

## Sanskul's Student's Day: An amalgamation of learning

Sanskul's recent celebration of Student's Day was a tapestry woven with vibrant displays of talent, devotion, and profound insight, showcased by our remarkable young learners.



The day commenced with an array of captivating presentations by our L2 students, each reflecting on the invaluable lessons gathered over their 13-week journey. From discussions on tolerance and acceptance to delving into the nuances between ambition and greed, these budding minds eloquently shared their perspectives, painting an inspiring picture of youthful wisdom.

Following this enlightening start, the L1 students stepped forward to offer a soul-stirring recital of the first 20 verses of the Hanuman Chalisa. Their dedication and unity in this spiritual endeavor echoed the essence of their commitment to both learning and practicing their faith.

However, the true spotlight of the day belonged to the enthralling drama titled "Me & My Mind," performed by our gifted young devotees. Through the characters of Me, My Mind, and Kali, portrayed with finesse by Ramanda, Srimada, and other talents, the drama artfully

portrayed the eternal struggle between the soul and the overpowering influence of a materialistic mind. It not only showcased the challenges faced by the innocent soul but also offered poignant insights into methods of liberating oneself from its grasp.

Adding a divine touch to the event, HG Shyamsundar graced us with a profound summary, unraveling the essence of the drama's teachings. His words resonated with the audience, emphasizing the pivotal role of consistent practice (abhyasa) and detachment (vairagya) in freeing ourselves from the clutches of the mind. His emphasis on the path of Krsna consciousness, particularly through the potency of chanting and Harinam kirtan, resonated deeply as a gateway to a blissful life.

**A huge haribol to Sanskul's teachers, students and parents who make this learning process possible for our youth!**

## Govinda Restaurant ISKCON: Harinam LunchBox Program

ISKCON Pittsburgh is delighted to start the Harinam Lunch Box Program for University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie University Students.

This program is an initiative to provide quality sattvik food to college students while at the same time serving as a precursor to the upcoming Govinda restaurant.

Vegetarian meals that are subsidized, healthy, freshly prepared, karma-free, and Yoga-friendly (sattvic) are served to students.

The lunchbox is available on a weekly basis and will be conveniently delivered to the nearest pick-up point for students.



If you are a student interested in taking advantage of this fantastic Lunch Box initiative by ISKCON Pittsburgh Govinda restaurant, we invite you to register at <https://forms.gle/prG8Nd3RqaE29ZcC8>

Please share this information with the students you know so that more individuals can benefit from this service. Your participation and support will contribute to the success of this seva endeavor.

36 WEEK SRI BHAGAVAD  
GITA SESSIONS  
*A Transformative Journey*

Hare Kṛṣṇa Mahā-mantra  
hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa  
kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare  
hare rāma hare rāma  
rāma rāma hare hare

## 36 Week Gita Study: A transformative experience with HG Shyamsundar Prabhujī

We completed another month of learning Bhagavad Gita. The participants had an enlightening journey. These free online Bhagavad Gita classes serve as an oasis in the busy life of participants. The collective recitation of the Bhagavad Gita, coupled with discussions during the holy month in which it was spoken, provided a beautiful experience for everyone involved! The Bhagavad Gita's profound teachings transcend backgrounds and expertise levels, offering life-changing insights to students and scholars alike. We've completed Chapter 3 and welcome anyone interested in joining. Recordings of past sessions are available for catch-up.

For those eager to partake in this enlightening journey, please contact us at 412-888-9577.

# Vaisnava Calendar January 2024

Jan 7	Saphala Ekadashi, Shri Devananda Pandita Disappearance	Jan 21	Putrada Ekadashi
Jan 8	Break fast 07:43 AM - 10:52 AM	Jan 22	Break fast 07:38 AM - 09:21 AM
Jan 9	Shri Mahesha Pandita & Uddharana Datta Thakura Disappearance	Jan 25	Narayan Purnima, Krsna Pusya Abhishek
Jan 11	Appearance of Locana Dasa Thakura	Jan 30	Disappearance of Ramacandra Kaviraja Appearance of Gopala Bhatta Gosvami
Jan 13	Disappearance of Jiva Gosvami & Jagadisa Pandita	Jan 31	Disappearance of Jayadeva Gosvami
Jan 14	Makara-Sankranti		

## 22 December: The advent of Sri Bhagavad Gita- Gita Jayanti

The Bhagavad Gita's beauty lies in its universality. On the auspicious occasion of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita's advent, ISKCON Pittsburgh celebrated by reaffirming the wisdom of this sacred text through summarisation by distinguished speakers.



Vanamali Prabhuji initiated the discussion on the Sri Bhagavad Gita summary by sharing his favorite shloka from each chapter and delving into how each one conveys the deeper meaning of the Bhagavad Gita. He put forward the essence of Karma yoga (selfless action with detachment).

Anandani Mataji continued the summary, focusing on Chapters 6-12 (Bhakti Yoga). She emphasized the significance of action and discussed the concept of Prakriti. Anandani Mataji eloquently explained the interconnectedness of Ishwar, Paramatma, and Brahma. She highlighted the futility of worshiping deities without practicing compassion towards others.

Vrajras Prabhuji succinctly explained Chapters 12, 13, and 14, providing further insights into the modes

of nature- satva, raja and tamas. He emphasised the importance of striving towards the mode of goodness.

Shyamsundar Prabhuji concluded the discussion by summarizing Chapters 15 to 18. He began by discussing the distinction between devotee and demonic nature. His final advice to everyone was to wholeheartedly surrender to Krishna and experience His mercy.

The gathering continued with a beautiful kirtan, and everyone relished the Ekadasi prasadam. This celebration served as a reminder of the Bhagavad Gita's timeless wisdom, capable of shaping our thoughts and actions for the better.



## Thursday Special: "Gaurahari Prabhu Unveils the Profound Power of Japa"

In an enlightening talk show, HG Gaurahari Prabhuji illuminated the myriad benefits of japa, drawing from his personal journey. His insights revealed the transformative potential of absorption in japa as a means to liberate ourselves from distractions, shielding us from their influence. Gaurahari Prabhu emphasized that the profound experiences derived from japa fortify our connection with the Divine, fostering a stronger foundation that enhances our interactions in this material realm. He quoted that 'If one is not satisfied with what one has, one can never become satisfied with anything more.'

Being able to do japa is an opportunity we get everyday and one should look forward to it. God is always available for us, so why can't we let ourselves be available for him. The pursuit of external gratification, he cautioned, often leads to lamentation, delusion, and fear. These sentiments are averted through the protective shell of japa.

Gaurahari Prabhu offered practical recommendations for all seekers: Preparation for japa aligns with Krishna's teachings in Chapter 6:

- Maintain an upright posture for attentiveness, clear pronunciation, and regulated breathing.
- Chant while exhaling, following the example set by Srila Prabhupada.
- Immerse oneself fully in the practice, staying tuned and connected throughout.

Gaurahari Prabhu's discourse sheds light on the transformative nature of japa, inviting us to embark on a spiritual journey that promises enrichment and deeper connections.



## The Perfect Birthday Gift: Krishna's blessings

Enchant your and your loved ones birthdays and other special days by becoming members:

[http://weblink.donorperfect.com/ISKCONPittsburgh\\_member](http://weblink.donorperfect.com/ISKCONPittsburgh_member)

ISKCON Pittsburgh will perform birthday puja on your behalf and send Krishna's prasadam to you and your family!

ISKCON Pittsburgh prays for these wonderful devotees who had their birthday in the month of December!

Manjari  
Sriram Prabhuji  
Srivats  
Anirudh Manchella  
Sundari  
Krishna Prabhuji

### How can I donate?

Please donate generously to support and grow the activities for our community. You can make a contribution via Zelle - email id - iskconpgh108@gmail.com

**Contact Info:** Sanskriti V Walia at 412-888-9577

# WEEKLY EVENTS

## Saturday Programs:

December was full of divine Saturday's with energetic kirtans and discourse by wonderful speakers! People immersed themselves in the holy names and enjoyed the devotional association. As we welcome the new year, our heartfelt prayers ascend for an abundance of Saturdays brimming with divine joy. We extend a warm invitation to our Pittsburgh community to join us and revel in these cherished moments together!

## Thursday Kirtans in Downtown Pittsburgh:

In the midst of life's hectic pace, solace awaits at the ISKCON Pittsburgh Kirtan Center. Here, amid the hustle and bustle, one can immerse themselves in the tranquil vibrations of ancient chants, creating a haven for spiritual rejuvenation. Join these sessions to experience the magic!  
 Youtube: @pittsburghkirtancenter9380  
 Instagram: @steelcitykirtans

**Friday Bhakti Vrksa:** Join us on Fridays for an immersive spiritual journey that encompasses wisdom, devotion, and joy!

Contact Vanamali Gopal Das (4127253442) & Gokulpriya Devi Dasi (4124011308) for more details!

# HARIBOL! ISKCON PITTSBURGH EXPRESSES GRATITUDE!

Haribol to all the devotees for a year filled with divine celebrations! We are filled with joy as we begin a new year 2024 with hopes and aspirations.

In the month of December, with everyone's efforts and Krishna's blessing, ISKCON Pittsburgh successfully completed its first semester in Sanskul and celebrated Student's Day to mark the learnings of all our young talented devotional kids. Together, as a family, we celebrated Gita Jayanti and weekly events with full vigor and devotion.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our supporters whose unwavering support and generosity have made all these achievements possible. Together, let's look forward to continued blessings and shared celebrations in the coming year!

Here is ISKCON Pittsburgh's financial statement for the month of December:

Income				Expenditure			
			<b>Income</b>				<b>Expenditure</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$316.00</b>	<b>Total</b>			<b>-\$8,416.42</b>
Number	Date	Item	Income amount	Number	Date	Item	Expenditure Amount
1	12/27/23	SafeSave	\$200.00	1	12/29/23	Water Bill	-\$10.43
2	12/12/23	SafeSave	\$116.00	2	12/15/23	Live Streaming Services	-\$240.00
3	12/13/23	Donation	\$101.00	3	12/19/23	Electricity Bill	-\$23.73
4				4	12/15/23	Electricity Bill	-\$33.57
5				5	12/15/23	Mortgage @downtown	-\$2,414.00
6				6	12/15/23	Mortgage @locust Rd	-\$1,500.00
7				7	12/15/23	Iskcon Pittsburgh Website	-\$150.00
8				8	12/8/23	Loan Repayment	-\$4,000.00
9				9	12/5/23	Gas Bill	-\$44.69
13							
14							
15		Total	\$417.00			Total	-\$8,416.42



REGISTRATIONS OPEN FOR SANSKUL SEMESTER II-

ISKCON PITTSBURGH

# *Sanskul School with Samskriti*

EVERY SATURDAY AT ST. BRENDAN CHURCH

2365 MCALEER RD, SEWICKLEY, PA 15143

SEMESTER 2: 1/6/2024 - 5/18/2024

5 - 6 PM : DRAMA PRACTICE

6 - 7 PM : SANSKUL

## LEVEL 1

TALES FROM PANCHATANTRA  
&  
HANUMAN CHALISA

- REINFORCING THE WISDOM FROM THE STORIES AND APPLIED LIFE ACTIVITIES BASED ON LEARNINGS AND LESSONS FROM PANCHATANTRA
- MEMORIZE HANUMAN CHALISA

## LEVEL 2

24 GURUS  
&  
CHAPTER 15 BHAGAVAD GITA

- DISCOVERING IMPORTANCE OF GURUS. GURUS ARE EVER-PRESENT AND SEEN WHEN WE ARE OPEN
- MEMORIZE AND LEARN PURUSHOTTAMA YOGA - CHAPTER 15 FROM GITA

FOR REGISTRATION  
CLICK ON THE  
QR CODE:



CONTACT ANNAPURNA MANCHELLA @ (412) 719-2564





**ISKCON Pittsburgh  
wishes everyone a  
Krishna conscious and  
blessed 2024!**