

Austin Hindu Temple and Community Center

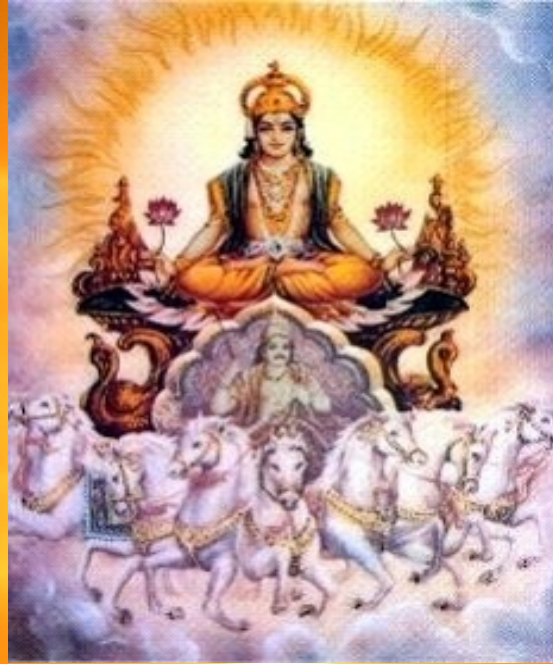


ॐ नमः शिवाय ! श्री मात्रे नमः ! ॐ नमो नारायणाय !

Ratha Saphthami

FEB 5, 2014 (6:30pm—9pm)

Rathasaphthami or Surya Jayanthi festival falls on the seventh day (saphthami) in the bright half (Sukla Paksha) of the month Maagha. Traditionally it is regarded as the day on which the chariot of the Sun God, with seven horses (signifying rainbow colors and each day of the week), is diverted towards the north east by his charioteer, **Aruna**.



“Arogyam bhaskaraad ichchethu”, meaning Bhaskara is the ruler of all health. Performing Surya Namaskaram on this day brings about great health benefits.

Devotees observe Ratha saphthami with a purification bath by holding Arka patra (Yakka leaves) on their head while bathing and offering Arghyam (water held in the palms) to the Sun God. They chant this hymn to the Sun God.

Saptha Saptha Maha Saptha

Saptha Dweepa Vasundhara

Saptha Arka Parna Maadaya

Sapthamyam Snana Maachareth

The Sun god is said to be saakshaat **Trimurthi** Swaroopa. The Vedas adore him as a witness of all actions (Karma Sakshi).

*Brahmaswaroopo udaye madhyahnethu Maheswaraha
Asthakale swayam VishnuH Trayimoorthi Divakaraha*

Lord Vishnu in his form as Surya Narayana is worshipped on this day. This sloka from Sri Vishnu Sashasra Nama (sloka 94) describes Lord Surya Narayana as the Sun God.

*VihaayasagatirjyotiH suruchirhutabhug vibhuh
Ravirvilochanah suryah savitaa ravilochanah*

Chanting of the most powerful Vedic Hymn from Krishna Yajur Vedam, namely Arunam, invokes the various benevolent energies of Surya Bhagwan and his infinite divine blessings. Other important prayers offered to the Sun God on this occasion also include Adityahridayam, Suryaashtakam, Surya Sahasranamam and others.

•6:00pm – Venkateshwara and Lakshmi Devi Abhishekam

•6:30pm – Aruna Homam

•8pm – Ratha Rathra (Surya Prabha and Garuda Vaahana)

•8:30pm – Archana and Haarathi

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