

## The Purest & Holiest of the Month: Damodar

*'Na Kartikasamo Maso, Na Kriten Samam Yugam, Na Tirtha Gangaya Samam'*  
*There is no month like Kartik, No era like Satyug, and No pilgrimage like Ganga.*



The most auspicious of all months, Kartik, began with the Sharad Poornima Celebrations on Saturday October 29th 2023. Many devotees came together to observe the celebrations and offer the lamp of their hearts for the pleasure of the Lord. HG Shyamsundar Prabhuji spoke on the glories of the Kartik month and emphasized the bhakta vatsalya nature of the Lord which makes this an opportune time to enhance one's spiritual growth. Any devotional activity performed during this month reaps 10,000 times benefit. Just as during the Black Friday sales on Thanksgiving expensive items are available for a sale, similarly in this month of Damodar, Krsna's mercy can be available with minimal effort. Devotees can create cherished lifelong memories through simple acts of offering lamps to Krsna daily while singing Damodar prayers, coming together in kirtan and making small vows like chanting extra rounds of japa, chanting some prayers or not eating their favorite dish during this month.

He also shared three tips for making the most out of Deep Dan:

1. Familiarize yourself with the Damodarastakam prayers, committing them to heart.
2. Focus your consciousness on Krishna and envision his endearing, playful pastimes.
3. As you meditate, insert the simple prayer, "Krishna, I'm yours."

To partake in the benefits of this holy Kartika month,

ISKCON Pittsburgh has planned for Deep Dan every day. We are maintaining a schedule so that everyone gets an opportunity and that we can all together celebrate this month. Here is the calendar:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1NeU3tORVozd32uEqsyLkK9M4Wrfa0PtT/edit?usp=sharing&oid=113191223676053445623&rtpof=true&sd=true>

*Don't miss out on this auspicious time to deepen your relationship with Krishna and offer your love and devotion to Srimati Radharani, the Mother of Devotion. Join the celebrations of ISKCON Pittsburgh to make the most of the Month of Damodara!*

# Vaishnava Calendar

Nov 5	Radha Kunda, Snana dana, Bahulastami
Nov 8	Rama Ekadashi
Nov 9	Ekadashi: Break fast 06:59 - 10:22 (Daylight saving not considered)
Nov 12	Amavasya, Dipa dana, Dipavali (Kali Puja)
Nov 13	Govardhana Puja, Go Puja, Go Krda (Worship of Govardhana Hill), Bali Daityaraja Puja
Nov 16	Srila Prabhupada Disappearance (Fasting till noon)
Nov 20	Gopastami, Gosthastami
Nov 21	Jagaddhatri Puja
Nov 23	Utthana Ekadashi, Bhisma Pancaka
Nov 24	Ekadashi: Break fast 07:16 - 08:43 (Daylight saving not considered)
Nov 26	Sri Krsna Rasayatra, Tulasi-Saligrama Vivaha (marriage) , Caturmasya ends
Nov 27	Katyayani vrata begins, Kesava Masa



ISKCON Pittsburgh Upcoming Project  
In just 1-2 months, launching our service to the vibrant  
Pittsburgh community! HARIBOL!

**SIZZLE & SPICE:  
Vegan & Vegetarian  
Restaurant**

3513 Butler Street, Pittsburgh, PA, 15201

# Jagannath Ratha Yatra: October 22

Second time in this year (2023), Lord Jagannath, Baldeva and Subhadra mayi, decided to come out on the streets for Rath Yatra. During the Rath Yatra on July 4th Parade, Jagannath gave darshan to about 20,000 Pittsburghers (for the first time in the history). This time, He decided to enchant the hearts of the devotee community by going around the Hays Park in Upper St Clair township, making it a small but sweetest event ever. This marked the second annual Rath Yatra in Hays Park.

Over 100 devotees & community members participated in welcoming Lord Jagannath, Baladev and Subadra devi with the chanting of the holy names. Devotees pulled rath carts from Vanamali Gopal Prabhuji & Gokulpriya mataji's home to Hays Park, and back to their home. Devotee's offered flower petals, lamp offerings and dance performances for the pleasure of Lord Jagannath.

HG Malati Devi graced the whole festival, giving a short and sweet talk about rath yatra pastimes. Her delight was clear through her comment- "It was the most wonderful mini Rathyatra that has the potential of being duplicated in any neighborhood! Simply Sweet!"

All devotees prepared chappan bhog with 56+ offerings. Everyone enjoyed the Jagannath prasad and left with a small packet of this blessed offering.

***Jagannātha means 'Lord of the Universe'. It is mentioned in the vedic literatures, "rathe ca vamanam drstva punar janma na vidyate", "Simply by seeing the Lord on the chariot, one makes advancement for stopping the repetition of birth and death."***

All those who participated went back with everlasting memories of this sweet festival.



# A big Haribol to all our supporters!

It is with great pleasure that another month has passed in service of Krishna and Radharani with everyone's commitment and support to ISKCON Pittsburgh. We are delighted to be an ever-growing congregation with you all!

ISKCON Pittsburgh extends the most heartfelt gratitude to all its devotees and members! Together, we have celebrated some remarkable milestones and initiatives, such as the weekly Birthday Programs, Jagannath Yatra, Friday events, Thursday kirtans, and the enlightening 7-Day Gita Online Course. We are deeply appreciative of the wholehearted participation of our devotees in making these events a success.

As we move forward, we offer our heartfelt prayers to Krishna and Radharani for the well-being and spiritual growth of each and every one of you in your association with ISKCON Pittsburgh. May our collective devotion continue to flourish, and may we find increasing joy and fulfillment in our service to the Lord.

We believe it is essential to keep you, our valued supporters, informed about all our finances. Here we share ISKCON Pittsburgh financial statement for the month of October.

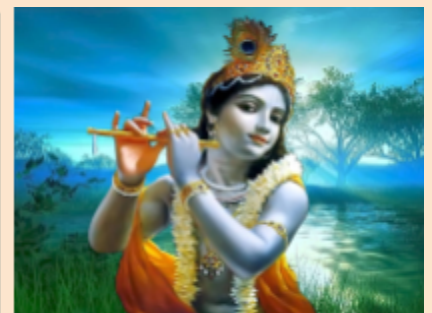
ISKCON Pittsburgh expresses deep gratitude to our generous donors!

Anil Bachu  
Saritha Pragallapati  
Madhu Motha

Income				Expenditure			
Total		Income <b>\$3,052.00</b>		Total		Expenditure <b>-\$5,500.54</b>	
Number	Date	Item	Income amount	Number	Date	Item	Expenditure Amount
1	10/2/23	Donations for Janmashtami	\$2,652.00	1	10/24/23	Electricity Bill	-\$61.65
2	10/3/23	Sanskul Semester fees	\$400.00	2	10/19/23	Electricity Bill	-\$114.39
3				3	10/17/23	Cake	-\$35.00
4				4	10/13/23	Mortgage @locust Rd	-\$1,500.00
5				5	10/13/23	Mortgage @downtown	-\$2,414.00
6				6	10/10/23	Gas bill	-\$9.49
7				7	10/3/23	Gas Bill	-\$21.01
				8	10/2/23	Lawyer Expense	-\$595.00
				9	10/5/23	Sept Church expenses	-\$750.00
12							
13							
14							
15		Total	\$3,052.00			Total	-\$5,500.54

Wonderful ways to engage our senses in the service of Hrishikesa.  
~Ashwin Nakrani

Hare Krishna! The events we have attended so far are awesome and we are blessed to be a part of this.  
~Surbhi Bishnoi



## The Perfect Birthday Gift: Krishna's blessings

Special days like birthdays and anniversaries have a powerful divine energy. When collective prayers of devotees are offered, the impact is magnified. ISKCON Pittsburgh has fervently started celebrating weekly birthdays as part of Saturday programs. Birthday puja and celebration is done for members of all ages to evoke Krishna and Radharani'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! Invoke Lord Krishna to bless you with his love and care on special occasions.

Engage in devotional services that attract all auspiciousness on your birthday or anniversary.

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

Shriya Garimella  
Shivani Nakrani  
Ananya Boddupalli  
Indira Nakrani  
Mani Madasu  
Pranav Rajsagar  
Sugeeta Inaganti  
Vivek Gai

## Ram Vijayotsva - 2023

### The Light will always conquer the Darkness:

In the Vijayotsava class by HG Shyamsundar Das, devotees were reminded of the importance of following our dharma duties, just as Maryada-purushotam Rama did. He encouraged everyone to walk the path of righteousness, even if it means that we will be outnumbered. The burning of Ravana inside our hearts symbolizes the triumph of good over evil. As we reflect on the teachings of the Bhagavatgita, we understand that wherever there is Krishna and Arjuna, there will be victory, power, and morality.

*Let us take inspiration from these lessons and strive to do what is right, knowing that victory is certain in due course of time.*



I love visiting the Pittsburgh Kirtan Center and immersing myself in kirtan. The positive and spiritual vibrance is truly uplifting. Singing along with other devotees and playing the Mridanga adds a unique dimension to the experience. I cherish every moment spent there and look forward to next week.

~Bhavik Thati, Student

## The weekly blissful & enlightening Saturday programs

ISKCON Pittsburgh had another successful month of Weekly Saturday Programs with enthusiastic Drama classes, spiritual Bhagavatam class, L1 & L2 Kids and Youth Classes. The Saturday programs have become a stress reliever for the families where kids learn, high level Bhagavatam discussions take place for parents followed by spiritually energizing kirtans and dinner prasadam.

In this month's Bhagavatam class, Chapters 3 to 6 of Canto 8 were discussed by speakers Ashok Krishna Prabhuji, Vanamali Prabhuji, and Lakshmi Vijaya Mataji. They emphasized the significance of faith, devotion, and divine justice through Gajendra's surrender, his return to the spiritual realm, demigods' prayers, Durvāsā Muni's curse, and a truce with demons for churning nectar.

The L1 kids' class successfully memorized the first 14 verses of the Hanuman Chalisa and narrated Damodar Stories. Damodar stories serve as a valuable tool for imparting life lessons to young children, who easily relate to little Krishna's playful pastimes and derive meaningful teachings from them.

L2 class completed till the 6th guru of Dattatreya. Observing and learning about the various gurus helps students cultivate lifelong proficiencies. For instance through air, kids learn not to be attached despite interactions with others.

Drama classes have started with the recording of the first Sakshigobal drama. The enthusiastic participation of kids is enhancing their creativity and public speaking!

The bhagavad gita lessons in youth class are preparing future leaders with hand-on skills to conquer any tough situation in adult-life. The class completed a deep analysis of chapter 1 of Bhagavad Gita and understood that the only way to have wisdom of Gita is by surrendering to Krishna as a disciple.



# ISKCON Pittsburgh Youth Forum!

Hare Krishna! As a student, coming to Kirtan has been the best medicine. I can tackle anything so long as I remind myself that Krishna is always standing behind me. No matter what may come, I have developed the courage to face it by taking comfort in singing the sweet names of Radha and Krishna. Faith that He will always come for his devotee, has given me the motivation to continue doing what is right always. The community here cannot be described in words, and despite my family being in India, I feel I have my ISKCON family to take care of me. My immense gratitude towards all the members and Vaishnavas for making me feel so welcome and loved.

~Anjana Mahesh

## CMU Yoga

We are happy to have a great number of students showing up for our Yoga classes at CMU!

## Krishna Club by Vrajras prabhu

A Weekly 21 minute online class for University Students. To Inspire life-transforming wisdom from vedic scriptures for inner growth.

Every Sunday at 12 noon starting from Oct 29th.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89398203875> (Passcode: vrajras)

## Sanskul

ISKCON Pittsburgh continues its Vedic and Cultural Classes for kids for this semester!



### 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](mailto:iskconpgh108@gmail.com)

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

Become a part of ISKCON Pittsburgh family:

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

# Seven Day Gita Session 2023 - From Sept 7th to November 4th: The Bhagavad Gita Lessons for Modern Audience

Recognizing the preciousness of time in our lives and our deep desire to discover happiness and inner peace, The Seven Day Gita Sessions were conducted over Zoom every Thursday. These sessions proved to be a source of profound enrichment for more than 20 participants. The essence of Bhagavad Gita is such that incorporating even a small verse of it in our lives can bring big transformations. The following topics were covered in detail in each class.

- ❖ *The search for Happiness*
- ❖ *Does God Exist? Is Scripture the word of God?*
- ❖ *Who is God?*
- ❖ *Who am I - The Science of the Soul?*
- ❖ *Why do Bad Things Happen to Good People? - The law of Karma*
- ❖ *The Topmost Yoga for this Age*
- ❖ *Practical Application of Gita in our lives*

The course is designed in a way to not just provide the meaning of Bhagavad Gita slokas but also to make the participants wonder about the integral topics of existence, happiness and life. Each session left participants in a reflective state, evident in the engaging and thought-provoking discussions that concluded every meeting. The one hour every Thursday became the time in the fully packed week to introspect and take small steps towards self-realization and leading a meaningful life.

