



# **GANESHAVANI**

## **Maha Shivaratri Special Edition**

**Maha Shivaratri 2026 at Missouri Ganesha Temple was celebrated in a truly grand and devotional manner. As it coincided with Presidents' Day weekend, many families were able to attend, filling the temple from morning until the early hours of the next day. It was heartwarming to see devotees of all ages – especially young children – staying awake through the night with deep bhakti to receive Lord Shiva's blessings.**

**The celebration began with the 1st Kaala Puja at 10:30 AM with Panchamirtha Abhishekam and Maha Ganapathi Abhishekam, creating a peaceful and spiritually uplifting start to the day. The 2nd Kaala Puja at 6:00 PM featured Ekadasha Dravya Sri Rudrabhishekam with Bilva Patra and Bhasma offerings. The temple resonated with collective chanting, and the devotional energy continued to grow.**

**During the 3rd Kaala Puja at 10:00 PM, Ekadasha Vaara (11 times) Sri Rudrabhishekam – Sri Rudram (Namakam and Chamakam), known as Ekadasha Rudra Parayanam – was performed, followed by Sri Shiva Parvathi Shanthi Kalyana Utsavam, invoking peace and harmony for all families.**

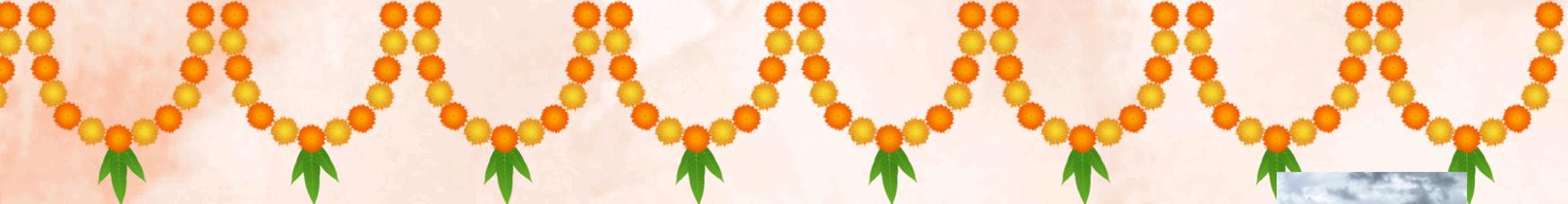
**The 4th Kaala Puja at 4:00 AM concluded with Sri Abheeshta Kapileeswara Swamy Maha Abhisheka Aradhana. Despite the long night, devotees remained prayerful and devoted in the sacred pre-dawn hours.**

**Devotees also participated in Individual Sri Rudrabhishekam & Bilva Patra Archana at 9:00 AM and 4:00 PM, offering personal prayers for their families' well-being.**

**We sincerely thank our priests for conducting such a divine celebration, our dedicated volunteers for preparing prasadam and organizing the event, our generous sponsors for their continued support of the temple, and all the families whose devotion made this Maha Shivaratri truly grand and memorable.**

**Om Namah Shivaya. 🙏**





# MahaShivaratri Mahotsavam



By-Kushal Kola

Mahashivaratri is a truly exhilarating divine night filled with chanting hymns, performing various pujas, and taking blessings from Lord Shiva, who the momentous night is dedicated to. The night brings Shiva's protection against evil, spiritual purification, overcoming of many negative traits, and numerous other blessings. Mahashivaratri even translates to "Great Night of Shiva"! This year, 2026, Mahashivaratri was from the 15th to the 16th.

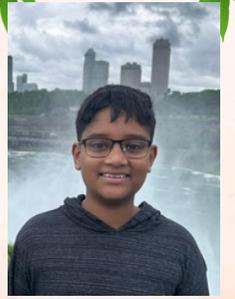
The common story of the sacred night is when after Sati sacrificed herself and Shiva fell into grief and a deep meditative trance. He chose to ignore the world, leading to a severe imbalance in the universe. Sati was reincarnated into Parvati. Parvati underwent thousands of years of penance, awakening Lord Shiva and leading to their marriage. This restored the balance in the universe. Another common story of Mahashivaratri is when during the legendary churning of the ocean by the gods and demons, a deadly poison emerged and threatened the safety and stability of the universe.

To save the universe, Lord Shiva heroically drank the poison, then wore a snake around his neck to prevent the spreading of the poison to the rest of his body. Devotees stayed up the whole night in penance and prayer, hoping Lord Shiva would be healed.





# MahaShivaratri Mahotsavam



By-Kushal Kola

We performed Sri Abheeshta Kapileeswara Swamy Maha Abhisheka Aradhana. During my time at the Missouri Ganesha Temple during Mahashivaratri, I was able to revel and bask in the energy of the second Kaala Puja. We chanted hymns in honor of Lord Shiva and performed the Ekadasha Dravya Sri Rudra Abhisheka Aradhana. The priest washed the lingam primarily with water and milk, and we chanted "Om Namah Shivaaya" various times. After the lingam was washed with milk, we offered the bhasma and covered the lingam with the sacred powder. The veil was then closed, and once it was open, the divine lingam looked mesmerizing and eye-dazzling with various gold decorations and various types of malas. We then offered the bilva patra leaves to the Lord Shiva while chanting "Eka Bilvam Shivaarpanam".

All in all, the night of Mahashivratri at the MO Ganesha Temple was a truly mesmerising experience, complete with energetic hymns that left me filled with ecstasy. I've always enjoyed the sacred night at the MO Ganesha Temple, however each time leaves me more excited for the next!





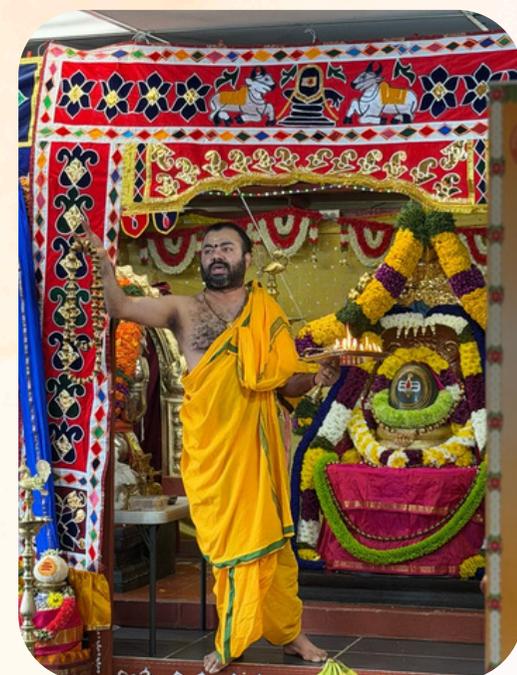
# MahaShivaratri Mahotsavam



By-Yagshini

Mahashivratri is one of the most important festivals dedicated to Lord Shiva. It is known as the Great Night of Shiva. On this sacred night, devotees pray, fast, chant, and often stay awake to show their devotion. Many believe this is the night Lord Shiva performed his divine cosmic dance and also the night he married Goddess Parvati. It is a time for spiritual growth, prayer, and inner peace.

At our Missouri Ganesha temple, Mahashivratri was celebrated with deep devotion through Kaala Pooja. On Mahashivratri, poojas are usually performed in four parts during the night, and each part is called a Kaala Pooja. Each kaalam includes special prayers, abhishekam, and chanting. The pooja began with prayers to Lord Ganesha to remove obstacles, and then the focus moved to Lord Shiva. Twelve gold-colored kalasams were placed at the front, and on top of each kalasam, a coconut was arranged. The kalasams represent purity and divine energy, and the coconuts symbolize respect and gratitude to God. Before starting the main rituals, the priest asked devotees for their names, rasi, and birth star details. He included them in the sankalpam, praying for the health, peace, and success of each family.





# MahaShivaratri Mahotsavam



By-Yagshini

One of the most important parts of the celebration was the abhishekam. Milk and other sacred offerings were poured over the Shiva Lingam while the priest chanted powerful mantras. Devotees brought milk, flowers, and fruits as offerings. Many people followed the chants using their phones and prayer books, repeating each line together. The temple was filled with the sound of “Om Namah Shivaya” and “Har Har Mahadeva” many times, creating a strong and peaceful spiritual feeling. Everyone chanted “Om Namah Shivaya” together, which means bowing to Lord Shiva with love and devotion. The repeated chanting created a calm, positive energy that made the temple feel sacred and holy.

The temple was beautifully decorated with flowers and lights, making the atmosphere feel warm and divine. More than 70 people attended the celebration in person, and many others joined through Facebook Live because they could not be there physically. At one point, the screen was closed so the priest could decorate Lord Ganesha and Lord Shiva with fresh flowers and ornaments. During that time, devotional songs were played in the background, including “Oh Nana Siva Ya,” which added to the calm and sacred environment. There was also an option for individual Shiva Linga Archana. This allowed devotees to personally offer prayers for their families and loved ones. Many people chose to participate in this special ritual.



