

Samarpan

an offering...



Hindu Samaj Temple of Minnesota

President's Note

Have a Spiritual Interest? We have a Satsang for You!

"For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

Matthew 18:15-20

Satsang (lit., "in the company of Truth") is the spiritual practice of coming together to chant, meditate, or study the Guru's teachings. It is also the practice of sharing our wisdom with one another. In a diverse community like ours, people with similar interests, background or native language get together to sing bhajans, learn about the scriptures, serve the community or just hang out together. To enhance this interaction we encourage you to form Satsangs. We already have a few Satsangs that meet regularly. For example, the Sai Baba devotees meet on Friday evenings (SaiSatsang@histemplemn.org), children meet for Balagokulam on Sundays (www.balagokulam.org), adult members have formed a Hindu Chintan Kendra (HCK@histemplemn.org) to discuss the Gita, and another Satsang meets every second Saturday to sing Hindi bhajans.

Two new Satsangs have been formed in recent weeks. The Hindu Association of Rochester Trainees brings together medical students, residents, fellows, post-doctoral fellows and other trainees who are interested in learning more about Hindu religion and culture (details about this will be available in a future edition of *Samarpan*). If you are a trainee, you are welcome to

join this group by writing to (HART@histemplemn.org).

Seva Satsang (SevaSatsang@histemplemn.org) will serve as the Clearing House for community service projects. The goal is to take up 3-4 Service projects in a year and use the collective strength of the community to make a difference in the lives of those in need of help. If you believe in a cause and would like to band together in a group please forward your ideas and we can help with formation of a Satsang. We will also list existing Satsangs on our website along with contact emails to help the community know about them and join those that they feel connected to.

"What a single individual cannot achieve a well-knit group or society can. A man walking alone will feel tired and miserable at the end of five miles, but walking with ten others as a group he arrives refreshed and strong. Social living contributes to increased happiness." ~Sanathana Sarathi Dec 1981, p 289.

Hope you can find the right Satsang for you!

Sincerely,

Suresh Chari

President, Hindu Samaj Temple



Volume 1, Issue 2

February, 2011

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Editor's Note

This second issue of *Samarpan* is committed to informing our readers and community of a great opportunity to be a part of the upcoming *Shiva Linga Pratishtha* and *Kumbhabhishekam* worship, bestowing special divine grace and blessings on all devotees. As per rituals detailed in the *Agama Shastra*, *Shiva Linga* will be installed, consecrated and infused with life energy. These elaborate rituals culminate in the *Kumbhabhishekam*, to regenerate and re-infuse divine powers in the deity, and also to re-sanctify the temple complex. According to Hinduism, those that participate in this auspicious event will benefit by rejuvenating their lives. divine energy, are sure to have a beneficial effect on the community at large.

Due to the tremendous devotion and rituals performed by the priests and devotees at our Temple, *Shiva Linga Pratishtapana* and *Kumbhabhishekam* ceremonies, effervescent with divine energy, are sure to have a beneficial effect on the community at large.

Based on the feedback received following the first edition of *Samarpan*, we have reduced the length and added more photos, thus including a few requests. The *Samarpan* team strives to increase readership and reach out to the community.

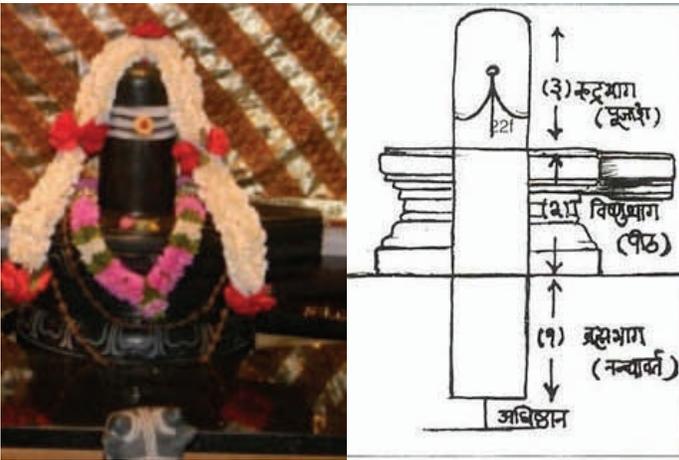
Did you know of a theory that the Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal in India derives its name from "Andoman" the Malay name for Hanuman ?



Shiva Linga Pratishtha and Kumbhabhishekam

Anantha Santhanam

The *Pratishthapana* of the *Shiva Linga* in our temple is scheduled to be held from February 10th to February 13th, 2011. The event starts with *Ganesha Puja* on Thursday, February 10th and concludes with *Kumbhabhishekam* on Sunday, February 13th. Scores of volunteers are working with the Temple Board, diligently planning the numerous Pujas performed during this auspicious occasion, under the guidance of our Priest, Harikrishna Ji. Sri Gowtham Sharma, a priest from the Hindu Temple of Minnesota, will join Harikrishna Ji in conducting these ceremonies. The events encompassed in the *Pratishthapana* are detailed on our Temple webpage, www.histemplemn.org. For the benefit of the readers of *Samarpan* newsletter, Harikrishna Ji has explained the significance of *Linga* worship.



The *Linga* represents *Maheshwara*, the Lord of the Universe, and consists of three parts (right picture): the lower part represents Brahma (*Brahma Bhaagam*), the middle part represents Vishnu (*Vishnu Bhaagam*) and the upper cylindrical part represents Rudra (*Rudra Bhaagam*). Hence, praying to the *Linga* entails concurrently praying to the Hindu trinity Gods of Creation, Preservation and Destruction - Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra, respectively.

For at least 40 days starting with the day of *Kumbhabhishekam* of *Shiva Linga*, a *Mandala Puja* is scheduled daily. The *Mandala Puja* consists of *Kala Nyasa Puja/Shodasha Kala Puja* and is aimed

at infusing divine energy into the newly installed deity. The entire process is akin to the maturation of a baby from a fetus within its mother's womb. Every day, at these Pujas, an offering, consisting of yogurt, milk and fruits along with flowers, will be made to the *Shiva Linga* (this offering is called *Maha Neivedhyam*). Families interested in volunteering for the *Mandala Puja* are requested to contact the Organizing Committee for suitable date(s) and the choice of *Prasaad*. Following the successful completion of the 40 days of *Mandala Puja*, the event concludes with a *Maha Mandala Abhishekam*, the details of which will be communicated later. Devotees participating in the *Pratishthapana* and the *Mandala Puja/Abhishekam* will receive the grace of Lord Shiva and are assured of advancement in their spiritual life, as well as material profits. Events of this magnitude will not be possible without the involvement of all the devotees affiliated to the Hindu Society in Rochester, and it is our humble request that devotees try to participate, in any role possible, with the organization and conductance of this auspicious and divine event.

The completion of *Pratishthapana* does not necessarily complete all the religious offerings to the *Shiva Linga*. Priest Harikrishna Ji will be performing *Pradhosha Kala Puja* (13th day every month) and *Masa Shivaratri Puja* on the *Thrayodashi* (14th day after full moon) every month. *Shivaratri* falling in the month of *Magha* is the most auspicious, called *Maha Shivaratri*, the details of which will be discussed in our next issue. Devotees, who sincerely worship Lord Shiva on *Maha Shivaratri*, are absolved of all sins and attain *Moksha*. Please mark your calendar for *Maha Shivaratri* celebrations to be held at our Temple on March 3rd, 2011.

Om Namah Shivaya!

**OM triyambakam yajāmahe sugandhim pushTivardhanam,
urvārukamiva bandhanān mrrityormokshiya māmrritāt.**

Seva

As part of Unity of Faiths lesson, Sai Bal Vikas has scheduled a trip for the children to visit a synagogue in Rochester, on Friday, February 11th. For more information, please contact Unni (ukg100@yahoo.com)

A Seva activity for children (10 years and up) as well as adults, has been organized by Shivani of Sri Sathya Sai Baba Organization. The Seva activity will be conducted in collaboration with the Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Rochester, an organization involved in rehabilitating homeless families. The first orientation took place on January 25, 2011, with 6 volunteers representing the Sai Baba group from the Hindu Temple. There is another two-hour orientation class scheduled on February 10th, 2011. Only those who have attended the orientation can participate in this selfless service activity that consists of cooking or bringing prepared food for the guest families at the host sites and interacting with the children and adults of the guest families. The Orientation class will be held at: Zumbro Lutheran Church, 624 3rd Ave SW, Rochester, MN 55902-3382,

The snake curled three times around the neck of Lord Shiva depicts the past, present and future time.

Devotion through Self-less Service – Youth/Adult Volunteers Program

Anantha Santhanam

As you enter our temple, have you ever wondered who maintains the cleanliness of the temple premises? A group of young and adult volunteers, assiduously coordinated by Mrs. Karpagam Maran under the 'Youth/Adult Volunteers Program', has taken the self-less task of keeping the temple premises clean. Lawn mowing, trimming trees, raking leaves during fall, and keeping the sidewalk and parking lot at the temple premises clean are some of the activities carried out by this enthusiastic group. Their group sets a perfect example of *Nishkâma Karma* (selfless service). Indeed, such acts are prescribed in the *Bhagavad Gita* as a means for spiritual elevation toward perfection.

Lord Krishna states,

*'abhyaase apy asamartho asi
mat-karma-paramo bhava
mad-artham api karmaani
kurvan siddhim avaaapsyasi'*

"If you cannot practice the regulations (laid by Jnâna Yoga and Bhakti Yoga), then devote yourself to My work, because by working for Me, you will attain perfection"

(Bhagavad Gita 12.10)

Devotional acts such as construction of temples, cleaning the temple premises, lighting lamps therein, and gathering flowers are some of the acts purported in this *Shloka* (poetic verse). Indeed, the work volunteered through the Youth/Adults Volunteer Program serve as an excellent opportunity for those interested in elevating themselves in the path of devotion through service.

As of date, Mrs. Maran is assisted by five or six student volunteers throughout the year, and five more volunteers partake in raking of leaves and trimming trees during fall. Participants in this program are duly recognized and appreciated with a 'Certificate of Participation' at the Hindu Samaj Temple's Annual General Body Meeting. Devotees, young and old, interested in performing these acts of devotion through service can contact Mrs. Karpagam Maran at

karpagam.maran@hotmail.com.



Community Members Honored!

The Board of Hindu Samaj Temple announced the *2011 Life Time Service to Community award* to Smt. Savita (Neelu) Katarya and Shri John Smith during the Annual General Body meeting on Jan 31. This award is presented annually at the Temple's Annual General Body Meeting to those who have provided continued exemplary service to the community.

Neelu Ji has been successfully running the Hindi *Paathshala* for children for the past eleven years. Started in the year 2000 with a handful of students, the *Paathshala* has a current enrollment of over 40 students from the community. The students learn to read, write and speak Hindi, in addition to gaining knowledge and exposure to the different cultures and traditions of India. We thank Neelu Ji for her selfless and relentless efforts to keep our next generation closely acquainted with Indian culture.



John Smith has been offering free Yoga classes every Wednesday at the Temple since 2006. His class has a mix of temple devotees and the Rochester community members. Children and adults are welcome to join his class. John's motivation to teach comes from what he calls "*Karma Class*" - giving back to the community in a true sense of "*daana*".

The *Samarpan* team congratulates both recipients and thanks them for their continued contributions to the community.



Mind is consciousness which has put on limitations. You are originally unlimited and perfect. Later you take on limitations and become the mind.
Ramana Maharshi

Upcoming Events :



FEBRUARY EVENTS

02-06-2011	Vasantha Panchami (Saraswati Puja)
02-10-2011	Ratha Saptami
02-10-2011 through 02-13-2011	Siva Linga Pratisthapana and Kumbhabhishekam
<i>Note: Shivalinga Mandala Pooja Starts on Feb 13th Sunday 2011 and continues until March 24th (Thursday)</i>	
02-17-2011	Pournami – Sri Satya Narayana Vratham
02-20-2011 (SUNDAY)	Sankatahara Chaturthi



MARCH EVENTS

03-01-2011	Pradosha Kala Pooja
03-02-2011	Maha Shivaratri
03-05-2011	Talk by Aseem Shukla
03-18-2011	Pournami – Sri Satya Narayana Vratham
03-19-2011	Holi Cultural Event
03-22-2011	Sankatahara Chaturthi
03-31-2011	Pradosha Kala Pooja

Learn more in the Upcoming Events section from www.histemplemn.org

Contributions

Call for Articles

Samarpan is the monthly newsletter of the Hindu Samaj Temple. Articles for the March issue are now being solicited from the Rochester Community. We welcome contributions from adults as well as children. You are invited to write on any topic related to Hinduism, Spirituality, Hindu Mythology or the Cultural Heritage of India that align with the temple's goal of promoting Hinduism and Indian Culture. The articles must be original and should have references to any quotes borrowed from other sources. The deadline for submission is February 25th, 2011. Please e-mail your articles to editors@histemplemn.org

We hope to hear from you.

Dhanyavad,

Rajani Sohni.

Samarpan Editorial Board

Shyamala Bhat

Surya Ghatty

Unni krishnan

Smita Krish

Vaishali Joshi

Anantha Santhanam

Rajani Sohni

Nisha Unni

This is your space. Please contribute and make this newsletter a delight for the community.

Rudrakshas, the prayer bead for Hindus and associated with Lord Shiva, are the seeds of a blue fruit and so are also known as blueberry beads. A Rudraksha can have anywhere between 1 to 108 faces. However, beads with 22 or more faces are extinct.

Shishu's Contribution

Vaishali Joshi

Children in our community participated in a number of events in the month of January. These events included *Pongal* and *Makar Sankranti* celebrations on January 15th, 2011, India Day celebrations on January 30th, 2011, and *Suryanamaskar Yagna* from January 15th – 30th, 2011.



Makar Sankranti Celebrations (January 15th, 2011)

The *Marathi Mandal* celebrated *Makar Sankranti* signifying the journey of the Sun to the north and the coming of Spring, the harvest season and warmer days. The children participated in fun art activities at the event. People exchanged *tilgul* (sesame seeds and jaggery) as tokens of goodwill. The under-lying thought in this exchange is to forget past ill-feelings and hostilities and resolve to speak sweetly and remain friends.



India Day Celebrations (January 30th, 2011)

The children of *Paathshala* celebrated India Day with presentations and displays of the different states of India. The program included play performances by children in each of the *Paathshala* classes. Using PowerPoint presentations, each student talked about one State in India and shared facts about the cuisine specific to the State, its famous people and tourist attractions.



Suryanamaskar Yagna (January 15th - 30th, 2011)

The Balagokulam children and families participated in the *Suryanamaskar Yagna* (details at www.hssus.org/sny) by performing 6118 *suryanamaskars* (a sequence of 10 yoga postures) during this period. *Suryanamaskar Yagna* is conducted nationwide every year during the period of *Makar Sankranti* as an offering to the Sun God for "Health for Humanity". A total of nearly 12000 *Suryanamaskars* were performed by participants from the Rochester area. The *Samarop* (concluding event) was held at the Temple on January 30th. This event was covered by KAAL-TV and all participating kids received certificates of participation.



Pongal Celebrations (January 15th, 2011)

Children performed a dance about *Dashavatara* during *Pongal* celebrations. Himaja, one of the dancers, explained the significance of the festival: "*Pongal* is the Harvest festival. The farmers harvest their crop and bring it home and make *Pongal*. Also we pray to the Goddess of grains (DhaanyaLaxmi)."

The World's first university was established in Takshila in 700 BC. More than 10,500 students from all over the world studied more than 60 subjects. The University of Nalanda built in the 4th century was one of the greatest achievements of ancient India in the field of education.



Food for Thought -February

Nisha Kurup

1.Lord Dakshinamoorthy is a form of

a)Vishnu b) Shiva c) Ganesha

2.The four heads of Lord Brahma represent the four ...

a)Directions b) Senses c) Vedas.

3.Goddess Parvathi is the consort of Lord Shiva and is also known as....

a)Shakthi b) Viryalakshmi c) Rukmini

4. Ekadasi is...

a) the first day of the Lunar cycle
b) the eleventh day of the Lunar Cycle
c) the fourteenth day of the Lunar Cycle.

5. Ahimsa is not hurting any being by

a) Speech b) Speech and thought c) Speech, thought and action.

6. What is the name of the poison that Lord Shiva swallowed during the Samudra Manthan?

a) Hayavadhana b) Halahala c) Kaliya

7. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi passed away on

a) January 31st 1948
b) January 26th 1947
c) January 30th 1948

8. Lord Shiva is an embodiment of

a) Anger b) Renunciation c) Prosperity.

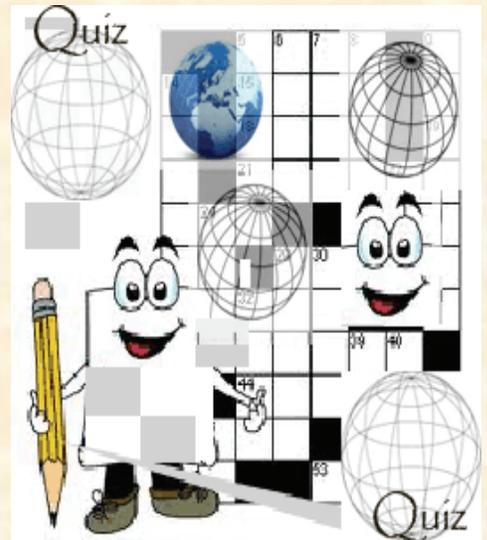
9. Who spoke these words?

“What ever you think, that you will be; if you think yourself weak, weak you will be; if you think yourself strong, strong you will be.”

a) Mahatma Gandhi b) Swami Vivekananda c) Henry David Thoreau.

10. The given words are different names of Lord Shiva. Unscramble them.

a) raaksna
b) naklaniat
c) tajarana
d) hdaveama



If you would like to contribute to this column please email

editors@histemplemn.org with the title “Food for Thought”. Contributors should reach 45 days in advance of the issue being published.

Winner



The winner of the January

Quiz

Ganga Gopalakrishnan

Answers For January

1. Uttarayanam
2. Gayathri Mantra
3. Pathanjali
4. Republic Day
5.
 - a. Pongal Tamil Nadu
 - b. Lohri Punjab
 - c. Bhogi Andhra Pradesh
 - d. Bihu Assam
 - e. Sankranti Karnataka

Choose the correct answer from the following multiple choices.

- 1.Ganga
2. Parvathi
3. Baanalinga
4. Kaalahasthi
- 5.Kedarnath

Lighter side -





Hindu Samaj Temple of Minnesota, Inc.

911 11th Av NW, Rochester MN 55901

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Automatic Monthly Direct Bank Debit Authorization Form

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Savings Routing number _____
(9 digits)

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I do hereby give permission to Hindu Samaj Temple of MN and their banking institution to debit the authorized amount mentioned above once every month. This authorization will be valid until revoked by me in writing. Unless otherwise stated the debit will be third or fourth week of every month.

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