

DEEPAM



HAPPY DEEPAVALI AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

**Volume 31, Deepavali Special Issue 1
November 2021**



Hindu Temple

13010 Arbor Street, Omaha, NE, 68144

hindu temple Deepavali

Cultural Virtual Event

November 14, 2021 • 4 PM

Link to watch the program will be announced
via Email and Facebook

Followed by Raffle on Facebook Live



RAFFLE TICKET
\$10

1st Prize: \$1000 in cash

2nd Prize: 65" TV (\$700)

3rd Prize: Vitamix Blender (\$350)

4th Prize(3): \$100 Indian Grocery Gift Card

5th Prize(6): \$50 Indian Restaurant Gift Card

6th Prize:(10): \$15 Indian Restaurant Gift Card

Raffle Contact

Alekha Dash
402 492 9707

Ankit Desai
402 547 9017

Shantaram Joshi
402 965 9777

Deepa Kashyap
402 932 7395

Anil Bhalla
402 333 6607

Chandrasekhar
402 812 5654

Cultural Program Contact

cultural@htom.us

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Priest: **Pandit Nagabhat Vidyashankar**
Pandit Pandit Badari Narayana
Pandit Laxmikant (Amol) Kulkarni
Sevak: **Chandrasekhar Karmegam**

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Vice President: **Venkatesh Bettadapura**
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Member (20-22): **Kalyan Karpagavinayagam**

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Finance: **Meera Kashyap**
Education: **Rajesh Sharma**
Cultural: **Shital Kontamwar**
Mahaprasad: **Surendra khandavalli /**
Vidya Sagar
Facility Maintenance: **Vikram Patel**
IT Management: **Sujeet Reddy /**
Shivakumar Nyalam

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Temple Tours/Public Relation: **Vandana Singh**
Volunteer/Welcome: **Nageswarao Atota / Ganesh Naik**
Nomination: **Srini Nedunoori**
Vedantic Center of Nebraska: **Dr. Phani Tej Adidam**

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Past Chairperson: **Muralidhar Chintapalli**

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Namaskaram All!
Om Ganeshaaya Namaha!!



Namaste. On behalf of Executive Committee and its sub committees, I want to wish you all Happy Deepavali.

We had a busy festive season and it had been a blessing to be associated with all the festivals. We have successfully performed – Jagannadha rath Yatra, Bahuda yatra, Ganesha Chaturthi, Janmastami, Guru Purnima, Navarathri and Dasara. We had performed two major havans for the welfare of the community. I want to thank our Puja committee and Priests for their commitment. After eighteen months of long gap, we are starting to see more and more devotees feeling comfortable coming to temple. Thanks to adhering to mandatory face mask while in temple premises.

The second phase of COVID was very deadly in India. Our condolences to those of you who lost family and friends. There was a scarcity of Oxygen Concentrators and flow meters. I want to thank all the donors who helped us raise and donate about \$50,000. We are continuing our meal services at Stephen Center every week. We donated some blankets during winter. If you want to be part of it, please reach out to me. I want to thank all of you who supported parking lot renovation. We spent \$290 K for paving concrete parking lot.

Beyond these activities, our temple started cafeteria at nominal donations to temple. Currently the cafeteria services will run every Saturday from 10:30 am to 1 PM in the temple Mini Hall. Please support the cafeteria and provide your feedback. I am thankful to all the volunteers who are preparing and serving the food. I want to thank our facility manager for all his support with Cafeteria operations.

I am excited to share with you we are in midst of forming Youth Volunteer Organization. We had about 25 youth volunteers signed up. We hope to share more about all the wonderful work they did in future publications of Deepam. I want to thank all volunteers who are supporting temple activities – Religious and Vedanta activities, Finance, Bal Vihar, Temple Tours, Publications, Cultural and decorations, Maha Prasadam & Cafeteria Services. Last and most important is my appeal to all devotees to support temple by signing up for ACH. I thank all patrons for your continued support to our temple. Always at the service of Lord!!

May Lord Prasanna Ganapati bless us all!!

Best Regards
Ketan Patel (Ankit)
President, Executive Committee
(2021-2022)



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Dear Hindu Temple Devotees

Namaskar

May the blessings of Lord Ganesh be upon you all.

Happy Deepavali,

It is with heartfelt gratitude that in this festive season I am writing this message as the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees (BOT).

To start with I want to express my gratitude to Murlidhar Chintapalli and Sirini Nedunoori respectively outgoing Chairperson of the BOT and President of the Executive Committee as well as their able teams for superb leadership and services they provided during the challenging year of global pandemic. Additionally I want to express my sincere thanks to all volunteers who have served the Temple in various capacities. Moreover, I want to communicate my gratitude to the leaders of Balvihar for imparting religious and spiritual knowledge to the future generations of Hindu leaders. Thanks to Vedantic Center leader Dr Tej Adidam for engaging the community at large for spiritual discourse. Last but not the least thanks to Dr. Sanjay Singh Ji for successful completion of beautiful Sant Sadan an envy for other Hindu temples.

I want to thank current BOT Chairs for Long Range (Dr Rakesh Singh Ji) Fund Raising (Dr Alekha Das Ji) Bye Laws (Suresh Seshadri Ji) as well as Vice Chair the BOT (Malathi Balu Ji) and Secretary of the BOT (Kantharaj Etigi Ji) and all Board Members for their genuine support for their guidance for all functions of BOT this year. Also, my thanks to Ketan Patel Ji (President Executive Committee) and all the Members of EC for their steady hand on the wheel in guiding the operations of the Temple

I want to devote part of my message to **Act of Charitable Giving or Daan**. You may know that Temple has significant financial need to meet the current and future operational and capital costs (details you will see in this Deepam).

Our Hindu scriptures e.g., Vedas, Bhagvad Gita and Ramayana have references to importance of **Daan**

In Vedas, charity, and benevolence have been attributed to paramount part of religion. Rigveda (verse – 3.24.5) says, “शतहस्त समाहर सहस्त हस्त सं किर” which means earn with hundreds of hands and donate with thousands of hands

In Bhagvad Gita Lord Krishna says “अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्यज्ञो विधिदृष्टो य इज्यते । यष्टव्यमेवेति मनः समाधाय स सात्त्विकः॥(verse-17-11) which means when one believes that charity must be performed without thought of reward, is **Sattvic** meaning moral, virtuous, good, holy, pure, wise and vital in character.

In Ramchritarmanas (Ramayana Uttarkand) Sant Tulsidas Ji states: प्रगट चारि पद धर्म के कलिल महुँ एक प्रधान। जेन केन बिधि दीन्हें दान करइ कल्याण॥(verse-103(ख)) means there are four types of donations like daily, casual, Kamay and Vimal. Vimal donation is given to delight the God. Please delight the God

I therefore on behalf of the Board of Trustees, request you to please **Donate, Donate and Donate**. May the blessings of Goddess Laxmi be upon you and yours.

With my Best Wishes, Humility and Gratitude

Subhash C Bhatia

Chairperson, Board of Trustees (2021-2022)



Please Support Your Temple by Buying the Deepavali Raffles Tickets! The details of prizes are provided below:

Ticket No: <u>492</u>		Ticket No: <u>492</u>	
Name:	Address:	Phone:	

hindu temple
Annual Deepavali Raffle 2021
NOVEMBER 14 | 4 PM

1st Prize: \$1000 in cash
2nd Prize: 65" TV (\$700)
3rd Prize: Vitamix Blender (\$350)
4th Prize(3 each): \$100 Indian Grocery Gift Card
5th Prize(6 each): \$50 Indian Restaurant Gift Card
6th Prize:(10 each): \$15 Indian Restaurant Gift Card

\$10



HAPPY DEEPAVALI AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR WISHES



From:
PURNIMA AND BABU GUDA
RAHUL AND REEMA

Financial Update: Hindu Temple Omaha

Hindu Temple, Omaha NE (Jan 2021 thru Sep 2021)

INFLOW		OUTFLOW	
<i>Hundi collections cash</i>	<i>\$52,977</i> <i>\$37,307</i>	<i>Operating expenses</i>	<i>\$89,711</i>
<i>Direct deposits</i>		<i>Priest & Staff expenses</i>	<i>\$138,078</i>
<i>Puja services</i>	<i>\$90,178</i>	<i>Sant Sadan Construction</i>	<i>\$13,973</i>
<i>Donations</i>	<i>\$146,231</i>	<i>Parking lot renovation</i>	<i>\$283,581</i>
<i>Sponsored/event collections</i>	<i>\$41,016</i>	<i>Sponsorship & Events</i>	<i>\$1,906</i>
<i>Charity sponsorships</i>	<i>\$56,028</i>	<i>Charity donations</i>	<i>\$50,137</i>
<i>Pledged Donations</i>	<i>\$177,068</i>	<i>Devotee Loan & Mortgage Int</i>	<i>\$38,260</i>
<i>Federal Grants</i>	<i>\$3,523</i>	<i>Towards Mortgage/payoff</i>	<i>\$25,990</i>
<i>Asset Sale</i>	<i>\$98,843</i>	<i>Towards Housing/payoff</i>	<i>\$13,525</i>
Total Inflow 2021 (YTD)	\$703,172	Total outflow 2021 (YTD)	\$655,161

----- Balances As of September 2021 -----

Balance owed on Federal loans: *\$145,727*

Balance owed on Devotee loans: *\$450,001*

Balance owed on priest/staff housing mortgage: *\$128,195*

Operating Account Balance : \$46,043

Savings (Endowment) balance : \$72,582

Interested in donating your appreciated securities (stocks)? It's very easy to transfer to your Temple! Please supply the following info to your brokerage firm.

Receiving Firm Name: **TD Ameritrade**

Receiving Firm DTC number: **0188**

Receiving Account title: **HINDU TEMPLE OMAHA**

Receiving Account Number: **868591259**

NOTE: This is subject to change and hence please check with Temple for the latest account information.

Then, email htom.finance@gmail.com with the details about your donation and contact information and with the subject line "Securities Donation" so that we can follow up to ensure a successful transfer. We generally consider the closing price of the stock on the day we have received to value your contribution. It's that easy!!

TRACK YOUR DONATIONS – We track your donations as complete as possible and send annual donation amounts to your address or email. For any changes please keep us updated with your latest email and physical address by e-mailing to htom@htom.omhcoxmail.com so that we can send financial communications to your latest email / address.



Hindu Temple Cafeteria

GRAND OPENING

October 16, 2021

Every Saturday 10:30am - 1pm thereafter



Idli, Sambar
& 2 chutneys

Dosa, Sambar
& 2 chutneys



Samosa



Chole Bhature



Balvihar Activities and Learning





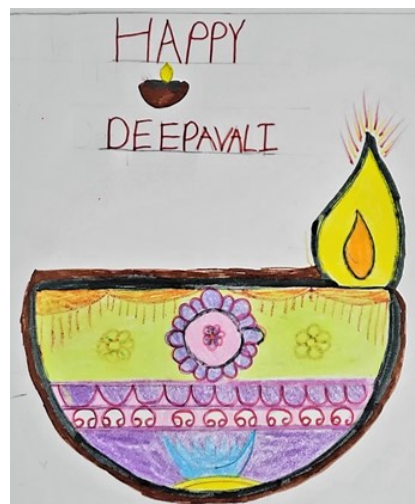
Arhaan-Prathama Jr-Rangoli



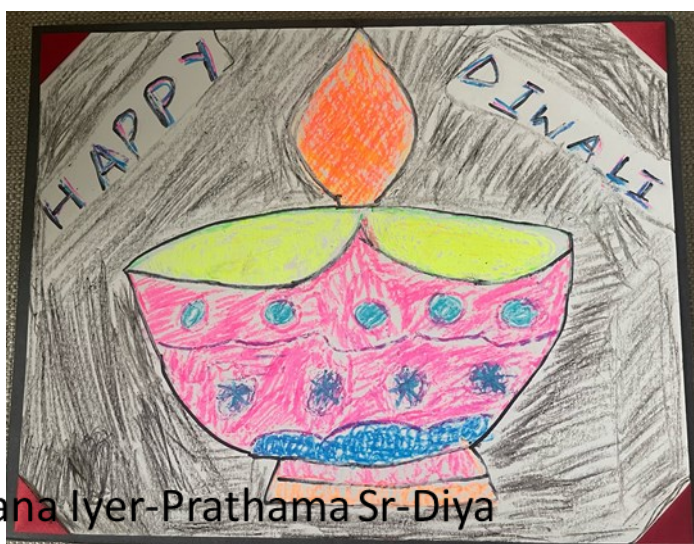
Armaan Sawhney-Prathama Jr-Diya



Neil Deshmukh-Dwitya Jr-Lord Ganesha



Vedanth Kulkarni-Dwitya Jr-Diya



Sahana Iyer-Prathama Sr-Diya

Balvihar Activities by Kids

Balvihar and Omaha Indian Community

Balvihar Omaha has been playing an important role in our community since 1970's to inculcate Hindu values, culture and spiritual values in our young generation. This is pivotal as we are not only introducing them to Hindu concepts and philosophy but also encouraging them to become tomorrow's torch bearers of Hinduism. Balvihar provides a place to our kids to get together with their peers in an inviting environment that introduces, encourages and fosters habits based on Hindu teachings. We feel appreciated and encouraged when our graduates share how they are benefiting from Balvihar learnings-

- Sense of Indian community
- Expose to Indian culture traditions and Hindu religion and spirituality
- Temple is a sacred place to practice Indian and Hindu beliefs
- Sets up to connect with Indian heritage, grand parents and other relatives till living in India
- Allows them to get their questions regarding India and Hinduism answered
- It offers place and opportunity to give back to community by volunteering in different activities while learning about their Indian roots
- Place that allows to expose other members of Omaha and Nebraska community to visit and get introduced to India and Hinduism by means of tours
- Provides platform to kids to expand their interests in extra curricular activities like- prayers/shlokas, dancing, plays, Hindu mythology, and volunteering

As we all know that 2021 has been a year filled with all kinds of challenges, Balvihar under the guidance of Hindu Temple leadership and Balvihar volunteers has adapted to continue to provide services and support our mission to kids of our community in support of Covid-19.

Rajesh Sharma, Balvihar Coordinator

Introduction of Diwali: by Aradhya Pawar

Today we are going to learn about Diwali. Diwali is "the festival of lights". We celebrate it by making foods such as shankarpali, laddu, chakli, and many more sweets. We also worship for five days. Mainly Hindus celebrate it, but other religions such as Jains, Sikhs, and some Buddhists celebrate it. This worldwide-known festival is celebrated in many countries but is originated in southern Asia.

Day 1: Dhanteras

On this day, people clean their houses. They make rangoli, colorful designs. They also light diyas, small lamps.

Day 2: Kali Chaudas

Kali Chaudas is the day when Lord Krishna defeats Narakasura and rescues 16,000 princesses kidnapped by this gruesome demon.

Day 3: Lakshmi Puja

On the third day of this fascinating holiday, people do the Lakshmi Puja. Diyas are set afloat in a tray of water. This day is to remember and give respect to ancestors.

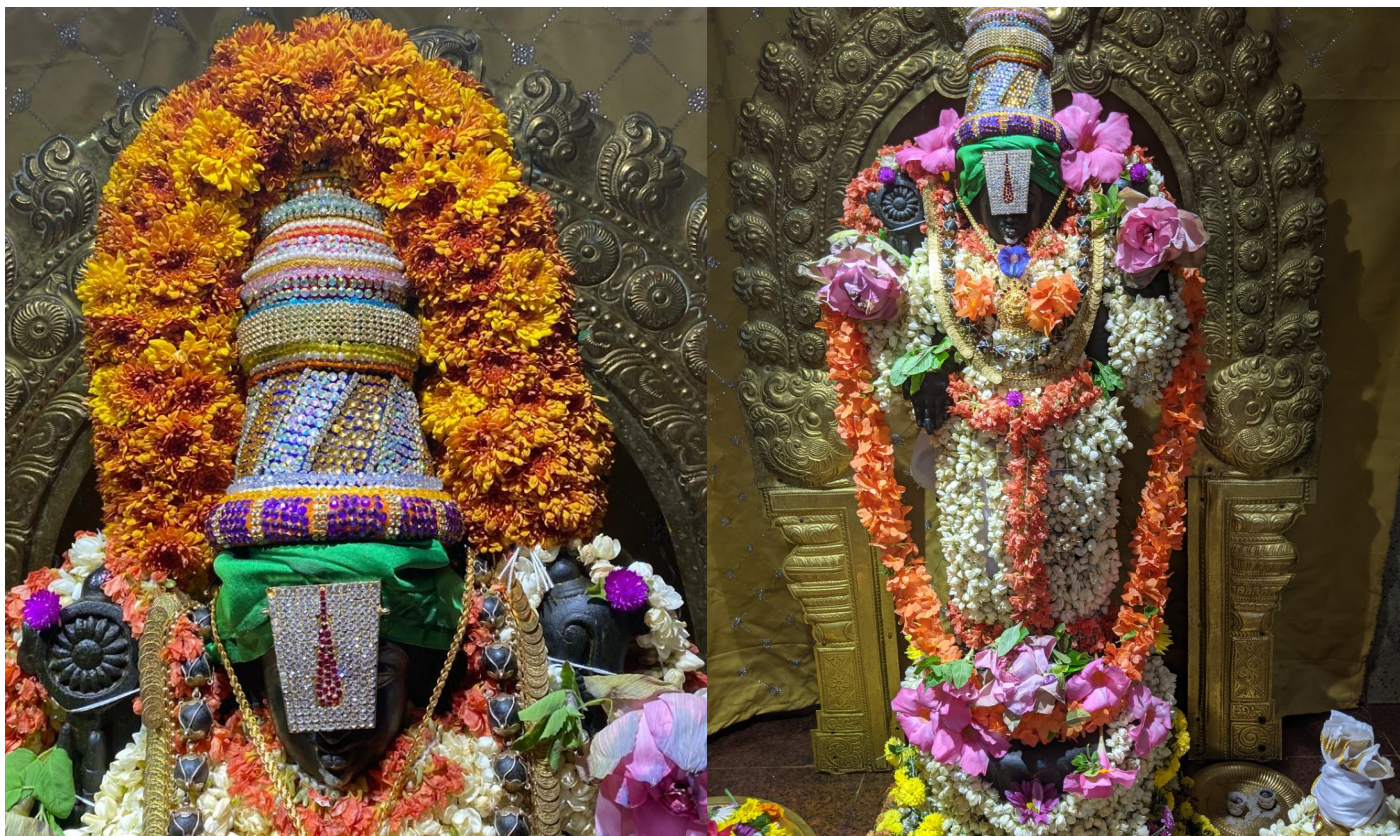
Day 4: Govardhan Puja

This day marks the defeat of the demon Bali. This day also marks the bond of husband and wife. Some communities make hundreds of kinds of food.

Day 5: Bhai Dooj

This day is the last day of Diwali. Bhai Dooj means "brothers' day". The sister does a small puja, and the brother gives a gift to the sister.

So, as you can see, Diwali is a fabulous holiday.



Venkateshwara Jayanthi 2021



Navaratri Puja - 2021



Ganesh Chaturthi Puja - 2021

Hindu Temple Donations thru Dec 31, 2020

Grand Benefactor (Over \$250,000)

Vinod Gupta	Shobhana & Jagmohan Desai
-------------	---------------------------

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Usha & V T Ramakrishnan	Kiran & Deepak Gangahar	Jane & Vedhagiri Selvakumar	Sudha & Anil Agarwal	Poonam & Sanjeev Sharma
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Chandrika & Mohan Mysore	Sandhya & Shailendra Saxena	Vandana & Sanjay Singh	Usha & Sushant Devaraju	
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Bharti & Ashok Amin	Cindy & Aryan Mooss	Swarna & Gopi Gopalakrishnan	Kumudini & Jagdish Pai	Sandhya Thamma & Srinivasu Pinapati
Aparna & Srinivasa Rao Nedunoori	Amrita & Sabyasachi Mahapatra	Asha & Bikram Singh	Radha Balasubramanian & Natarajan	Kiran & Sudesh Gambhir
Meena & Narendra Reddy	Kusum & Anil Bhalla	Deepa & Venkatesh Bettadapura	Jayanthi & Palvannanthan Ganesan	Gyanendra & Smriti Bhandari Chhotry
Swaroop & Jagdish Nijhawan	Madhu & Arvind Patel	Ravikumar Subramaniam Pillai & Umasankari Sundaram	Apar Ganti & Ketki Tendulkar	Premkumar Neelakanta
Meena & Krishna Murthy	Madhuri and Chandra Are	Bhavani & Sam Chigurupati Rao	Sudha & Anand Karney	
Sarbani & Anup Chakraborty	Hena & Sanat Roy	Geeta & Sundar Chokkara	Manjula & Natarajan Raman	

Patrons (Over \$10,000)

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Latha & HG Jayappa	Murty Adabala	Padma & Krishan Lassi	Rao & Madhavi Konijeti	Nagaraju Mudhelli & Dhanalaxmi
Kanta & Prem Arora	Madan & Lauryl Ramakrishnan	Kalpana & Vasudeva Murthy	Ratheesh Nair	Nandita & Malay Dalal
Jyoti & Uday Chintalapudi	Srinivasarao Mallipudi	Surinder Batra	Devika & Arunkumar Pondicherry	Madhavi & Sayi Repakula
Kavish Rohatgi and Timisha Singh	Sangeeta & Sandeep Agrawal	Jeya & Prasad	Monica Arora & Michael Bodensteiner	Sivakumar Shanmugam
Vishal & Sonya Khanna	Jayanthi & Mohan Balmoori	Bangalore Arunagiri	Anand & Pooja Deshmukh	Kanad Sharma
Visalakshi & Ramnathan Narayanan	Anusha Narasimhan & Vijay Anand Kannan	Santhanam Sirungattur & Hemamalini Krishnan	Somnath & Meera Singh	Progress Physical Therapy
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Amit Ashok Khot & Padmaja Khot	Tamil Sangam	Saroj & Bhupinder Gangahar	Padmashri & Murali Ambekar	Ketan Patel
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Kavitha & Sathish Shanmugam	Raghu Tadikonda	Raghu Dasari & Ganta Snigdha	Nageswara Athota	Suseela Sarasamma & Premchand Nair
Asha & Murali Deshpande	Sai K Renukunta	Prafulla & Vasant Raval	Sumitra & Bhasker Patel	Prakash Kukreja & Priti Agrawal
Praveena & Jayachandran Narasimhan	Vijay Kashyap & Deepa Hangal	Lalitha & Atul Kunte	Nagarajan Venkataraman	Harish & Seema Bhandula
Meera & Mahendra Varman	Viji & Suresh Seshadri	Murali & Mukunda Devanaboyina	Mala & Rakesh Bedi	Swapna Kanuri & Chakri Pureti
Sharath Kasi Reddy & Saritha Reddy	Marie & Satish Mediratta	Surendranath Subramaniam & Meera Kashyap	Shanti & Shyam Somani	Veerender R Kandi
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Angela & Vinay Nijhawan	Bindu & Vishwajeth Bhoopalam	Kalpana & Prasad Padala	Jayashree Giridhar & Giridhar Thoranagallu	
Namaste Foods	Manju & Parmender Mehta	Hiranmayi Srinivas & Sunil Arora	Aswathy Chandran & Narayanan Nair	
Sandeep Sheth & Susan Hendrick	Jayanthi & Krishnamurthy Viswanathan	Asha & Mahesh Patel	Muralidhar & Sudharani Chintapalli	
Sivamani Somasundaram & Jayasudha Sivamani	Telugu Samiti	Seema & Kantharaja Etigi	Suchitra & Asit Pattnaik	

Grand Donor (Over \$5,000)

Shreejit & Dhanya Nair	Sumantha & Jeffery Sedor	Usha & Venu Chivukula	Bhaskar & Viji Setti	Jyotsana Sharma
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Sowjanya & Sangamesh Phulari	Deepika & Rahi Khandelwal	Jyothi & Sudhir Kalra	Mandira & Amit Khanna	Rajesh & Harsha Sharma
Asha & Niranjan Agarwal	Geetha & K Parameshwaran	Candy Grush	Swati & Ashish Jain	Makrand A Bhide
Kartik Gollapudi	Sudhir Gajre	Kavita & Ranganath Rao	Sanjay & Sridevi Garapati	Hena & Kirti Patel
Laksh & Chaitra	Deepak Sinha & Suhita Sinha	Sunil & Lala Luthra	Smrati & Maneesh Jain	Nayana & Thakor Patel
Bengali Association of Nebraska	Srinivas Chundru & Matha Yaramati	Suvarna & Prasad Adusumalli	Suneel Doddapaneni	Yashaswini & Nagesh Kuriyavar
Ratish Gopal & Smitha Ratish	Veena & Sanjay Varma	Venkat & Sitalavanya Malina	Subhash Chandra	Asha & Pravin Desai
Yugandhar & Shilpa Vana-parti	Sadhna & Devender Malik	Maya & Purathatil Krishnan	Pooja & Anil Jayaprakash	Madhavi & Gautam Bhadbade
India Association of Nebraska	Omaha Tamil Palli	Neeruben & Sureshbhai Patel	Kanchan & Umesh Mehta	Priya Venkataraman
Usha & Premnath H Singh	Chandra M Kotipalli	Ganesh Hospitality LLC DBA Super 8	Sona Marudaraj & Marudaraj Jivaraj	Manashi & Debasis Bagchi
Vathsala & Subra Raman	Nisha & Vikas Padhye	Arbuda Hospitality LLC DBA Days Inn	Jitendrabhai Patel/Lavkesh Patel	Krishna & Iswari Chennam
Minaxi & Pradip Mistry	Madhu Vallabhaneni	Sun Hospitality LLC	Geetha & Narasimha Gondi	Puspa & Arvind Patel
Best Brains / Prasad Nalamittu	Mahesh & Prasanthi Gudaruru	Pratap Reddy Syamalaraja & Vasudha	Venkatesh Ramakrishnan	Sanju & Kamlakar Rajurkar
Reetu and Susanta Hota	Nilam & Dhaval Naik	Sharada & Ramakrishna Reddy	Duvvuri Rakesh	Sujeet Reddy Adudodla & Neeraja
Venugopal Rao Boinpally & Madhavi Pamera	Madhu Midathada & Srinivasa Rao Kadubandi	Magesh & Anitha Sreenivasan	Nirmala & Rajagopalan Parthasarathy	Jai Bikhchandani & Priyanka Vashisht
Surendra Khandavalli	Sai Maddipoti & Sudha Ravilla	Vijay VenkataSubramanian	Vaishnavi & Seshadri Rajagopal	Gopi K & Krishnaveni Mudhapati
Shilpa Somraj & Prahalada Rao	Greeta Juliet Dhanraj & Rengarajan Ramanujam	Harikumari & Ayyangar Komanduri	Surya S Maddipati	Sugata Sensarma & Sumitra Bhattacharya
Suganthi & Krish Soundarajan	Pravardhan R Birthi	Balu Ramakrishnan & Malathi Balu	Anil K Tati & Jyotirmayi	Sreenivasulu Kode & Karuna Rasineni
Pushpa & Subramaniam Srikumaran	Eshwar Mandava & Anusha Tummala	Meenakshi & Deepak Khazanchi	Shefalika & Shashi Verma	Venkata Kolli
Rajasekhar Bodduluri	Roshni & Ganesh Paduvaru	Sasmita & Chittaranjan Ray	Rohini & Mallari Kulkarni	Stanton Inn Motel
Nebraska Nepalese Society	Jeya & Jothi Muruganathaswamy	Andrea & Dhruba Chakravarti	Venugopala Potineni & Mrudula Nagineeni	Ramesh & Devi Kotaru
Anil Ayalasomayajula	Mahadevan Subramaniam	Lalit and Jayashree Bohra	Maya Ravichandran & Ravichandran Rajagopal	Jeyamkondan Subbiah
Baldev & Kailash Luthra	Srija, Manjari and Srikanth	Gayathri & Ramasubramanian Rajamani	Ranjith Kumar & Keerthi	Navneeth Rao Bongu & Anuhya Gudibanda
Srikant Jangala & Venkata Padmanabhuni	Jolly & Ishan Amin	Kaushik & Rekha Patel	Kalyani & Kamlesh Ansingkar	Binodh Wariyar
Himaanshu Agarwal	Murali Mohan Ravi	Renu & Jasbir Singh	Robin & Priti Gandhi	Hitendra Ghosh
Hem Dutt, Uma & Nidhi Mehta	Natasha & Sridhar Kannan	Ramesh & Radhika Bada-nahatti	Amala & Srinivas Nim-magadda	

Donor (Over \$1,000)

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Deepavali greetings to all
From

Ramakrishnans

—V T, Usha, Praveen, Madan, Lauryl, Sabina, Liliana—

Ashtavakra Gita

Jitender Singh Deogun

India is a land of great sages, Rishis and Munis. Ashtavakra (अष्टावक्र), one of the holy sages, was a great expositor of the Self, freedom from bondage, and transcendence to the supreme state of eternal bliss. The Ashtavakra Gita embodies his teachings in the form of a dialogue between the sage Ashtavakra and King Janaka. Not much historical is known about the life of Ashtavakra, however, several stories can be found in Mahabharata. One must know some of the interesting stories about his birth and contact with King Janaka to appreciate the exposition in Ashtavakra Gita.

Ashtavakra was the son of sage Kahor and Sujata. Kahor was a great scholar of Vedas. Ashtavakra learned Vedas from his father while still in the womb of his mother. One day, Kahor was teaching his disciples and made mistakes while reciting a Vedic mantra. "Father your recitation is wrong." Ashtavakra exclaimed from the womb. Kahor was angry and cursed his son, you will be born with eight deformities in your body. True to the curse, the son was born with eight crooked parts (deformities) in his body and thus was named Ashtavakra.

Kahor went to King Janaka's court to get some monetary help but was defeated in debate by the court Vedic scholar Vandin, the son of King Varuna. Kahor was made to go into sea to take part in a sacrifice performed by King Varuna. As the time passed, Ashtavakra grew to twelve years of age, his mother sent him to King Janaka's court to bring his father back. Ashtavakra easily defeated Vandin in the debate and secured release of his father and many other Vedic scholars who were defeated in debate by Vandin and confined to sea.

King Janaka was impressed by the spiritual prowess of Ashtavakra and sought to become

his disciple. It must be noted that King Janaka was not only the most powerful king but also a highly spiritually advanced person of his time. *Ashtavakra Gita* is a compilation of Ashtavakra's teachings as a dialogue between the sage Ashtavakra and King Janaka.

Ashtavakra follows a very simple, intuitive, uncompromising, and direct approach to teach the profound truths of Upanishads. One can feel the magic of the transcendental from his answer to the very first question of King Janaka. Ashtavakra Gita has 20 chapters and a total of 298 slokas. The text starts with a question from King Janaka in first sloka:

कथं ज्ञानमवाप्नोति कथं मुक्तिर्भविष्यति ।

वैराग्यं च कथं प्राप्तं एतद् ब्रूहि मम प्रभो ॥ १-१ ॥

O my Prabhu, tell me how knowledge of Truth can be acquired, tell me how liberation can be achieved, also tell me how renunciation is realized (in life). Ashtavakra replies,

मुक्तिं इच्छसि चेत्तात विषयान् विषवत्त्यज ।

क्षमार्जवदयातोषसत्यं पीयूषवद् भज ॥ १-२ ॥

If you want liberation, O' my child, give up the objects of senses (विषयान्) like poison (विष). Seek, cultivate forgiveness, sincerity, kindness, contentment, and truth like the nectar (अमृत).

First, it is interesting and instructive to see from the first two Slokas that how King Janaka addresses Ashtavakra, a twelve-year boy with deformed body, as "my Lord" (प्रभु), and how Ashtavakra calls King Janaka as "my child." This is because a Guru and disciple relationship has been established and agreed to between Ashtavakra and King Janaka. We must understand that the Guru is held in the highest esteem in our culture from the ancient times. The physical form, and materialistic status of

Continued to the next page.....

the two in a Guru-disciple relationship is of no significance. The Guru is The Guru and must be held in highest esteem. Second, Ashtavakra propagates a simple path to knowledge of Brahman, liberation, and renunciation, that is, cultivation of virtues like forgiveness, sincerity, kindness, contentment, and Truth (Truthfulness). The same path to enlightenment is also propagated by Guru Nanak,

सचु वरतु संतोखु तीरथु गिआनु धिआनु इसनानु ॥
दड़िआ देवता खिमा जपमाली ते माणस परधान ॥

Those who make Truth (Truthfulness) their solemn vow, contentment their sacred place of pilgrimage, spiritual knowledge and meditation their cleansing bath, as well as kindness their deity to worship and forgiveness their chanting beads, those people are spiritually most exalted. In fact, one cannot follow a path of Dharma and attain liberation without acquiring these virtues. Guru Nanak says,

धौलु धरमु दड़िआ का पूतु ॥

संतोखु थापि रखिआ जिनि सूति ॥ SGGS Pg. 4

The mythological ox that holds earth in its place is, in fact, the Dharma, and Dharma is born of Kindness (दया), moreover, kindness is nurtured by contentment. Goswami Tulsi Das confirms, दया धर्म का मूल है।

Kindness is the root, the essential core of the Dharma. Again, Bhagat Kabir says,

गोधन गज धन वाजिधन और रतनधन खान ।

जब आए संतोष धन सब धन धूरि समान ॥

There are all kinds of wealth, like wealth of cows, wealth of elephants, wealth seized/acquired by force and wealth of mines full of gems, however, Bhagat Kabir says that all these wealth are like dirt when one acquires the wealth—the virtue of contentment. It seems to me that *contentment* is like the basic, the core virtue that nurtures other virtues.

Ashtavakra continues to answer other aspects of King Janaka's question in first sloka.

न पृथ्वी न जलं नाग्निर्न वायुर्द्यौर्न वा भवान् ।

एषां साक्षिणमात्मानं चिद्रूपं विद्धि मुक्तये ॥ १-३ ॥

(O' my child, like phenomenal world, you are not made of five elements of creation.) You are not earth, not water, not fire, not air, and not even ether. If you wish to attain liberation, know yourself as the Self—Atman, witness of the empirical world, but different from all the phenomenal objects, the body, and the mind. Above all you are the Consciousness.

यदि देहं पृथक् कृत्य चित्ति विश्राम्य तिष्ठसि ।

अधुनैव सुखी शान्तो बन्धमुक्तो भविष्यसि ॥ १-४ ॥

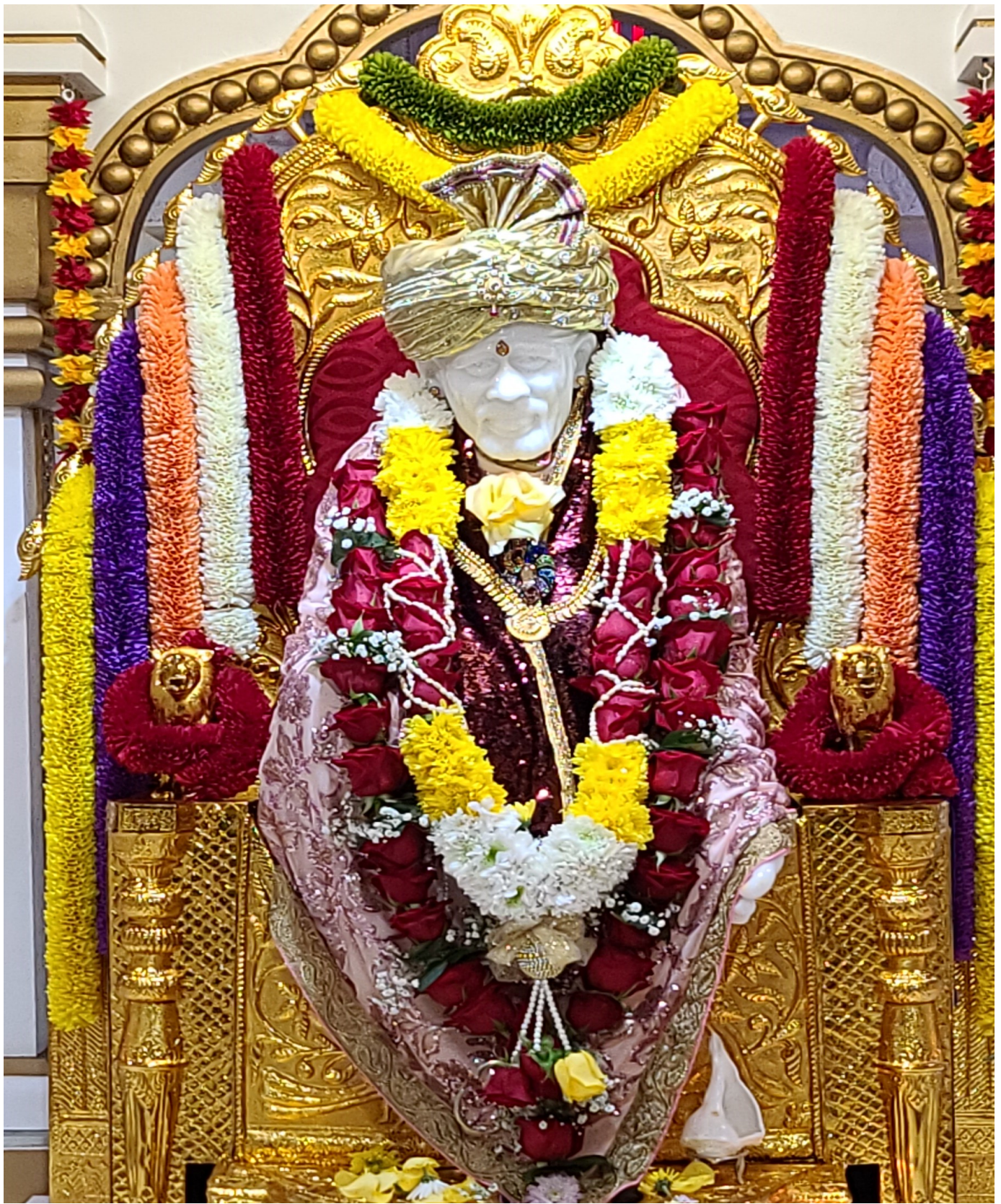
If you detach yourself from the body, that is, do not identity yourself with the body, and calm your Chitta (चित्त) that is rid your Chitta of all “agitations” (literally, remain at rest in Chitta), you will be spontaneously gain eternal bliss and peace, and attain liberation from the “perceived” bondage of Maya.

Ashtavakra instructs King Janaka to follow Self-Realization which is both the *process* and *goal of recognizing* that our true nature is the same as that of the Brahman — The Supreme Truth. Mundakya Upanishad clearly states: One who knows Brahman becomes Brahman, स यो ह वै तत्परमं ब्रह्म वेद ब्रह्मैव भवति ॥ MU. 3.2.9
Guru Nanak propagates similar philosophy, जिनी आतमु चीनिआ परमातमु सोई ॥ SGGS Pg. 421

Those who know Atman become Paramatman. जन नानक बिनु आपा चीनै मिटै न भ्रम की काई ॥ Pg. 684
that is, Guru Nanak says, without knowing the Self, the moss of delusion of duality cannot be eradicated.

Ashtavakra's Gita, even though not regarded as an Upanishad, yet comprises a systematic expounding of mystical and monistic Vedanta.

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Guru Purnima Puja - 2021

Long-range Planning Committee Survey and Vision 2030

Thanks to those patrons/devotees who have completed the Hindu Temple Long-range planning (LRP) committee (Rakesh K. Singh, Chair; Malathi Balu, Co-chair; Natasha Keshwani; Jagdish Nijhawan, Srinidhara) survey. In this survey, our goal was to identify specific areas of concern and develop goal-oriented plans to address specific deficiencies that impact our temple's long-term growth. We greatly appreciate your responses.

Based on the survey, we acknowledged the progress made in the religious services, which is reflected in the survey (Very Satisfied/satisfied). On the contrary, concerns persist in educational and spiritual services suggesting immediate and long-term investment.

The overall survey has given a better perspective regarding the current state of our temple services and the need for improvements.

Based on the feedback, the long-range planning committee is working on Hindu Temple Vision 2030, to be presented in Jan. 2022 to the board of trustees (BOT). Four subcommittees have been created to address specific areas chaired by a member of the LRP committee.

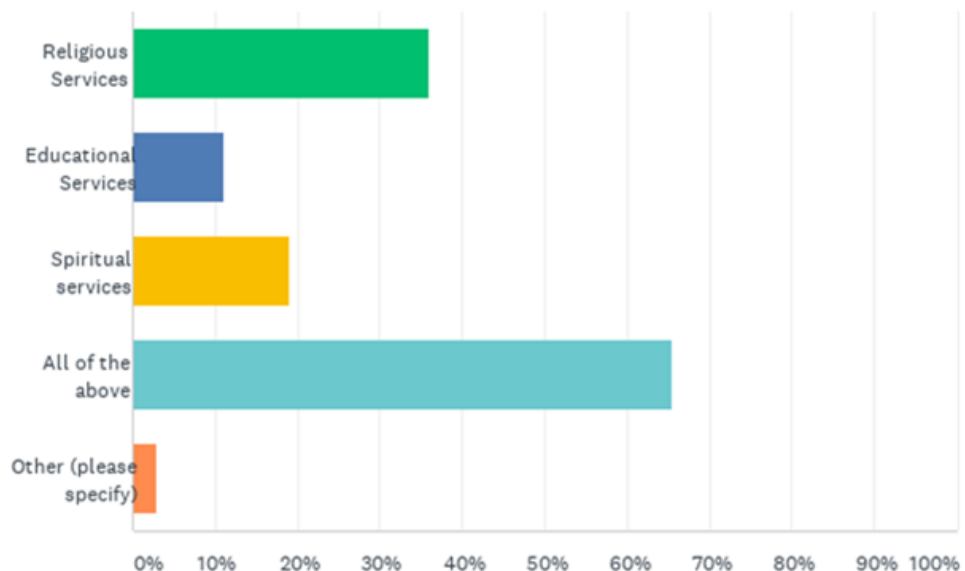
- ♦ Education services including Balvihar/Youth group (Chair-Natasha Keshwani)
- ♦ Spiritual/Vedantic Center of Nebraska (Chair-Jagdish Nijhawan)
- ♦ Religious services (Chair-Srinidhara)
- ♦ Community services and Operational management (Chair-Malathi Balu)

These subcommittees/taskforces will have their members chaired by LRP members mentioned above. These subcommittees will meet and develop specific goals, requirements, and strategies. They will have 90 days to formulate a draft presented and discussed in the LRP meeting in Jan. 2022. Following approval from LRP, it will be forwarded to the BOT for their approval, followed by GBM approval (special meeting in March 2022).

We thank you for your generosity and continued support.

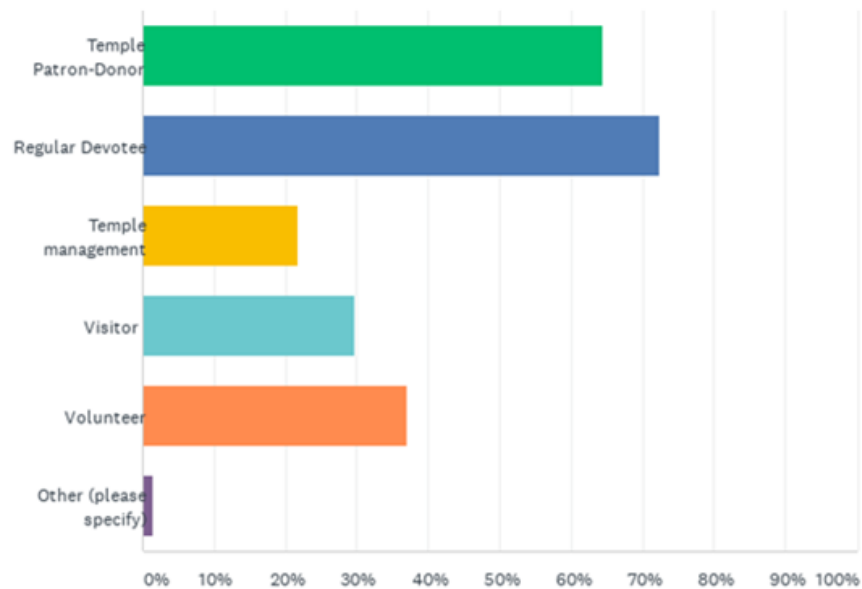
-Hindu Temple Management

Q1: Which aspect of our Hindu Temple mission is most important to you?

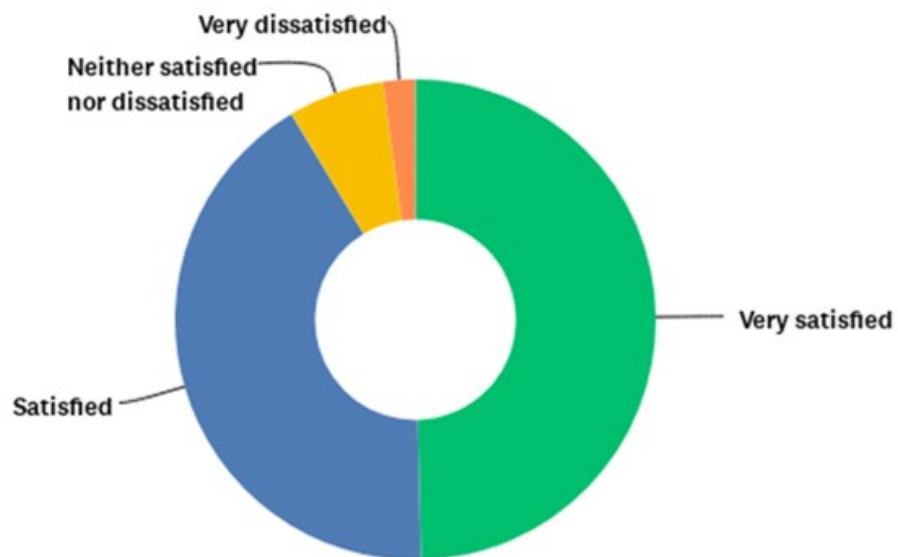


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Q2: In what ways do you interact with our temple?

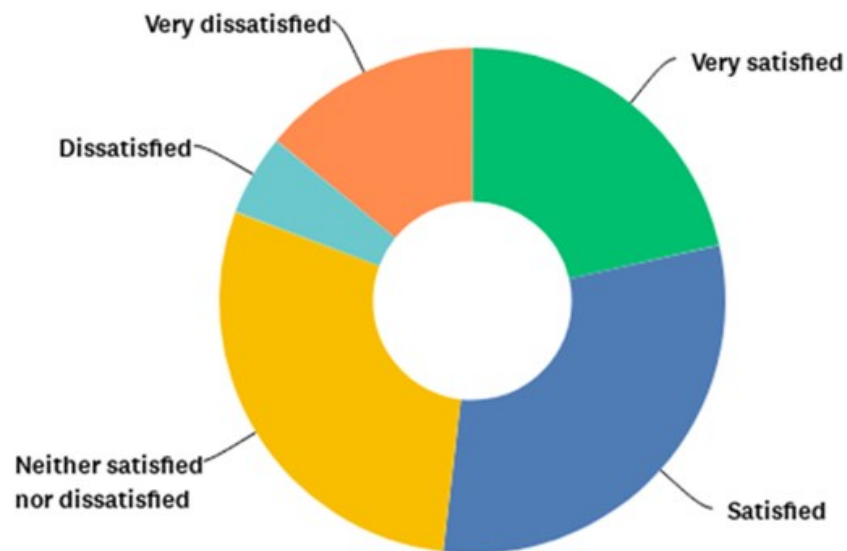


Q3: How satisfied are you with our temple's religious services?

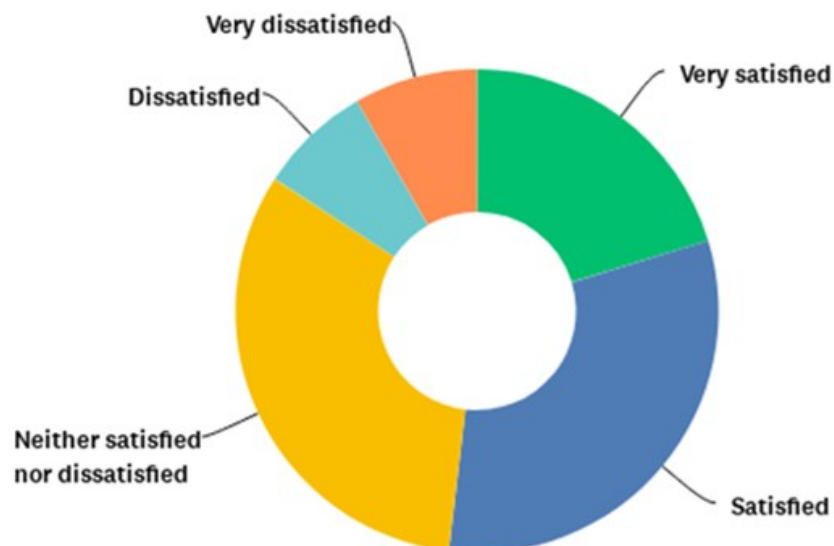


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Q4: How satisfied are you with our temple's spiritual program, including Vedantic Center?

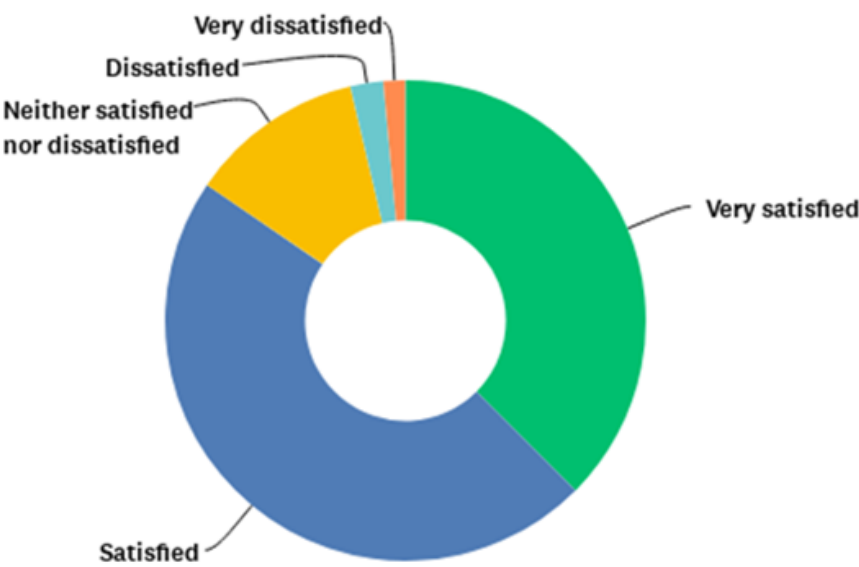


Q5: How satisfied are you with our temple's education programs, including Balvihar and Youth classes?

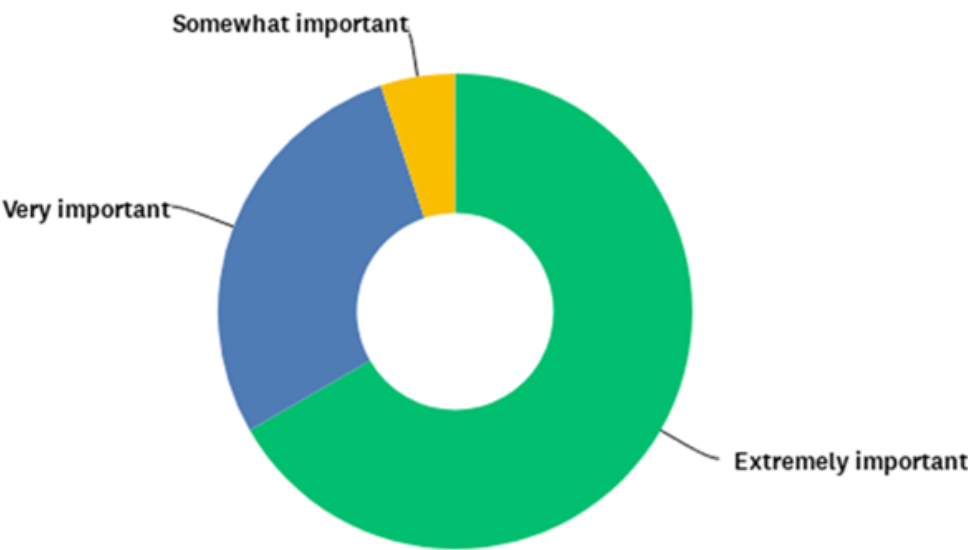


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Q6: How satisfied are you with the impact our temple has made since 2016?

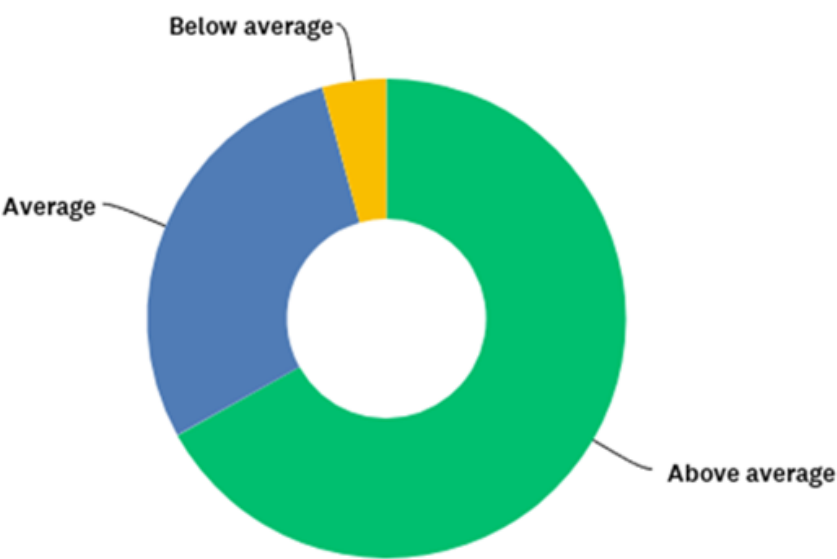


Q7: When thinking about future generations, how important is it to you that we further our educational and spiritual mission?

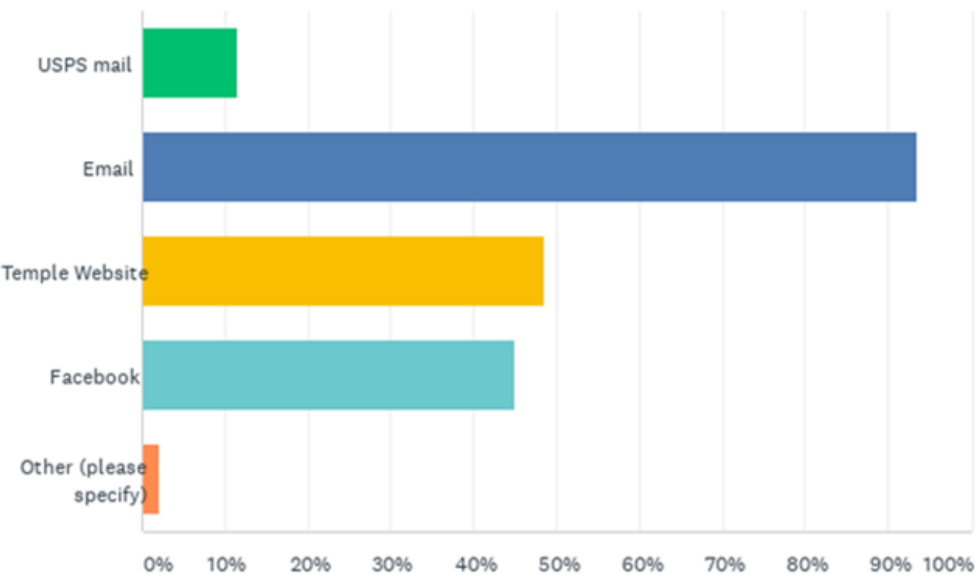


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Q8: Where does Hindu Temple rank relative to other charities you support?



Q9: What is your preferred method of communication?





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Omaha, Nebraska

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WHEN: EVERY FRIDAY

Program Details

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- 2) During Devi abhisekhams, priest does sankalpam in devotee name even if devotee is not present physically in the temple
- 3) Prasadam will be posted to devotee's registered home address once every month
- 4) To Sponsor use below link or visit our Temple
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Om Gam Ganapathaye Namaha

Hindu Temple Omaha
Lord Ganesha Abhishekam - Annual Sponsorship
WHEN: EVERY SUNDAY

Program Details

- 1) Devotee Sponsors for yearly abhishekams by providing sankalpam details of the entire family and devotee address.
- 2) During Ganesha abhishekams, priest does sankalpam in devotee name even if devotee is not present physically in the temple
- 3) Prasadam will be posted to devotee's registered home address once every month
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Om Ganapathaye Namaha

Hindu Temple Omaha

Navagraha Abhishekam - Annual Sponsorship

WHEN: EVERY FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH

Program Details

- 1) Devotee Sponsors for yearly abhishekams by providing sankalpam details of the entire family and devotee address.
- 2) During Navagraha abhishekams, priest does sankalpam in devotee name even if devotee is not present physically in the temple
- 3) Prasadam will be posted to devotee's registered home address once every month
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Omaha, Nebraska

Om Namah Shivaaya

Hindu Temple Omaha
Lord Shiva Abhishekam - Annual Sponsorship
WHEN: EVERY MONDAY

Program Details

- 1) Devotee Sponsors for yearly abhishekams by providing sankalpam details of the entire family and devotee address.
- 2) During Shiva abhishekams, priest does sankalpam in devotee name even if devotee is not present physically in the temple
- 3) Prasadam will be posted to devotee's registered home address once every month
- 4) To Sponsor use below link or visit our Temple
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Annual Sponsorship

Shiva Abhishekam: \$501

For More Information :

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hindu temple
Omaha, Nebraska

Om Sri Muruga

Hindu Temple Omaha
Lord Murugan Abhishekam - Annual Sponsorship
WHEN: EVERY TUESDAY

Program Details

- 1) Devotee Sponsors for yearly abhishekams by providing sankalpam details of the entire family and devotee address.*
- 2) During Murugan abhishekams, priest does sankalpam in devotee name even if devotee is not present physically in the temple*
- 3) Prasadam will be posted to devotee's registered home address once every month*
- 4) To Sponsor use below link or visit our Temple*
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Annual Sponsorship

Murugan Abhishekam: \$501

For More Information :

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hindu temple
Omaha, Nebraska

Om Namo Venkatesaaya

Hindu Temple Omaha

Lord Balaji Abhishekam – Annual Sponsorship

WHEN: EVERY SATURDAY (EXCEPT FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH)

Program Details

- 1) Devotee Sponsors for yearly abhishekams by providing sankalpam details of the entire family and devotee address.
- 2) During Balaji abhishekams, priest does sankalpam in devotee name even if devotee is not present physically in the temple
- 3) Prasadam will be posted to devotee's registered home address once every month
- 4) To Sponsor use below link or visit our Temple
<http://hindutemplenebraska.org/donate.php>

More details... htom.puja@gmail.com



Annual Sponsorship

Balaji Abhishekam: \$501

For More Information :

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Durga Puja 2021 by Bengali Samiti of Nebraska



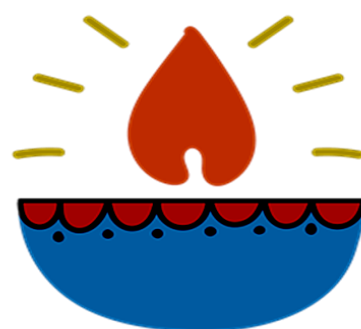
Deepavali Greetings from Gopi & Swarna

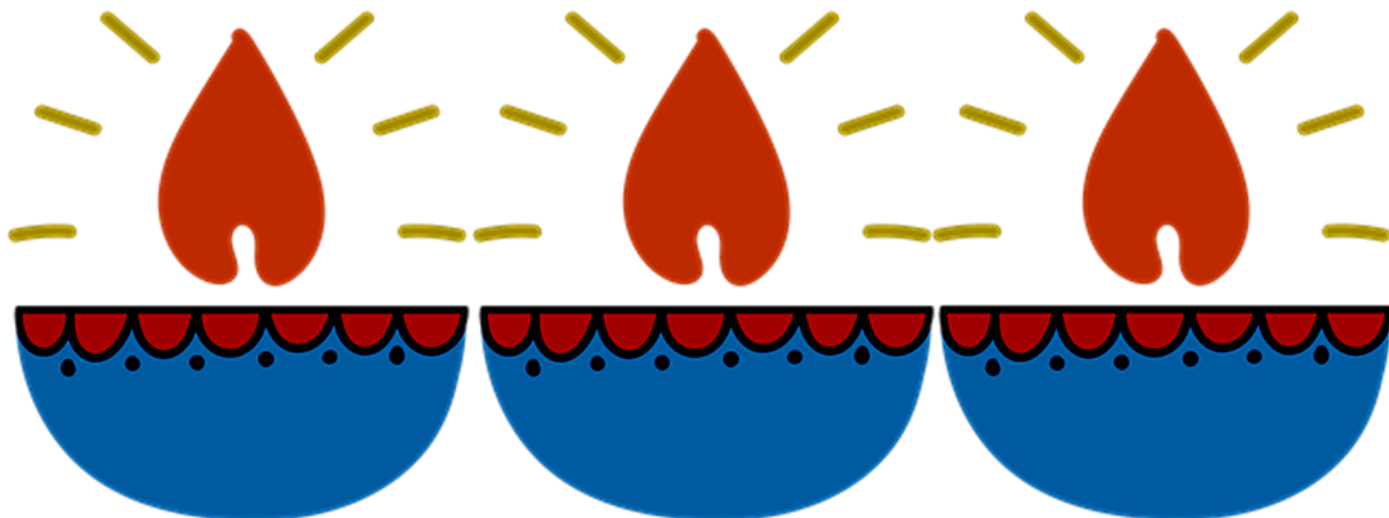


**Wishing You All
A Very Happy Deepavali**

From:

Jitender and Ravinder Deogun



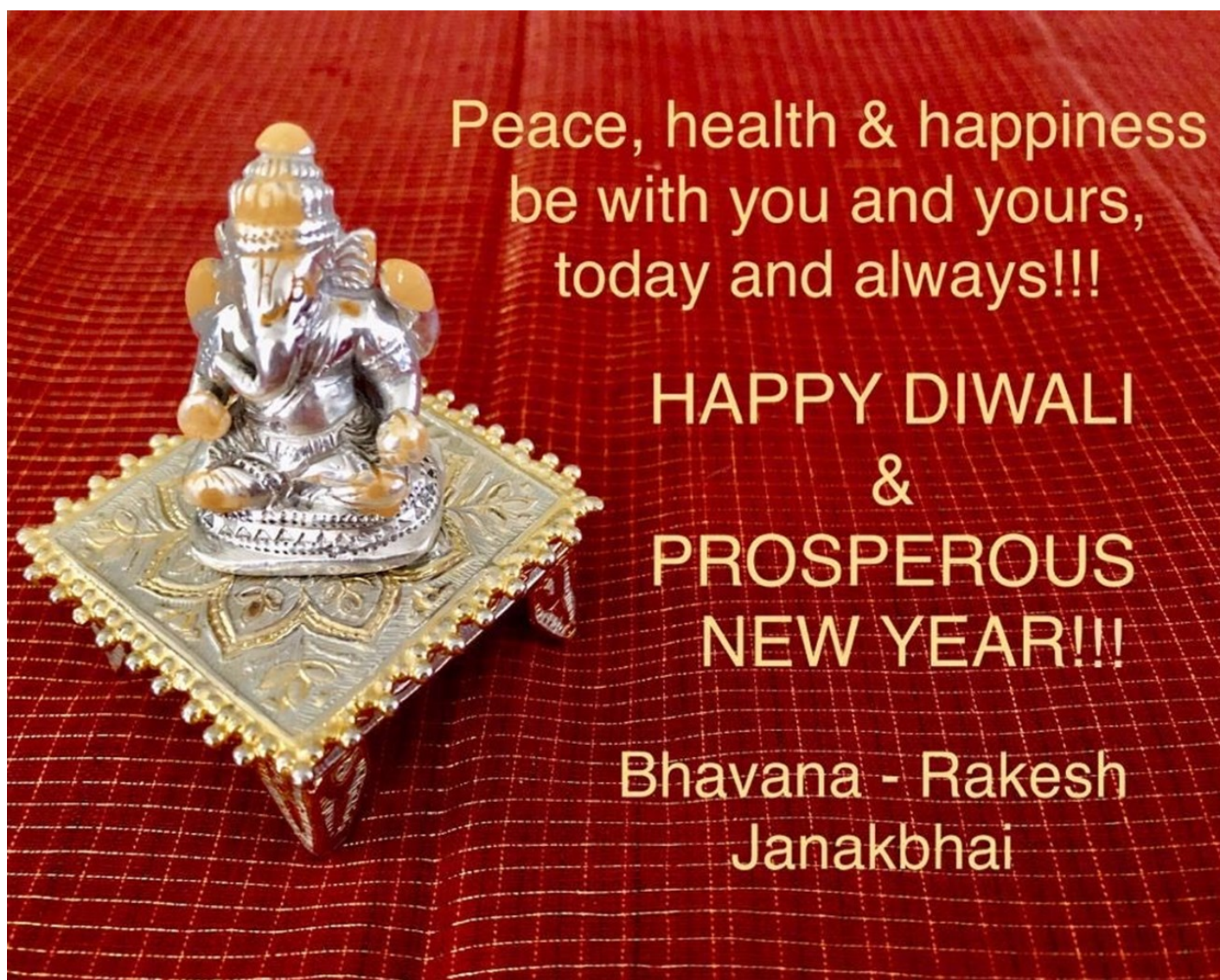


Best Wishes and
Happy Diwali
From:



Smita and Alekha Dash
Rohan Dash
Debleena, Ajay & Sarika Saini





Peace, health & happiness
be with you and yours,
today and always!!!

HAPPY DIWALI
&
PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR!!!

Bhavana - Rakesh
Janakbhai





Happy Deepavali Wishes



From: **Saraswathi G. Joshi & Family**
Sumangala and Shantaram Joshi
And Deepa and Nikhil Kumar
Yashaswini K. Joshi & Family

**Our best wishes for a very
HAPPY DEEPAVALI to all**

**We pray for everyone's
safety and prosperity!
Our heartfelt love and
gratitude to Lord
Prasanaganpati!**



**Shashi, Subhash, Shivani, Sameer, Supriya and
Bhatia Family**

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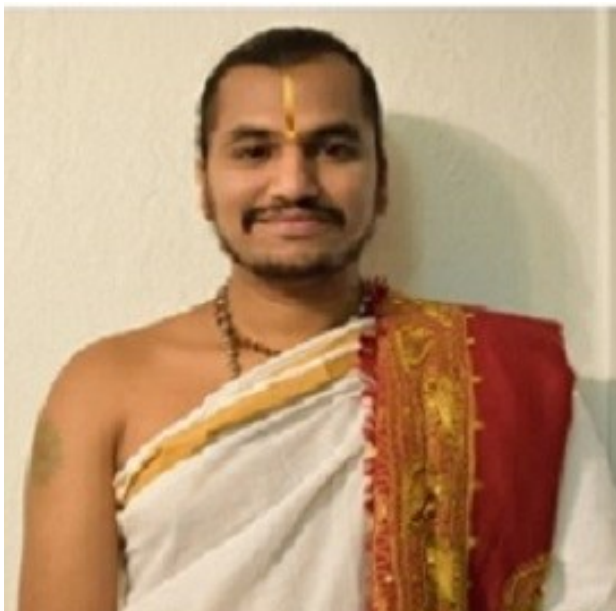
Please Join Us in Saying “Thank You” to Our Priests and Facility Manager



Pandit Nagabhat Vidyashankar
Priest, Hindu Temple



Pandit Badari Narayana
Priest, Hindu Temple



Pandit Laxmikant Kulkarni
Priest, Hindu Temple

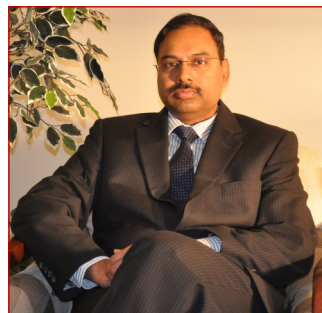


Shri Chandrasekhar Karmegam
Facility Manager, Hindu Temple

2021 Honorees and Outstanding Volunteers of Hindu Temple, Omaha



**Shri Srini Nendoori, Past President of
Executive Committee**



**Shri Muralidhar Chintapalli, Past
Chair of the Board of Trustees**



**Shrimati Kusum Bhalla, 2021
Outstanding Volunteer of the Year**



**Shrimati Meera Kashyap, 2021
Outstanding Volunteer of the Year**



**Shri Sai Yeluri, 2021
Outstanding Volunteer of the Year**



**Shri Yuvaraj Rajagopal, 2021
Outstanding Volunteer of the Year**

Editor's Corner

"It is my great pleasure to bring the 2021 Deepavali special issue of Deepam to you all. We have included the useful updates and details of the major events such as Deepavali Puja, messages from our leaders, Deepavali greetings from our community members, a brief reports on Bal Vihar activities and upcoming major events/pujas of 2021. We thank all the devotees for their continued support of Deepam.

In this special issue, we have included an updated donors list as of December 31, 2020, including donors who have donated over \$1,000 donation to the temple since its inception. We sincerely thank all the donors for their generous contribution. If there is any error in the amount we have listed, please contact Shrimati Meera Kashyap or Shri Ketan Patel. Please help temple to grow by giving your precious time, effort, constructive criticism and generous donation.

We also want to thank all the advertisers for their support of this publication. We invite you all to consider contributing articles for publication in the quarterly Deepam issues. Articles from young adults are also welcome and I request the parents to encourage their children to contribute their articles. I look forward to your suggestions to improve the Deepam.

I also take this opportunity to thank the members of Publication Advisory Committee for their help in bringing this special issue. We also want to thank the Printing Facility, Creighton University for this publication.

Wishing you all a **"Very Happy Deepavali and Prosperous New Year 2021"**

Nagendra Chaturvedi, Editor

on behalf of Publication Committee

Hindu Temple

**HAPPY DEEPAVALI AND
PROSPEROUS NEW
YEAR WISHES**



From:

**Archana and Nagendra Chaturvedi
Partha and Prahaan**



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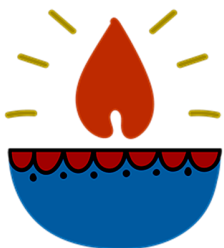
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**Happy Deepavali to You All
From Hindu Temple, Omaha**

