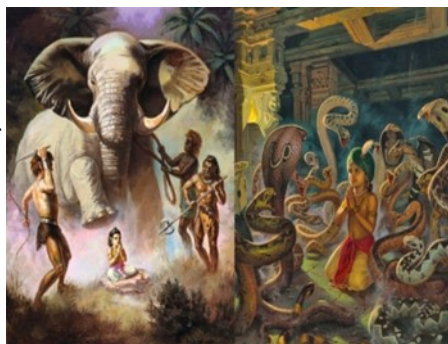
In this kaliyuga, the age of fightings and hypocrisy, it is said that Keertanam is the only way to achieve salvation. The only means of deliverance is chanting or singing the holy names of the Supreme Lord. By constantly singing the Lord's name, will bring in relief and one can develop spiritual mind. Through Keertanam only, the Saints Annamacharya, Tyagaraja Swamy, Prahlada, Meera, Tukaram, etc., have achieved God's realization.



Sage Narada is always the supreme example of one who realized the divine by continuously singing the glories of God in all circumstances and he also demonstrated the supreme spiritual efficacy of singing the Lord's glories to the world.

3. SMARANAM – Constant remembering of the Lord.

It is the third form of devotion. Smaranam is the incessant thought of God. It is the constant remembrance of the Lord, reveling in the contemplation of His beauty, majesty and compassion.



For a true and pure devotee, even during all his extreme sufferings and pain, if he keeps remembering or meditating at the Lord's lotus feet without losing any faith in Him, his world will become free of all material contamination.

The greatest example of such devotee who realized God through smaranam is Prahlada. He was just a little child at the time he attained salvation. Though he was put to many difficulties and tragedies by his atheist father, Hiranyakashipu, he constantly remembered Supreme Narayana, and, in the end, the Lord gave His darshan in the form of the Narasimha avatar, killing Hiranyakashipu and protecting his bhakta, 'Prahlada'.

4. PAADA SEVANAM – Serving the Lord's feet

It is the fourth form of devotion. Paada sevanam means worship of the Lord by concentrating upon or 'honoring' His feet or Paadukaa (sanctified sandals). It is an innate sense of surrendering to the Supreme leading to the worship of the Lord's lotus Feet (Paadapankajam).

In Indian Tradition, there is a tradition of worshipping to guru's (Lord's) feet. To touch a person's feet is a sign of humility. That is why we are taught to touch our parent's and elder's feet as a token of respect. One of the beautiful examples of bhakti extolled in Paada sevanam is none other than Goddess Lakshmi Herself, the consort of Supreme Vishnu. Goddess Lakshmi is mostly seen at the Lotus feet of the Supreme.



Just thinking of the Lord's feet takes the devotees to deep feelings of love, longing and ecstasy. Worshipping to His transcendental feet loses attraction to pursuits of short-lived pleasures in life which is a great spiritual blessing. Thus, pada sevanam offers a deep spiritual lesson and an intimate service to God.

5. ARCHANAM – Worshipping the Lord with offering flowers.

Archanam, the fifth form of devotion, is the offering of food, flowers, or clothes to God in the form of pujas or ritualistic worship or chanting mantras of His holy names like Sahasranamas (1000 names) or the Ashtotarams (108 names) or singing bhajans or offering Aarathi. Archanam is usually performed to deities in temples or in one's personal altar at home or to a deity personally preferred as the istadevata or sometimes even manasapooja that can be done at the mind level.

It is said in Bhagwad Gita 9.26- "whoever offers Me with devotion and a pure mind a leaf, a flower, a fruit or even little water – I accept this as devotion". Love expresses in giving and as love for the Supreme Lord grows in the heart of the devotee, he naturally wants to offer his best. By doing this, the devotee derives inner satisfaction and inspiration.

Archanam or deity worship combines an external ritual with internal meditation. A devotee may feel a stronger attraction for a deity. One of the most wonderful aspects of archanam is that it employs all the four forms of devotional service Shraavanam, Keertanam, Smaranam, Pada Sevanam. Thus, it is a very significant form of devotion that can be practiced as a routine in our daily life to seek God's grace.

In the Skanda Puranam, it is said that all sinful reactions coming from all the thousands and millions of past births can be relieved if someone sees the face of the Supreme at the time of Aarathi offering. Also, it is said that when incessant chanting of the God's name is done at the same place for a while, divinity with vibrations will be created in that place. This explains the importance of regularly visiting temples for prayers and worshipping the Lord and witnessing the Aarathi in the form of Archanam.

6. VANDANAM – Offering obeisance unto the Lord.

Vandanam is the sixth form of devotion which means the reverence with folded hands or a sincere prayer to the Supreme. In this form of bhakti, a devotee begins to see his favorite form of the Lord everywhere and in all beings and objects. It is an intense personal process and the most universal form of devotion, through universal prayers that make up the traditions of the different religions and cultures of the world.

There are various forms of prayers – simple prayers of gratitude, prayers for the welfare of loved ones, prayers for the speedy recovery of ill health and of course, prayers for some coveted desires to be fulfilled.

The significance of this form of devotion is that it is not just for humans to practice, but even animals and other beings can offer this form of devotion to attain the God's realization (moksha). The best example of an animal that attained the God's realization through vandanam is the elephant king named Gajendra. Moved by the pure-hearted song of surrender, Lord Vishnu appeared and saved the elephant. This story called Gajendramoksham is beautifully narrated in the 8th skanda of Srimad Bhagavatham.



Thus, prayers reflect our spiritual realization and our unique relationship with God. Prayer is everything from our most intimate conversations with the Lord in our hearts to the universal expressions of praise and gratitude.

7. DAASYAM – Becoming God’s servant.

It is the seventh form of devotion and Daasyam refers to a heartfelt yearning to be of personal service to the Supreme. It is the ultimate expression of humility and stretching our humility as far as our realizations will allow. In this form of Daasyabhakti, the devotee sees himself as just not the servant of the Lord but also the servant of the Lord’s devotees, with no sense of inferiority.

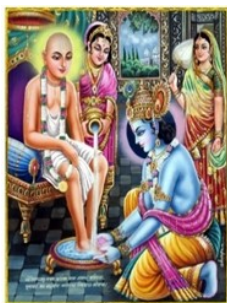


To attain this kind of daasyam one must completely accept that God is almighty supreme. The Ramayana offers an extraordinary example of such personal service. Hanuma is the supreme example of dasyabhakti, the one who realized God through serving Him wholeheartedly. Rama did not have to instruct Hanuma. He served Rama as His servant by knowing and understanding His desires and wishes. Hanuman’s pure love for the Lord itself enthralled him whenever he got the opportunity to serve Rama. Hanuman prayed to Rama with no expectations whatsoever but prayed only for His blessings to be with him forever.

Service to Lord supreme is so intimate that He offers it only to the most trustworthy souls. That’s why it is said that one must need a guru to attain daasyam. True humility thus naturally appears in a true guru and whose heart is ever satisfied as the servant of Lord’s servants.

8. SAKHYAM – Developing friendship with the Lord.

Sakhyam is the eighth form of devotion where the devotee considers himself to be the ‘friend’ of the Supreme. There is another world which is exclusively composed of spiritual energy where everything is sentient and full of love for the Supreme. Pure souls in the spiritual world would enjoy friendship with the Lord because they have no desire for anything else.



The beauty of having such an eternal friendship with the Lord is clearly seen with Krishna’s childhood friends in Vrindavan who chased Him in

their games and played with Him. Their love for Krishna was so complete that they were blind to His divinity and only knew how much they loved their wonderful friend.

Sudama and Arjuna are classic examples of ‘Sakhyam’, who achieved perfection through their friendship with Lord Krishna. In the text Madhurashtakam it is stated – “sakhyam madhuram” which means how sweet the lord’s friendship is with devotees / Bhaktas.

9. AATMANIVEDANAM – Complete surrender of oneself to the Lord.

Aatmanivedanam is the ninth form of devotion and is the ultimate height of Bhakti, which is self-surrendering to God. The devotee has no self-identity. He surrenders all his body, mind and soul unto God. He has no desires, no urges, no ego; he has no pain, sorrow or grief; he seeks nothing but loving God for the sake of loving Him. He loses individual consciousness and attains absolute consciousness.

Filled with devotion to God, the devotee gains the knowledge of his true self in this form of bhakti, where the devotee and the lord become one. In other words, called Nirvikalpa-Samadhi or Brahma-Sakshatkaram.



King Bali is the perfect example of Atmanivedanam or complete self-surrender unto the Lord. This feeling of ‘oneness’ with the lord and all His divine beings is achieved only in the spirit of the final stage of devotion to the Supreme.

Conclusion

It is said that knowledge without bhakti is useless tinsel. Bhakti is a bliss and more blissful would be our lives when we cultivate and practice the above discussed navavidha bhakti or nine forms of devotion in our journey of life towards the Supreme. Always let us keep remembering and chanting the names of the Lord. Let our hearts bloom into beautiful flowers of divinity, by drinking the divine nectar of eternal bhakti!



A Prayer for Thanksgiving

by Gautham Reddy, PhD

Thanksgiving is an important public holiday in the US. Families and friends meet to reflect on the challenges and blessings of the last year. It is an important time to cultivate humility and also gratitude. Below is a small Hindu prayer for Thanksgiving.

Lord Rama needed to build a bridge to Lanka to rescue his wife Sita. Lord Rama was known as Maryada Purushottam (the most noble man) and was revered by one and all. Since Sita Devi was the daughter of Bhu Devi (Mother Earth), all the wild animals of the Earth wanted to help Lord Rama in this huge task. Lord Hanuman and all the others in Rama's vanara sena (monkey army) carried the largest boulders and rocks. But even all the smaller creatures helped too.

One squirrel was carrying pebbles when a monkey asked what he was doing there. He shouted at him to get out of the way. The squirrel said he was bringing the pebbles to help Lord Rama build his bridge. The monkey laughed at the squirrel and said, "You? You are so tiny! What can a small squirrel like you do?"

In fact, it was these small pebbles that filled in the gaps between the boulders that made the bridge strong. Lord Rama lifted up the little squirrel, thanked him for all his hard work, and blessed him by stroking his back. And even today squirrels in South India have dark stripes on their backs.

Lord Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita, "If one offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or water, I will accept it."

This Thanksgiving we are grateful for the large and small acts of kindness that grace our days, our lives and our world. We remember that no effort of ours is too small to be recognized and blessed by God.

Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti.

Mudupu Puja at S.V. Temple

by Dr. Jyothsna Reddy, Religious Chairperson, S.V. Temple

Mudupu is special puja, based on belief and faith of devotees. Mudupu can be offered to any God or Goddess but most done to Lord Venkateswara swamy and Lord Ganesha in South India.

When a devotee wishes to start a new project, has a new wish to come true, to remove any obstacles or health problems in their lives or for their loved ones-they will take Diksha (oath) to start the Mudupu process in front of specific swamy they have chosen for that specific reason under the guidance of priests.

The Mudupu is a 7 weeks Diksha process, that starts with preparing a pouch with a new yellow cloth that contains some coins and turmeric roots / rice (offerings to God). And start making Pradakshinams (rounds) around swamy Venkateswara sannidhi, continuously chanting the special mantram initiated by priest. At the end of pradakshinams, the devotee will come back to do archana and get blessings of priest. It will continue for 7 weeks on every Saturday and on 7th week (last week) and the devotee will complete this process by making 49 rounds and offer this Mudupu pouch to God by placing it in Hundi.

Mudupu also has some other significance in certain areas of India, mostly done for SevaSamskar by a group of students and devotees will start for a specific cause such as world peace or for community services by collecting money and for using that money for a specific reason and for a specific duration.

S.V. Temple has started this unique puja in 2019 at the request of our devotees and has been going on very successfully. A lot of devotees participated in this process and got benefited by doing this. Many of those devotees have come back and took Diksha again multiple times for different reasons of their own.

Any questions about this special puja, please contact the S.V. Temple priests for details.

Kids Column

Friendship Between Krishna and Arjuna

by Ajay Inampudi

To call Krishna, Arjuna's friend would be an oversimplified version of their bond. Their bond was much stronger than just a friendship. It was an undying and eternal companionship. In fact, they have been tied for all eternity since Krishna is an incarnation of Narayana (God) and Arjuna is an incarnation of Nara (human). Any time Arjuna suffered from misfortune, Krishna would not only immediately step in and solve the conflict for Arjuna but also would guide him and teach him. Any time Arjuna would face an obstacle, Krishna would always be there to guide the way. Countless times, their friendship was challenged, tested and vexed but they always remained friends no matter what the circumstances were because they completed each other. Throughout all their trials and hardships, Krishna would help in more ways than just a friend or a chariot-eer against Arjuna's physical foes and mental demons saving Arjuna from countless calamities and most importantly, saving Arjuna from himself.

Krishna's role as a teacher

Throughout many of Krishna's roles in Arjuna's friendship, a common theme of a guide and a follower will start to appear in the epic of Mahabharata. One example of this is when Krishna became the teacher for

Arjuna. On the first day of the battle of Kurukshetra, the climax of the Mahabharata epic, before the battle was about to commence, Arjuna was distraught and disheartened by the fact that people he had known his whole life would die in the battle of Kurukshetra. He threw down his weapons in grief and began to lament this cruel fate. Then, when Arjuna was at his lowest, Krishna knew the



proper role to take in order to help him. He took the role of a preacher by teaching Bhagavad-Gita (the scriptures of Lord). When Krishna talked, Arjuna could see the Vishwa Roopa or true form of Krishna. As Lord Krishna started to talk, the time ceased to move forward around them. The only thing happening was Krishna teaching Arjuna the truth about the universe and Arjuna realizing that Krishna was the supreme Lord. After Krishna finished his teachings and took them back to the battle scene, Arjuna picked up his weapon, feeling revitalized and reborn with the knowledge of the Bhagavad-Gita and was ready to fight the battle.

Krishna's role as a charioteer

Krishna's role as a charioteer, which may not seem big at first shows how much Arjuna loved Krishna. Before the battle of Kurukshetra, Duryodhana and Arjuna went to Krishna for guidance to win the war. Duryodhana being prideful sat next to Krishna's head while Arjuna sat next to his feet. Krishna then saw Arjuna and Duryodhana. When both asked for help from him, he



said he would help by giving each of them one choice. He said that one could get his army of millions of men, and one could get Krishna, but only as a Charioteer. Because Arjuna was younger, Krishna asked him first, and Arjuna said he wanted Krishna on his side in the battle. This made Duryodhana happy because he could get Krishna's army over Krishna in this situation. Arjuna picked Krishna because he knew that Krishna would not just contribute as a charioteer but would be cunning and crafty with strategies of the war.

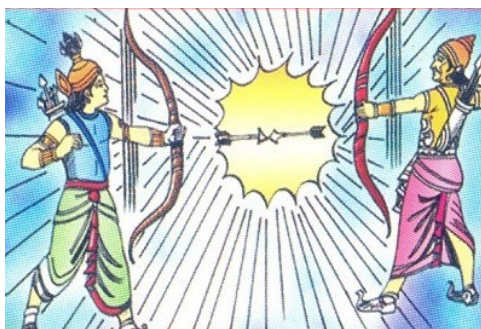
Krishna's role as a friend

One great example of Krishna's caring for Arjuna was illustrated through the story of Arjuna and Subhadra (Krishna's younger sister). When

Subhadra was old enough to marry, Balarama, Krishna's older brother suggested that she marry Duryodhana. However, Arjuna and Subhadra were already deeply in love after attending the Annual mountain festival together. Lord Krishna, knowing this told them to elope and escape from Dwaraka before Subhadra was married off to Duryodhana. Krishna also knew that Balarama would be enraged by this and would wage war on Arjuna, so he used his shrewdness in order to help Arjuna get out of this situation. Krishna told Arjuna to let Subhadra be the charioteer, so it looked like she was kidnapping Arjuna. Krishna then told Yadavas (people who live in Dwaraka) that Subhadra was the one kidnapping Arjuna meaning that she wanted to be with Arjuna. Balarama after discovering this fact allowed and conducted the marriage.

Krishna's role as an enemy

Although many of these stories so far have been about Krishna helping Arjuna, there was one time where they fought against each other in a battle. One such example is the story of Krishna-Arjuna Yuddham or the Krishna Arjuna war. There was once a Gandharan (one of the Devas) named Gayan who was flying recklessly on the Earth and as he



approached Dwaraka, he almost hit Krishna who had to swiftly move out of the way. Gayan immediately became terror-stricken and flew away without even apologizing. Krishna then angrily yelled, "You call yourself above a human, yet you don't even have the guts to say sorry to me."

Krishna then swore that he would kill Gayan no matter what. Gayan upon hearing this was petrified since he knew that Lord Krishna would never break his promise. Gayan flew his chariot to Indra's abode Amaravati and started begging Indra's help. Indra told Gayan to simply ask the Lord for his forgiveness as it was the only way he could achieve penance for his mistake. Gayan, however, didn't trust Indra because he believed that the Lord Krishna would not break his word. Gayan then went to Lord Shiva for help. Shiva also said the same thing as Indra. Gayan who was now crestfallen and distraught asked Narada who suggested asking Arjuna to defend him. "Why would Arjuna defend me from Krishna if they are the best friends," asked Gayan angrily. Narada then added that Gayan should merely ask for Arjuna's protection but not specify from whom. Because Arjuna was a soldier, he wouldn't allow himself to say 'No' to someone asking for protection no matter who it was from. Gayan then rushed to the Pandavas house where Arjuna saw Gayan running towards him. Arjuna asked him why he was so scared. Gayan responded by saying that a king was coming to kill him and asked for his protection. Arjuna gave him his word to protect him. After giving his word, he asked Gayan who the

tenacious king was. Gayan smiled mischievously and said, Krishna. Arjuna felt a cold shiver run down his spine as he asked for the full story. After Gayan told him the full story, Arjuna was furious that he now had to defend a man who was in the wrong. However, despite his brothers telling him to let Gayan die, Arjuna wanted to keep his word. He knew that he would have to fight no matter what against Krishna. Krishna was still searching for Gayan, so he asked Sage Narada where he was. Sage Narada told him where Gayan was and that Arjuna was protecting him. Krishna was very surprised by this but knew it must be true since Narada would never lie. He then asked Subhadra to ask Arjuna why he was defending an honor less Gandharva. After Subhadra asked Arjuna what happened, Arjuna told her how he had been tricked by Gayan and that he could never break his promise. Since neither person could give up their promise, A fierce battle did ensue between Krishna and Arjuna. They were evenly matched and topping each other with one lethal attack after another. However, after some time, Krishna became angry and was going to use his Sudarshana Chakra (Disc) as Arjuna was going to use his Pashupatastra which he attained from Shiva. They were about to use it on each other which would also destroy the whole world and kill everyone. However, before they could use it, Brahma (the God of creator) appeared from the sky and stopped them. They bowed before Brahma who told Arjuna to give up Gayan to Krishna promising that he would make sure both of their promises would be kept. Krishna then killed Gayan to the horror of Arjuna. However, as soon as he was killed, Brahma resurrected him. Gayan got up without any wounds and asked for forgiveness from the Lord and thanked Arjuna and Lord Brahma. Krishna then embraced Arjuna who was thankful that the fight was over between him and his best friend. Krishna then told him a very important lesson that would prepare him for the future battle of Kurukshetra. Krishna told him that he must do the right thing even when the people he loves the most push back against it. It is said that this is the battle that would help Arjuna mentally prepare for the battle of Kurukshetra which was yet to come.

Conclusion

Throughout their respective lives, although many things changed, their friendship remained constant. Krishna helped Arjuna in many ways since Arjuna completely surrender unto Krishna. Overall, their friendship is something that will be told for centuries to learn the value of friendship.

S.V. Temple School Updates

S.V. Temple School (SVTS) started another exciting year on September 15, 2019 with good number of students enrolled in various classes. We had a successful open house on September 8th for all prospective students and parents to come and meet with our teachers and management. We have started Shloka class at the request of many parents this year. This year, we have some new teachers. Below is the list of our teachers & management for this school year.

Telugu Level 1 - Mrs. Sirisha Vanukuru & Mrs. Madhu Rajulapati
Telugu Level 2 - Mr. Vijay Yeleswarapu & Mrs. Vimala Muthyala
Hindi Level 1 - Mr. Shrawan K. Mishra
Hindi Level 2 - Mrs. Krishna Goel & Mrs. Ramya Padmanaban
Music - Mrs. Vinodini Bandela & Mrs. Veda Valli Kumanduri
Shloka - Mrs. Anuradha Ramakrishna
Principal - Mrs. Vimala Muthyala
Front Desk Support - Mrs. Krishnaveni Katragadda

We have some returning students but a lot of new students who are all very enthusiastic and energetic to learn new things to keep their young minds sharp and be more productive in future years.

S.V. Temple Management would like to thank all our volunteer teachers and the parents for their commitment to help prepare this new generation of our community youth to promote our Heritage. Also, we would like to thank all our previous volunteer teachers for their support and commitment during our last year's school year and hope to see them again next year.

S.V. Temple Updates

Temple committees have updates on three ongoing projects.

Kitchen Project:

Good News. We have selected the area of kitchen in the building with all plans to execute and the general contractor who oversees the project and ready to proceed any time. Management met with Edina city and all plans are approved to go ahead. Once the kitchen is done, the temple will have an assigned priest cook who can supply pure vegetarian food & snacks during temple events and on special occasions.

Temple is still raising funds for this big project so if the community members are planning to support this project, please contact temple management or priests.

Panchaloha Utsava Vighraams:

Recently, we have received panchaloha utsava vighraams - Siva and Parvathi, Bhoga Venkateswara swamy for Ekanta Seva at night, Bala Subramanya (Karthikaeya) for Naga Dosha Nivarana, larger set of Rama Parivar includes Rama, Lakshmana, Sita and Hanuman. We are planning to have Pranaprathistapana of these vighraams after Ugadi in 2020 and we will notify the date and details of the events to all our devotees and our vighraha sponsors in advance.

Decorative Brass coverings and door frames:

We are planning to make Brass molding decorations and door framings for all pillars and Gods sannidhis on temple floor and the measurements are

already taken and in the process of working with shilpis in India. All the designs and cost estimate proposals are displayed on the temple floor if anyone is interested to support this project.

We have already completed the project of Sri Venkateswara swamy sannidhi with Brass door framing with beautiful and elaborate carvings. If any devotees are interested to support this project, please contact priests or temple management.

Religious/Cultural Events since July 2019

Below is the recap of the cultural/religious events that took place since July 2019. (Note: Few of the monthly events that happen every month in the temple were not mentioned here). We thank all the volunteers and organizers who made all these events a great success. We are looking forward to similar support for the upcoming events.

Sri Sudarshana Jayanthi – July 10th, 2019. Sudharshana Jayanthi, is the birthday of supreme divine Sudharshana Chakra (wheel or discus), the mighty weapon of Lord Vishnu. Sudarshana Jayanthi is dedicated to the Sudarshana Chakra of God Vishnu. This year, in the S.V. Temple, Priests performed special pujas on this occasion.

Samoothika Maha Mrityunjaya Homam – July 13th and November 23rd, 2019. Maha Mruthyunjaya Homam is dedicated to Lord Shiva and performed to avoid untimely death or health related illnesses. Samoothika (performed as a group) Maha Mruthyunjaya homam was introduced by the S.V. Temple priests this year as a unique event and during Homam, devotees chanted 21 mantras for their longevity and healthy lives along with priests. S.V. Temple will continue this special event twice a year for our devotees and dates are already published in 2020 temple calendar.

3rd Annual Temple Brahmotsavam – August 1st – August 4th, 2019. S.V. Temple celebrated third Brahmotsavam event (3 years from Prathistapana in 2016) in a grand way for 4 days under the guidance of our temple priests, supported by volunteers and Goshti members. Program started with Suprabhatam and Aradhana. Dhawaja Kumbha Aaradhana was also performed on that day. 2nd day on August 2nd, priests did Vishwakshena puja, Mahakumbha sthaapana and Sri Maha Lakshmi homam. 3rd day on August 3rd, we had Sri Srinivasa Kalyana Mahotsavam and Garuda Vahana Seva, a procession of Swamy and Ammavaru on Garuda Vahanam around the temple with all the devotees and Goshtis chanting and doing Bhajans and dances with Chandai music performed by local artists. Last day, we had Ashtottara Sata Kalasabhishekam (Abhishekam with 108 kalasams) and Deepa alankara seva (decorating with lamps) along with dwadasa Aradhana, sri pushpa yaagam and unjal seva in a very grand way. Many devotees participated and did their service to swamy and got their blessings. Next Brahmotsavam is scheduled to be performed on July 23rd -26th, 2020.

Sri Krishna Janmashtami and Utti Utsavam – August 23rd & 24th, 2019. A special event for kids called “Utti Utsavam” was arranged in the temple where all kids dressed up like “little Krishnas” and little Radhas and participated in the event. Sri Krishna Aradhana, Mukunda mala stotra parayana and other bhajans

were done and followed by offering of various prasadam to Lord Krishna. Lord Krishna's Abhishekam was done in the morning. Fancy dress competition was held for all kids and about 100 kids participated.

Sri VaraLakshmi Vratam – August 9th, 2019. Samuhika Vara Lakshmi Vratam was performed, and many married Indian women participated in the vratham by performing puja themselves in front of Goddess Lakshmi under the guidance of our temple priests and got the blessings.

Sri Vinayaka Chavithi – September 2nd, 2019. 5 ft. Clay Ganesha vigraha was prepared by our local artist Ganesh Kamath for this event. Samuhika Ganesha puja, Vratam and katha parayanam were performed and lots of devotees participated in bhajans. A huge laddu was prepared by our priests and was auctioned at the end of the event for \$2001.00 (one devotee family bought the laddu) and all the proceeds went to temple. Delicious dinner was served by food volunteers.



Maha Ganapathi Visarjanam / Vinayaka Nimarjan – September 7th, 2019. Huge procession of Clay Ganesha vigraha was organized around the temple and the vigraha was immersed in water with chantings of “Ganapathi Pappa Moriya” under the guidance of our temple priests.

Sharad Navaratri / Vijaya Dasami or Dussera Celebrations – September 29th – October 7th, 2019. The nine days of celebrations were performed with Ashta



Lakshmi Kumkum Archana, Lalitha Sahasranama Parayana along with Sami puja, Saraswathi Puja (samuhika aksharabhyasam) and Sri Seetha Rama Pattabhishekam. Many devotees visited and took part in all rituals. Each day, Abhishekam was performed to one form of Lakshmi and on final day to Moolavar Maha Lakshmi. Different Alankarams (decorations) were done daily. Delicious prasadam were distributed every day. Bommala koluvu, also called ‘Golu’, is a very old tradition during Dussera as it was a setup of so many varieties of dolls and decorating lights for all 9 days. Kids enjoyed watching all these dolls and were taught the importance of this by their parents.

Sundarakanda Parayanam – September 29th – October 6th, 2019. As the name itself describes that it is the most beautiful (Sundara=beauty and Kanda= section) and fifth part of Ramayana - the Hindu epic. This beautiful episode of Ramayanam is recited as parayanam (reading of Sacred holy book) in our S.V.Temple for 8 days.

Diwali Festival – October 27th, 2019. More than 2,000 devotees participated in these celebrations with great delight and took part in the worship of Goddess Lakshmi with Swarna pushpams (golden flowers, a special puja done on this day only) and enjoyed delicious & special dinner prepared and served by food volunteers. Like previous years, SV Temple organized fireworks to celebrate the festival of lights. Many devotees from nearby cities also visited the temple and participated in fireworks.



Give MN - the Max 2019 – November 14th, 2019. This is once a year opportunity where devotees or donors donated to the S.V. Temple towards the temple improvements. Reddy Foundation matched \$5,000 to these donations.

Diwali Cultural Talent Show Celebrations – November 16th, 2019. Kalanjali, the cultural wing of SV Temple has been a pioneer in bringing new programs to Twin cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul with the intent of giving back to the community and retain a culture for upcoming generation growing in USA. To celebrate Diwali, we had a cultural program on November 16th evening with varieties of dances & music which was enjoyed by all audiences and parents. All ages from 3 and above participated in the program.

Karthika masa Rudraabhishekams and Deepotsavam -October 28th, November 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th 2019. **Deepotsavam** - November 11th, 2019. During Karthika masam, temple priests performed Rudraabhishekam to Lord Shiva on every Monday for 5 weeks. Samuhika Sri Satyanarayana Swami Vratam was performed on full moon day (Karthika Purnima November 22nd, 2018). since it is a very auspicious day, many couples, more than 90 families participated in the Vratam. Karthika Deepotsavam (lighting of Diyas with 365 wicks) by all married women under the guidance of priests took place in the temple. Aakasa Deepam was placed on Dhwaya Stambam during the month of karthika masam.

Geetha Jayanthi Celebrations – December 7th, 2019. Geetha jayanthi was celebrated at the S.V. Temple by performing abhishekam and archana to Sri Krishna Swami and Bhagawath Geetha.

Marghazhi Mahotsavam (Dhanurmasam Begins) – December 15th, 2019. Dhanurmasa at our S.V. Temple got off to a great start this year with more than 60 artists (kids & adults)) participating in Marghazhi mahotsavam event held on December 15th. Kids performed in character dress up as Avatars of Lord Vishnu along with Lord Narayana and Goda Devi. Following this was an enchanting and divine Katha-Dance-Music performance on ‘Life of Andal’ presented by Taraangini School of Dance and Minnesota Devaganam Ensemble. Event ended with Aarati to Lord Srinivasa and blessings to all the artists. Event volunteers prepared and distributed free lunch prasadam to all the devotees.



Upcoming Events and Festivals

Date	Event
January 1	New Year Day Celebrations
January 6	Vaikuntha Ekadasi
January 13	Bhogi
January 14	Sankranthi/Pongal
January 15	Kanuma
January 31	Ratha Sapthami
February 5	Bheeshma Ekadasi
February 21	Maha Sivarathri
March 8	Holi/Vasantothsavam
March 24	Ugadi/Gudi Padwa/Cheti Chand (Vikari)
April 2	Sri Rama Navami
April 7	Sri Hanumat Jayanthi
April 13	Tamil New Year / Vishu
April 25	Akshaya Tritiya
April 28	Sri Ramanuja Jayanthi
May 2 - 3	Naadotsavam
May 5	Sri Nrisimha Jayanthi
May 6	Sri Tallapaka Annamacharya Jayanthi
TBD	Sri Annamacharya Sankeerthana Vaibhavam (Cultural event where only Annamacharya Keerthanas are sung as part of Annamacharya Jayanthi)
TBD	Natya Manjari (Cultural Event as part of Hindu New Year Celebrations)
June 7	SVT School Annual Day

S.V. Temple Priests - New Priest Introduction

We welcome our new priest Prasanna Srinivasan / Keshava Bhattar, joined the S.V. Temple in December 2019. He is a Sri Vaishnava priest, got his Pancharatra Agama deekshai under Sri Rajam Bhattar (Archagar at Varadaraja Swamy Devasthanam, Kanchipuram). He has been trained pancharathra agamam under Srinivasa Bhattar (Sri VeeraRaghava Temple / Mylapore Vedantha Desikar Devasthanam). He has been doing kainkaryam and working for the last 15 years as a full-time priest and performing parayanam in various temples around Tamil Nadu and participated in the Malaysia Temple Samprokshanam.



He studied Divyaprabandam and Veda Parayana at Bhattar Kuzham, KuSe patasala and under Embar Kannan Swami. He performed and participated in many temple events and organized Veda, Divyaprabandam Goshti and kalyana utsavams, Sudarsana Homams and other daily pujas and rituals around temples in Tamil Nadu.

He is married and has one baby girl. He is and can speak fluently in English, Tamil & Sanskrit and has working knowledge in Telugu and Hindi. His hobbies are participating in Carnatic kacheris (concerts) and photography.

Comments and Articles

We are inviting all readers, devotees, followers, students, teachers, and writers, etc. to submit devotional stories, essays, and experiences to S.V. Temple Newsletter editor. After newsletter committee's review, selected articles will be published in the upcoming issues of the newsletter. Editor of the newsletter will have all the rights to modify the articles to address language, grammar, and space-constraint issues. Since the audience of this newsletter comes from various age groups, we request you to send articles that everybody can understand. Make sure that your articles are helpful in educating the readers in devotional field and encourage them to follow dharma. Also, you can send comments on the published articles and ideas for new articles that you want to see. You can email your articles to news@svtemplemn.org.



Bramharpanam Bramha Havihi
 Brahmagnou Bramhanaa Hutham!
 Bramhaiva Thena Ganthavyam
 Bramha Karma Samadhina!!

We cannot live without doing actions in this world. The Gita teaches us to free ourselves from the bondage of Karma that is ever done. Every act of ours is to be known as service to the Lord. Our life itself is Yajna. One can perform many Yajna: Tapo Yajna, Yoga Yajna, Jnana Yajna and others. The sacrifice in the form of knowledge, i.e., Jnana Yajna is the most supreme of all Yajnas.



Thanks from S.V. Temple:

S.V. Temple earnestly thank all the generous donors, wonderful devotees, learned priests and dedicated volunteers that help to make our Temple a marvelous place of worship.

Temple Hours:

The temple is open weekdays from 9:30 AM to Noon & 5:30 PM to 8:00 PM
 Saturday and Sunday from 9:30 AM to 8:00 PM
 Please visit www.svtemplemn.org for updates and details.