



Vandana

Newsletter of the Hindu Temple, Canton, Michigan

ISSUE NO. 1, 2026 | REVIVAL EDITION

"A Place of Worship" -- Est. 1987

Reviving a tradition first published in 2005 -- bringing our community together again.

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A Letter from the Editor

Jai Shri Krishna, Namaste.

Hope this finds you all well with Tan, Man and Dhun. This newsletter/magazine is revived from previous publication which was last printed in 2005. Our temple has progressed with leaps and bounds since its inception in 1987 in terms of growth in every which way and the forecast is for even more progress. Thus, more so for a need to inform you all of activities in detail and give you a chance to input your ideas and comments to enhance our culture, beliefs and progress spiritually in the community that we live in.

This was initiated by our current president Daxesh Modi to revive the newsletter/magazine to inform the devotees of happenings in the Temple in a little more detail. I have been given the task to gather the materials along with Amit Patel to do this first newsletter/magazine. Hope you all enjoy it.

-- Bhanu Hajratwala

info@hindutemple.org



Chairman's Message

June 2026

Dear Devotees, Members, Volunteers, and Friends,

Namaste.

As we reflect on the first half of 2026, I am filled with gratitude for the countless blessings Bhagwan has bestowed upon our temple and community. With the grace of the Divine, our temple continues to flourish as a spiritual home, nurturing devotion for generations to come.

Celebrating Our Sacred Traditions

From Maha Shivaratri to Holi, Chaitra Navratri, Rama Navami, Hanuman Jayanti, and Akshaya Tritiya, our temple was vibrant with prayer, bhajans, cultural activities, and family participation. It is heartwarming to witness devotees of all ages coming together to celebrate these sacred occasions. Every religious event is accompanied by a kids activity component, which has become extremely popular and has caused many young families coming to the temple regularly.

A Historic and Transformational Katha

Undoubtedly, one of the most memorable highlights of 2026 was our recent Katha. The overwhelming attendance, enthusiastic participation, and heartfelt appreciation from attendees made this one of the most significant spiritual gatherings in our temple's history. For many, the Katha was not merely an event but a deeply transformative experience.

"I do not usually understand or attend discourses. I attended on one of the days with my wife and was completely captivated by Sagarbhai's heartfelt way of conveying the message in simple, relatable language. I went on to attend four days—truly the first time I had experienced a discourse like this in my life," shared a long-time devotee and life member of our temple.

This achievement would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of our volunteers, committees, priests, sponsors, donors, and countless devotees who worked behind the scenes to ensure its success. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I extend my deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to making this historic event a reality.

The Spirit of Seva

Every successful temple program is built upon the foundation of selfless service. Throughout the year, our volunteers have generously dedicated their time, talents, and energy to support religious services, cultural programs, educational initiatives, and community outreach efforts.

Gratitude for Our Priests

Our temple's success would not be possible without the relentless efforts and dedication of our three priests. Their daily commitment to sacred rituals and compassionate engagement with devotees continues to uplift and

inspire all who visit our temple. On behalf of the Board and all devotees, I extend our deepest gratitude for their dedication and invaluable contributions.

Looking Ahead

As we move into the second half of the year, we remain committed to enhancing the spiritual experience for all devotees, expanding educational and cultural opportunities, and strengthening our outreach within the broader community. We are also encouraged by the growing participation of our youth and families. Investing in our youth remains one of our highest priorities as we strive to provide meaningful opportunities for spiritual learning, leadership, and community engagement.

Thank you for your continued trust, support, and devotion. May Bhagwan bless you and your families with health, happiness, prosperity, and spiritual fulfillment.

Jai Shri Krishna. Hari Om.

-- Somil Shah, Chairman

Hindu Temple, Canton



Meet the Priests



Prasad Bhat
Head Priest (Panditji)
734-981-8730 ext. 3



**Jitendrakumar
Ranchhodbhai Sevak**
Priest (Mukhiyaji)
734-981-8730 ext. 4



Chandramouli Sharmaji
Priest
734-981-8730 ext. 5

Our three priests lead daily rituals, festivals, and personal ceremonies for our community with deep devotion and scholarship, keeping our traditions alive for every generation of devotees.

Vandana Speaks With Prasadji

Education

Shri Prasad Bhat is highly trained in Complete Krishna Yajurveda and Vedic philosophy (Bodhayana and Amastambha Sutra), having completed his studies at Maharshi Veda Vignana Vidya Peeth, Theerthahalli, Karnataka, India. Coming from a traditional family of priests, he is well qualified to perform a wide range of religious ceremonies, including Poojas, Havans, Weddings, and other Vedic rituals according to both North and South Indian traditions.

Panditji began his Vedic education at the age of 12 under the guidance of Mahalinga Upadhyaya. He later pursued advanced studies at Maharshi University, where he completed his Krishna Yajurveda training under the blessings and mentorship of his guru, Veda Brahma Shree Gopalakrishna Upadhyaya. He is also well versed in Sanskrit and has served in several temples in India.

In recognition of his scholarship and dedication to Vedic learning, Panditji has been honored with the prestigious titles of “Veda Murthi” and “Samhita Paathi.” His rich, resonant, and powerful chanting voice creates a deeply spiritual and divine atmosphere during religious ceremonies and Vedic recitations.

Languages fluent in: English, Kannada, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, and Tulu *Working knowledge of:* Malayalam, Gujarati, and Sanskrit *Additional qualifications:* Teaching Vedas and singing Bhajans

When were you appointed at this temple?

Shri Prasad Bhat joined our temple on February 10, 2003, with the blessings and guidance of Dr. Shivakumar Bhat, the temple's former Head Priest. Dr. Bhat served as his mentor and played an instrumental role in helping him begin his new chapter of service in the United States.

How do you stay inspired and maintain such vibrant communication with devotees?

“My inspiration comes from serving the Divine and witnessing the transformation that occurs in people's lives through sincere spiritual practice. My connection with devotees is cultivated through genuine care, attentive listening, shared spiritual experiences, and the understanding that we are all fellow travelers on the same spiritual path. Love, compassion, and consistent presence help nurture that bond.”

“I also strive to ensure that every devotee who comes to the temple—regardless of their background, language, culture, or region of the world—feels welcomed, valued, and spiritually at home. Each person arrives with a unique journey and relationship with the Divine and it is important that they are received with respect, warmth, and kindness.”



“Creating an atmosphere of inclusiveness, devotion, and service allows the temple to become a place where all can experience spiritual nourishment, community, and a deeper connection with God.”

Devotees seem to love and respect you, and the general comments about you are very positive.

“I prefer not to comment on what others may say about me. However, I can sincerely say that the love, affection, respect, and blessings I receive from devotees continually inspire and motivate me to serve with greater dedication and to perform divine ceremonies for our beloved temple and community.”

Any other comments you would like to share?

“I encourage all members of our community—elders, adults, youth, and children—to remain connected with the temple. By participating in temple activities and preserving our traditions, we can strengthen and uplift our Sanatana Dharma and pass its values on to future generations. I pray for the good health, wisdom, prosperity, and peace of all community members.”

***Om Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah, Sarve Santu Nir-Aamayaah |
Sarve Bhadraanni Pashyantu, Maa Kashcid-Duhkha-Bhaag-Bhavet |
Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih ||***

May everyone be happy, may everyone be free from all diseases; may everyone see goodness and auspiciousness in everything; may none be unhappy or distressed. Om peace, peace, peace.

Editor's Note

We hope the above interviews were helpful to devotees, and we appreciate the priests' positive vibes in the temple.

Stay tuned for our Mukhiyaji's Interview in the next issue...

Highlights This Quarter

Shrimad Bhagvat Katha

We were very blessed and very fortunate to listen to Panditji Sagar Pandya (PhD) for seven days. His interpretation and explanation of the Bhagvat Katha with Bhav and Bhakti was food for the Soul.

His message to us was how important it is to live by consistently concentrating on Atma, quietness and stability of the mind and luck. For this and everything we have, including family and friends, we should thank Bhagvat Bhagwan on a daily basis. What a treat this was!!!

At the conclusion of the Katha we had Lord Balaji Tula Puja. What a success this was!!!

Overall seven days of blissful words from Panditji Pandya and festivities such as Tulsi Vivah was enjoyed by all. I had the good fortune of interviewing Dr Pandya for "Vandana".



"Thank Bhagvat Bhagwan daily with Bhav and Bhakti."

Vandana Speaks With

Dr. Sagar Pandya, PhD

Early Life

His family was financially compromised. However, he was able to complete early years of school with financial help in Ahmedabad, India.

Education

He completed his PhD in Hindu Philosophy at the Vedanta Academy in Varanasi (Banaras), India. His PhD thesis was based on Vallabha Vedanta. Currently he resides in Houston, Texas, where he does various Kathas and priestly duties.

What inspires you?

“Seniors and children inspire me — especially in USA. There is loneliness and isolation among the senior population. Children are culturally isolated at times. Living in the community where the ‘east meets the west’ is difficult for both generations.” He tries to sort out the cultural differences and similarities for them through examples, explanations, and Bhav and Bhakti.

What is your message to us all?

Atma, quietness of mind, and Luck is the answer for a constructive and peaceful life. Thank Bhagvat Bhagwan daily with Bhav and Bhakti.

Meet the Executive Committee

2026 Executive Board



Somil Shah
Chairman



Daxesh Modi
President

Kamlesh Patel

Vice Chairman

Sailesh Patel

Secretary

Mahesh Rathi

Treasurer

Meet the Board of Trustees

Ramakrishna Nallani*Trustee***Hasmukh Patel***Trustee -- Chair, Kitchen Committee***Madhavan Ranganathan***Trustee***Nilesh Patel***Trustee -- Chair, IT Committee***Amit Patel***Trustee***Bharti Bhavsar***Trustee***Hitesh Patel***Trustee***Bhanu Hajratwala***Trustee***Mayur Shah***Trustee***Keshav Raizada***Trustee*

Enrichment Classes

Our temple offers a variety of classes throughout the year designed to nurture spiritual growth, cultural knowledge, and community connection for devotees of all ages -- from Bhagavad Gita study circles and Sanskrit shlokas to bhajan and classical music groups, yoga and meditation sessions, and Hindi/Gujarati language classes for children.



Community Outreach Programs

In the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam -- “the world is one family” -- our temple extends its seva beyond our walls through food drives, interfaith gatherings, blood donation camps, senior support initiatives, and partnerships with local charities serving the greater Canton and Metro Detroit community.



Membership

Temple membership helps sustain our daily worship, festivals, education programs, and community services, while giving members a voice in temple governance, including voting rights at the Annual General Body Meeting.

Membership Benefits

- ◆ Free yoga classes
- ◆ Discounted rates for priest services
- ◆ Discounted rates for facility rental
- ◆ Free temple publications
- ◆ Free annual calendar
- ◆ Free Vandana quarterly magazine
- ◆ Discounted fees for dance, language, and mantra classes
- ◆ Discounted-price tickets for Navratri and other events
- ◆ Volunteering and community-service opportunities

To join or renew your membership, visit:

<https://thehindutemple.breezechms.com/form/membershipform2026>

Activities This Quarter

- ◆ Shrimad Bhagvat Katha followed by Lord Balaji Tula Puja
- ◆ Adhika Jyeshtha Masa Purnima Satyanarayan Puja
- ◆ Father's Day Celebrations
- ◆ Applications for High School Seniors Scholarship Program 2026
- ◆ Community Golf Outing

For dates, times, and registration details on the Scholarship Program and Community Golf Outing, please contact the temple office at info@hindutemple.org.



Glimpses of 2026



Support Our Temple

Your generosity sustains our Kathas, festivals, scholarships, and seva programs -- and helps us continue serving this community for generations to come.

To make a donation or learn about sponsorship opportunities, please reach out to us.

info@hindutemple.org

Hindu Temple of Canton, Michigan

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