

Heather D. Long

World Religion

Dr. Young Ko

Site Visitation Report #2

I was brought up in an American Baptist church located in Columbia Station, Ohio. I've always had a curiosity about why people believe the things that they do. I currently do not affiliate myself with any church. I remain spiritual but not necessarily religious.

On December 3, 2013, I went with my sister to visit the Greater Cleveland Shiva Vishnu Temple on 7733 Ridge Road in Parma, Ohio. I arrived at approximately 5:45pm for the puja at 6pm. I thought I was going to be attending the puja for Hanuman, the monkey God responsible for peace of mind and courage but as it turns out, they were celebrating paying off the original loan for the temple construction. The service was for Lakshmi in thanks for her blessings. Lakshmi called the Mother Goddess by one of the priest is the Goddess of wealth (physical and spiritual), beauty, and consort to Vishnu. The service itself lasted about 45 minutes.

I was not able to get a good view of the temple building itself since it was already dark when I arrived. The building appeared to be made out of the colors of brick; yellow, cream, and brick red. There appeared to be two torrent type structures in the center of an otherwise flat roof. In order to enter the temple there was a separate walkway leading around the building so that you entered from the opposite side of the building facing the road. The walkway was not heated actually having openings at the top of the walls in the otherwise enclosed area. Along the walls of the walkway were many plaques dedicated to deities, famous people (Gandhi), and families of worshipers. Through the doors in the back of the building, there is a large reception area with stairs leading to the lower levels and a shoe room. In the shoe room, you are to leave your shoes

and coats. There is a reminder not to leave valuables and to dress in a non-provocative manner before entering the main temple hall. The main temple hall is a vast open space consisting of a carpeted floor; the walls mostly tiled in marble or granite along with the areas where the deities resided. The use of rich colors of gold, deep red, ivory, black or onyx was throughout. The room had alcoves containing statues or figurines on both sides (Krishna, Durga, Hanuman); there are two with their own free standing rooms (Shiva & Vishnu) and four in domed arched displays along the back (Ganesh, Parvati, Saraswati, Lakshmi). There is a small room off to the back right hand side containing small black figurines. Off the main hall to the left in a separate space had two figures flanking the outside of a small temple-like structure containing a large almost human size onyx statue. The inside of the areas containing the statues and figurines was different items; such as apples, bananas, and honey, some had incense, coins, flowers, oil or water, and other smaller figurines. Overall, the temple was similar to a very well maintained museum, complete with signs naming the deities, asking one not to touch and not to enter the area.

The service took place in the back on the right side where the Lakshmi statue is located. Lakshmi is an ivory colored statue with four arms with each hand-facing palm out; the top two hands contain lotus flowers. She was garbed in a dark green dress bordered with gold and had an orange sash. She wears a golden crown with a halo and a lei of flowers around her neck. Lakshmi is sitting inside of a gold structure containing columns with elephant heads on all four sides and a gilded dome on top with an alabaster ceiling.

There was a small gathering of worshipers no more than 30 total. The congregation was seated in the floor before the deity, most with legs crossed in a casual yoga stance, the elderly or disabled were offered chairs or backs with an attached seat to make them more comfortable. No children were present and there was no separation between the almost even amount of men and

women. Three priests in long flowing loose fitting robes/garb officiated the service. Each took turns at different points leading the service by using a rhythm in their speech to as they imparted prayers, sometimes asking the worshippers to repeat after them. They each had different jobs of offering food, flowers, or anointing the statue with oils, holy water, or a type of red paint. They first gave the food, which was apples and bananas, and the flowers to the worshipers then they return them to the priests to display around the statue or on it. They also took turns waving a cone of incense and incense sticks before Lakshmi. At one point during the service, the regular worshippers received a red dot in the middle of their forehead as well as Lakshmi. Some worshipers used hand gestures of bowing or touching the head and heart during different parts of the puja. There was no music or singing done during the service but the chants had their own rhythm and tone to them. Right before the end of the service, the one priest took the cone of incense before each of the deities represented in the temple before returning to Lakshmi. At the end of the service, the congregation was asked to stand and repeat a prayer were several of the worshipers spun around or knelt down prostrating themselves before Lakshmi. There was a line that formed beside of the statue were the priests gave each a bit of holy water and a bananas or apples to the worshippers to receive the Goddess blessing.

I thought the ceremony was beautiful and moving even though I did not understand the majority of what was said. The people were very friendly and accepting of outsiders in their midst. I would love to return to witness another service.

Greater Cleveland Shiva Vishnu Temple
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 P.O. Box 29508
 Parma, OH 44129

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 Organization
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Phone (440) 888-9433
 www.shivavishnutemple.org
 A Non-Profit Tax-Exempt Organization

REGULAR WEEKLY & MONTHLY PUJA SCHEDULE

Sunday 9:30 AM Shiva Abhishekam; 11 AM Vishnu Puja
 1st Sunday 12:30 PM Jagannath Puja; 1st Sunday 11:00 AM Jain Puja
 Monday 10 AM Shiva Abhishekam; 6 PM Jagannath Puja
 Tuesday 10 AM Ganesha Abhishekam; 6 PM Hanumanji Puja
 Wednesday 10 AM Ram Parivar Puja; 6 PM Aiyappa Puja;
 Thursday 10 AM Radha Krishna Puja; 6 PM Shrinathji Puja;
 Friday 10 AM Parvati Puja (Abhishekam 1st Fri 7:15 p)
 6 PM Lakshmi Puja; 6:30 PM Durga Puja
 7:15 PM Abhishekam for Sridevi 2nd Fri for Bhudevi 3rd Friday (7:15 p)
 Saturday 11 AM Vishnu Abhishekam 10 AM Aiyappa Puja 1st Sat
 5 PM Karthikeya Puja 6 PM Saraswati Puja;
 6:30 PM Navagraha Abhishek 11 AM Venkateswara Abhishekam 2nd & 4th Sat Puja 1st & 3rd Sat

NITYA PUJA (Monday - Saturday)

10 AM Shiva Abhishekam; 10 AM Vishnu Puja **Arati** Sunday 12:20 PM

Highlights of Jan 2014 events

Date	Day	Time	Description
Jan 1	Wed	9:15 a	New Year Day, Ganesh Havan,
		11 a	Venkateswara Abhishekam
		11 a	Satsang, Bhajan, Aarati (Main temple hall)
Jan 4	Sat	10 a	Sri Aiyappa Puja
Jan 6	Mon	6p	Sukla Shashthi, Murugabhishekam
Jan 11	Sat	9 a	Vakunta Ekadashi
		10 a	Sri Aiyappa Makara Vilakku Puja celebration
		5:30 p	Festival of Lohri
Jan 12	Sun	11:30 a	Makara Sankranti & Pongal Celebration
Jan 14	Tue	9:30 a	Makara Sankranti, Suryanarayan Puja
		6p	Sri Aiyappa Makara Vilakku Puja
Jan 15	Wed	7:15 p	Pournima, Satyanarayanpuja
Jan 16	Thu	6p	Tai Poosam (Murugabhishekam)
Jan 19	Sun	6p	Sankatahara Chaturti, Ganeshabhishekam
Jan 28	Tue	6p	Pradosham, Rudrabhishekam
Jan 30	Thu		Amavasya

Visitors are requested to wear appropriate attire in the Temple premises

Greater Cleveland Shiva Vishnu Temple
Temple Hours

Mon to Fri: 9 AM - 12:30 PM & 4 PM - 8:30 PM
 Sat & Sun: 9 AM - 8:30 PM



BHAKTI
December 2013

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 SUNDAY PUJA 9:30 AM Jain Puja 10.50-AM JAGANNATH PUJA 1: p Vedic Havan 3 PM	2 SHIVA PUJA (ABHISHEKAM) 10:00 AM JAGANNATH PUJA 6 PM AMAVASYA	3 GANESHA ABHISHEKAM 10:00 AM HANUMANJI PUJA 6 PM HANUMAN CHALISA 7:30PM	4 RAM PARIVAR PUJA 10 AM AIYAPPA PUJA 6 PM	5 RADHA KRISHNA PUJA 10 AM SHRINATHJI PUJA 6 PM BHAJAN 7:15 PM	6 LAKSHMI PUJA 6 PM DURGA PUJA 6:30 PM PARVATI Abhishekam 7:15P DURGA CHALISHA 7:30 PM; BHAJAN 7:30 PM	7 SRI AIYAPPA PUJA 10 AM VISHNU ABHISHEKAM 10:AM SHRINATHJI PUJA 6 PM KARTHIKEYA PUJA 5 PM SARASWATI PUJA 6 PM Navagraha Abhishek 6:30 PM SHUKLA SHASHTI MURUGABHISHEKAM 6 PM
8 SUNDAY PUJA 9:30 AM (See above for the details)	9 SHIVA PUJA (ABHISHEKAM) 10:00 AM JAGANNATH PUJA 6 PM	10 GANESHA ABHISHEKAM 10:00 AM HANUMANJI PUJA 6 PM HANUMAN CHALISA 7:30PM	11 RAM PARIVAR PUJA 10 AM AIYAPPA PUJA 6 PM	12 RADHA KRISHNA PUJA 10 AM SHRINATHJI PUJA 6 PM BHAJAN 7:15 PM	13 PARVATI PUJA 10A LAKSHMI PUJA 6 PM DURGA PUJA 6:30 PM SRI DEVI Abhishekam 7:15P DURGA CHALISHA 7:30 PM; BHAJAN 7:30 PM	14 SRI AIYAPPA PUJA 10 AM VISHNU ABHISHEKAM 10 AM VENKATESWARABHISHEKAM 11 A KARTHIKEYA PUJA 5 PM SARASWATI PUJA 6 PM Navagraha Abhishek 6:30 PM
15 SUNDAY PUJA 9:30 AM (See above for the details);	16 SHIVA PUJA (ABHISHEKAM) 10:00 AM JAGANNATH PUJA 6 PM POURNIMA SATYA NARAYAN PUJA 7.15 P	17 GANESHA ABHISHEKAM 10:00 AM HANUMANJI PUJA 6 PM HANUMAN CHALISA 7:30PM	18 RAM PARIVAR PUJA 10 AM AIYAPPA PUJA 6 PM Arudra Darshanam 8:AM Nataraja abhishekam	19 RADHA KRISHNA PUJA 10 AM SHRINATHJI PUJA 6 PM BHAJAN 7:15 PM	20 PARVATI PUJA 10: AM LAKSHMI PUJA 6 PM DURGA PUJA 6:30 PM BHU DEVI Abhishekam 7:15P DURGA CHALISHA 7:30 PM; BHAJAN 7:30 PM SANKATAHARACHATURTHI GANESHABHISHEKAM 6P	21 8.30 a Thirupavai SRI AIYAPPA PUJA 10 AM VISHNU ABHISHEKAM 10 AM VENKATESWARA PUJA 11AM KARTHIKEYA PUJA 5 PM SARASWATI PUJA 6 PM Navagraha Abhishek 6:30 PM
22 SUNDAY PUJA 9:30 AM (See above for the details)	23 SHIVA PUJA (ABHISHEKAM) 10:00 AM JAGANNATH PUJA 6 PM	24 GANESHA ABHISHEKAM 10:00 AM HANUMANJI PUJA 6 P HANUMAN CHALISA 7:30PM	25 RAM PARIVAR PUJA 10 AM AIYAPPA PUJA 6 PM	26 RADHA KRISHNA PUJA 10 AM SHRINATHJI PUJA 6 PM BHAJAN 7:15 PM	27 PARVATI PUJA 10: AM LAKSHMI PUJA 6 PM DURGA PUJA 6:30 PM DURGA CHALISHA 7:30 PM; BHAJAN 7:30 PM	28 8.30 a Thirupavai SRI AIYAPPA PUJA 10 AM VISHNU ABHISHEKAM 10 AM VENKATESWARABHISHEKAM 11 A KARTHIKEYA PUJA 5 PM SARASWATI PUJA 6 PM Navagraha Abhishek 6:30 PM
29 SUNDAY PUJA 9:30 AM (See above for the details) PRADOSHAM RUDRA ABHISHEKAM 6PM	30 SHIVA PUJA (ABHISHEKAM) 10:00 AM JAGANNATH PUJA 6 PM	31 AMAVASYA GANESHABHISHEKAM 10a HANUMANJI PUJA 6 PM HANUMAN CHALISA 7:30PM 10 p End of 2013 Bhajan	For the following information please call: Donations - Batuk Modi (440) 623-5164 Priest & Hall scheduling - Manager, Dr.Ramaswamy Sharma (440) 888-9433 Comm Services - Raman Patel (216) 524-6744		Every Sunday: Vedic Heritage class (for children) 1:15 PM	

FOR RECONFIRMATION OF EVENTS AND TIMMING, PLEASE CALL THE TEMPLE MANAGER AT (440) 888-9433.