

Souvenir of Gratitude



Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of NC



Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa (Thakur)

“As many faiths, so many paths.”

“The winds of grace are always blowing; it is for us to raise our sails.”

Sri Sarada Devi (Holy Mother)

“If you want peace, do not look into the faults of others.”

“Learn to make the whole world your own. No one is a stranger, my child.”

Swami Vivekananda (Swamiji)

“Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.”

“You cannot believe in God until you believe in yourself.”

May their lives and words continue to inspire strength, compassion, and spiritual courage.

**Blessings from Most Revered Swami Gautamananda Maharaj
President, Ramakrishna Math & Ramakrishna Mission
(Belur Math) on the occasion of the Groundbreaking
Ceremony and the Start of Construction of The Universal
Temple of RKVSNC**



Dear Samrat Das,

I was glad to see your email and the accompanying pictures with me and other trustees of Belur Math. I was pleased to know that you have the groundbreaking ceremony on March 9th, 2025. I send my blessings and best wishes for the success of this ceremony and your onward development and progress.

I am very glad to learn that you celebrated Durga Puja and Kali Puja with great success. And now you are starting the construction of the Universal Temple dedicated to Sri Ramakrishna. I convey my most reverential prayers to Sri Ramakrishna to bless you with success in your noble project.

May Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother, and Swamiji bless you in every way is my prayer to them.

Jai Sri Ramakrishna!

Revered Swami Suhitananda, Vice President, Ramakrishna Math & Ramakrishna Mission (Belur Math)



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Message

I am pleased to learn that the Vedanta Society of North Carolina has entered the construction phase of the Universal Temple dedicated to Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Vivekananda declared, "So now the great conclusion is that Ramakrishna has no peer; nowhere else in this world exists that unprecedented perfection, that wonderful kindness for all that does not stop to justify itself, that intense sympathy for man in bondage. ...This is my conviction sure and certain; and the worship of such a divine man has been referred to by Patanjali in the aphorism: "Or the goal may be attained by meditating on a saint." So a temple built in Sri Ramakrishna's name is always Universal and all-embracing yet solemn in its resolve.

I pray to Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Ma Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda for successful construction of the temple and to shower Their blessings on all those associated with it.

(Swami Suhitananda)
Vice President

15 March 2026
Belur Math

Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa (Thakur)



ॐ स्थापकाय च धर्मस्य सर्वधर्मस्वरूपिणे । अवतारवरिष्ठाय रामकृष्णाय ते नमः ॥

Salutations to Thee, O Ramakrishna, the establisher of Dharma (spirituality), the embodiment of all religions, and the supreme avatar.

Sri Ramakrishna was one of the most influential spiritual figures of 19th-century India. Born in 1836 in Kamarpukur, Bengal, he later became the priest of the Kali Temple at Dakshineswar near Kolkata. From an early age, he displayed an intense longing for direct experience of the Divine, and his spiritual life was marked not by scholarship or debate, but by profound mystical realization. With childlike simplicity and unwavering devotion to the Divine Mother, he entered deep states of meditation and ecstasy, seeking not just to worship God but to see and *experience* God.

What made Sri Ramakrishna extraordinary was his fearless exploration of multiple spiritual paths. He practiced various streams of Hindu devotion, followed disciplines within Islam and Christianity, and declared from his own realization that all sincere paths lead to the same ultimate Truth. His famous teaching, “As many faiths, so many paths,” continues to resonate in a world seeking harmony among religions.

Though he had little formal education, his wisdom attracted seekers, scholars, and reformers. Among his foremost disciples was Swami Vivekananda, who later carried his master’s message to the West and introduced Vedanta to a global audience. Through Vivekananda and the Ramakrishna Order, Sri Ramakrishna’s life and teachings became a bridge between ancient spirituality and the modern world.

Sri Ramakrishna passed away in 1886, but his life remains a living testimony to purity, devotion, and the universality of spiritual truth. His message was simple yet transformative: God can be realized, and divine love is the essence of life.

Sri Sarada Devi (Holy Mother)



ॐ जननीं सारदां देवीं रामकृष्णं जगद्गुरुम् । पादपद्मे तयोः श्रित्वा प्रणमामि मुहुर्मुहुः ॥

Om. Taking shelter at the lotus feet of Mother Sarada and Ramakrishna, the World Teacher, I salute them again and again.

Sri Sarada Devi, reverently known as Holy Mother, was the spiritual consort of Ramakrishna and one of the most revered figures of modern Hindu spirituality. Born in 1853 in the quiet village of Jayrambati in Bengal, she lived a life outwardly simple yet inwardly luminous. Married to Sri Ramakrishna at a young age, she later joined him at Dakshineswar, where she became not only his companion in spiritual life but also a quiet embodiment of divine motherhood.

After Sri Ramakrishna's passing, Sarada Devi emerged as a guiding force for his disciples and countless householders who sought comfort and spiritual direction. Though she avoided public attention, her presence radiated serenity, compassion, and strength. She welcomed all—regardless of caste, creed, gender, or background—with unconditional love. To many, she was not just a teacher but a living expression of the Divine Mother. Her teachings were simple and practical, centered on purity of heart, patience, and kindness. She often reminded devotees, "If you want peace, do not look into the faults of others. Rather see your own shortcomings." Through her gentle words and silent example, she demonstrated that spiritual realization is possible while living a life of service and humility.

About Sri Ramakrishna, she said "Really and truly, Sri Ramakrishna was God himself. He assumed this human body to remove the sorrows and sufferings of others. He moved about, as a king walks through his city in disguise. He disappeared the moment he became known..."

Sarada Ma passed away in 1920, but her legacy continues through the Ramakrishna Order and the countless lives she transformed. She remains a timeless symbol of universal motherhood—compassionate, forgiving, and infinitely loving.

Swami Vivekananda (Swamiji)



ॐ नमः श्रीयतिराजाय विवेकानन्द सूरये । सच्चित्सुखस्वरूपाय स्वामिने तापहारिणे ॥

Salutation to that king of renouncers and controller of passions, the sage Vivekananda, who is Satchitananda (Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute) Itself, the spiritual preceptor and the remover of distress.

Swami Vivekananda was one of the most dynamic spiritual leaders of modern India and a key figure in bringing Indian philosophy to the Western world. Born as Narendranath Datta in 1863 in Kolkata, he possessed a sharp intellect, a questioning mind, and a deep yearning to understand the nature of God. His life transformed when he met his spiritual master, Ramakrishna, whose direct experience of the Divine answered the doubts that had troubled the young seeker.

After Ramakrishna's passing, Vivekananda embraced monastic life and traveled extensively across India, witnessing firsthand the poverty and social challenges facing the nation. These experiences shaped his conviction that spirituality must go hand in hand with service to humanity. He believed that each soul is potentially divine and that religion should empower individuals to realize their inner strength and dignity.

In 1893, Vivekananda gained international recognition when he addressed the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago. His opening words, "Sisters and Brothers of America," were met with a standing ovation, and his message of universal tolerance and harmony resonated deeply with audiences. He presented Vedanta as a rational, inclusive philosophy compatible with modern thought.

Vivekananda later founded the Ramakrishna Mission, an organization dedicated to spiritual growth and social service. Though he passed away at the young age of 39 in 1902, his legacy continues to inspire millions worldwide. He remains a symbol of fearless faith, intellectual clarity, and the power of service rooted in spiritual realization.

The Sixteen Primary Monastic Disciples of Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa who formed the core of the Ramakrishna Order



Swami Vivekananda
(1863–1902)



Swami Brahmananda
(1863–1922)



Swami Yogananda
(1861–1899)



Swami Premananda
(1861–1918)



Swami Niranjanananda
(1862–1904)



Swami Shivananda
(1854–1934)



Swami Saradananda
(1865–1927)



Swami Ramakrishnananda
(1863–1911)



Swami Abhedananda
(1866–1939)



Swami Adbhutananda
(–1920)



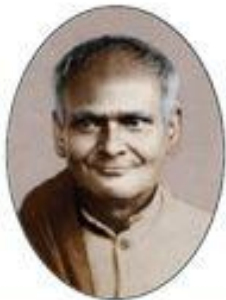
Swami Turiyananda
(1863–1922)



Swami Advaitananda
(1828–1909)



Swami Trigunatitananda
(1865–1915)



Swami Subodhananda
(1867–1932)



Swami Akhandananda
(1864–1937)



Swami Vijnanananda
(1868–1938)



Swami Sarvadevananda is the spiritual head of RKVSNC and the leader of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, and a monk of the Ramakrishna Order of India.

Vedanta Society
of Southern California

www.vedanta.org

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March 10, 2026

Hollywood

It is a great joy to see that the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Carolina is expanding its own place of worship to cater to the needs of present and future generations. Here, many devotees will be able to assemble, pray, and make their lives peaceful and joyful by attending talks and lectures, meditating and contemplating on God and the Vedantic principles in the light of the Ramakrishna–Vivekananda ideology, and by singing bhajans and prayers.

This place is a divine sanctuary that can offer solace to everyone, helping them forget the suffering caused by the anxieties and worries of daily life, and inspiring them to learn how to love and respect all religions while continuing their own spiritual journey.

It has long been a cherished dream that there would be a temple. With the help of all the devotees, trustees, and especially the cooperation of generous donors, the necessary funds have been raised, construction has begun, and the temple project is now seeing the light of fulfillment. My heartfelt thanks and gratitude go to all of you who have come forward to help fulfill this mission. I also warmly welcome other devotees to come forward so that this plan may reach its successful completion and this sacred place may begin its vibrant spiritual life.

The Ramakrishna Sangha, is the organization founded by Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda to bring welfare to society at all levels of human need—mental, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual—guided by the twin ideals: “Atmano Mokshartham Jagat Hitaya Cha” — for one’s own liberation and for the good of the world.

This center in North Carolina will continue to provide such nourishment to society, both on the physical and spiritual levels, for many years to come. The founders of this center, inspired by Swami Swahanandaji, dedicated their lives to this mission. My gratitude goes to them all. I also offer my loving gratitude to monks, devotees, well-wishers, and Government Officials who, at present, are carrying forward this banner of principles and ideals for the generations yet to come.

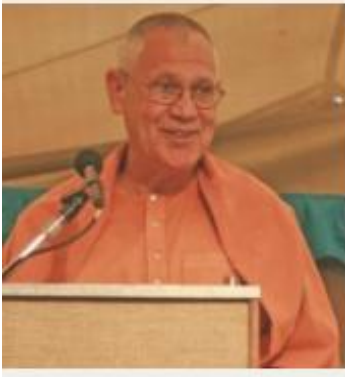
May Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda bless us all. This is my humble prayer.

Sarvadevananda

Swami Sarvadevananda

Minister-in-Charge

Vedanta Society of Southern California

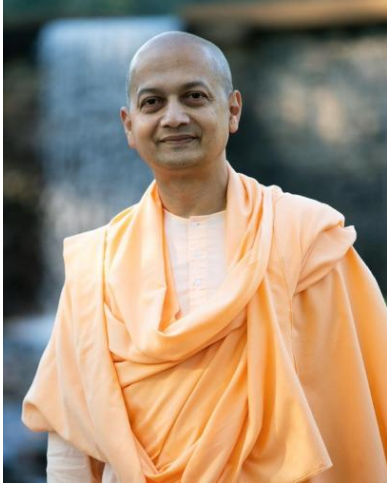


Swami Atmajnanananda is the chairman of the Board of Trustees for RKVSNC and is currently the head of the Vedanta Center of Greater Washington, DC, in Silver Spring, Maryland, USA.

By Thakur's grace, I have been associated with the Vedanta work in Raleigh for about three decades. I remember very well the early visits to Raleigh in the company of Revered Swami Swahanandaji. At that time, there was no separate building, and we usually met and stayed with Amitava and Joy Sarkar. Swami Swahanandaji had great hopes for the Vedanta movement in Raleigh and with the help of the original group, the Gulatis, Uppals, Sarkars and others, the work gradually started to take shape. The turning point was the purchase of the present property on Globe Road.

It has been a great joy for me to see how the work has progressed over the years. One of the greatest contributions has been the children's school. On almost all of my visits, I get the chance to see them perform, chant, and talk about Vedanta. The center also does wonderful service in connecting with the local community through charitable work. The recent choir is also a wonderful addition. And the number of visiting swamis and pravrajikas that come each year has grown to the point where every month witnesses one or two who come for weekend programs. I am quite sure that there is not another private center that hosts such a large number of visiting sadhus. Perhaps, the greatest contribution of the center has been the large number of new devotees that have been coming, many of whom have taken initiation with Revered Swami Sarvadevanandaji. His guidance and inspiration have been essential for the wonderful growth of the center.

As the number of devotees has increased, the need for a larger space has become more and more apparent. Many attempts were made to find the right property to purchase, but Thakur ordained that the original land which the center was built on would become the site of the future temple. It is with great joy that we now see the work coming to fruition. The blessings of Swami Swahanandaji, the inspiration of Swami Sarvadevanandaji, and the selfless service of the board members and devotees are now tangibly visible as we see the work on the temple begin. I pray that Thakur and Ma will continue to shower their blessing on the Vedanta Society of North Carolina and that the message of Vedanta may reach greater and greater numbers of devotees in the area.



Swami Sarvapriyananda is the Minister and Spiritual Leader of the Vedanta Society of New York. Prior to this, he served as assistant minister of the Vedanta Society of Southern California.

Dear friends,

I want to tell you about this very special project. The Vedanta Center of North Carolina is an Ashram which at present has very small premises, but it has been expanding its activities and the footfall of devotees and interested visitors have increased. I've been coming here over the last 4 to 5 years, and I feel that the present facilities are inadequate and larger facilities are needed for the visitors and those who are going to visit in the future. There is a project for building a universal temple on the land already with the ashram and this project is imminent. The construction has begun in full earnest, and I would like to appeal to one and all to contribute whatever you can, however much you feel comfortable with, to this wonderful project.

Sri Ramakrishna used to say that the best use of money is in the service of God and in the service of the holy, but if there is one being who is not ungrateful, it is God. When we offer our service and our financial resources in this way, it is an offering to the Lord. It is also a very wise and insightful thing to do for the welfare of the community made up of large numbers of Indian immigrants who have settled in this Raleigh Durham area. It's a wonderful investment in the future of the children and your grandchildren. It is also an investment in the future of the Hindu community here. The message of harmony and service which will go out from this Universal Temple, in the years and decades to come, will be of great benefit.

It's a great blessing, not only to the community here in RDU, but also to the state of North Carolina, and to the national life of the United States. This is a wonderful opportunity, and we all feel blessed to be part of this great project. Please take part in it, and please contribute to the best of your ability. This is my prayer.

Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti!



Swami Ishatmananda



VIVEKANANDA VEDANTA SOCIETY OF CHICAGO

(A Branch of Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, India)

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March 10, 2026

Dear Devotees of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Carolina,

I am extremely pleased to learn that the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Carolina is moving forward with the construction of its Temple. To mark this important and historic phase, the Society is planning to publish a commemorative edition of the "Souvenir of Gratitude" on this occasion.

Swami Vivekananda's mission, as he said to his disciple Sister Nivedita, was "to make people aware of their divine nature, and to help them manifest it."

May your endeavor be successful in fulfilling Swamiji's mission. This is the prayer of,

Swami Ishatmananda

President

Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Chicago



Swami Yogatmananda



Vedanta Society of Providence

227, Angell Street, Providence, RI 02906 USA

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Date: March 07, 2026. Birth Anniversary of Swami Yogananda

Dear Members of the Vedanta Society of North Carolina,
I am very happy to note that a **Souvenir of Gratitude** is being brought out to commemorate the inauguration of the new temple of the Society.

The special reason of my happiness is obvious. In the summer of 2001, the very year I arrived in USA to assume the charge of Vedanta Society of Providence, I got to meet some prominent devotees from North Carolina at the Marshfield Retreat Center. They gave me the invitation to come to the Greenville (North Carolina) Hindu Temple. I assured them that I will surely like to come, probably next year. And yes, in 2002 December, I went there and since then, almost every year (barring 2 years of Corona) I have gone at least once, mostly twice to North Carolina – to Greenville as well as to the Raleigh-Durham-Cary area. The Vedanta Society was not then formally established there, but a good number of sincere, generous, hardworking devotees were there. Umesh and Usha Gulati-s were the main organizers, arranging my stay at their home rendering exemplary hospitality.

But when Vedanta Society was formed and the present building was purchased, then things started moving rapidly and in a systematic way. Number of devotees attending regularly grew, the donations increased and as expected, the present management under the stewardship of Dr. Samrat Das, hit on a courageous plan to build a new temple in the same premises.

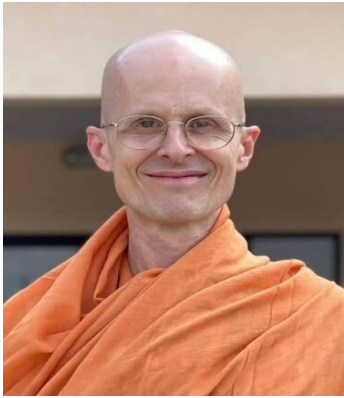
I have no words to express the great work put in by all the members of the Society, under expert and inspiring guidance and support of Swami Atmajnananandaji and others. Jai Sri Ramakrishna. My heartfelt best wishes and prayers for the fast completion of this excellent project, for the benefit of all devotees.

With love and Namaskar.

Swami Yogatmananda

Swami Yogatmananda

President, Vedanta Society of Providence, Rhode Island



Swami Mahayogananda joined the Ramakrishna Order in 1997 at the Ramakrishna Monastery in Trabuco Canyon, California and since 2013, has been serving at the Vedanta Society of Southern California.

On December 9, 1898, Swami Vivekananda brought the relics of Sri Ramakrishna to the new Monastery grounds at Belur—the place which would come to be known as Belur Math. While carrying them, he said to his disciple, “Thakur said to me, ‘Wherever you take me, carrying me on your shoulders, there I will go and stay, be it under a tree or in a hut.’ Therefore, I myself am carrying him on my shoulders to the new Math grounds. Know it for certain that Thakur will keep his seat fixed there, ‘for the welfare of the many,’ for a long time to come. Within this Math that is being built, harmony will remain among all viewpoints, all ideals. Just as Thakur held highly liberal views, this Math, too, will be a centre for propagating similar ideas. The blazing light of universal harmony that will emanate from here will flood the whole world.”

Every Vedanta Society and every temple dedicated in Sri Ramakrishna’s name is a channel for this “blazing light of universal harmony.” Let us remind ourselves at this significant time, when a new temple for Sri Ramakrishna is being built in North Carolina through the coming together of so many devotees and well-wishers, that this new Temple is dedicated to that universal harmony. It is established, not to make one more sect, not to gain followers, not to preach a personality, nor to gain any worldly benefit; but to practice and disseminate the highest spiritual principles. It stands for the realization of God, attainment of devotion, service of God in human beings, and the ideal, “As many faiths, so many paths.” It encourages individual freedom of belief and respect for all through seeing the Divine in all. It is held together with the binding glue of love, and the common ideal, *ātmano mokṣārtham jagad hitāya ca*: for one’s own liberation, and for the welfare of all.

This center doesn’t emphasize personalities, but rather principles. Of course, we hold our founding figures—Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda—as representing and embodying the highest principles of Vedanta, and present them as our inspiration, without prescribing how people should think of them. Many of our close members do accept them as their spiritual ideal, and cultivate faith in and devotion to them, remembering always that they represent the same spiritual Principle which manifests again and again through so many different religions.

Finally, let us also ask ourselves, what does a Vedanta Society, a Ramakrishna Temple, ask of us? Not just that we support the center, attend its functions, and participate in its activities. We ourselves must strive to live up to the ideal of God Realization, of harmony, of recognizing the Divine shining in every heart. The world needs this! Humanity needs a group of men and women who are ready to live up to the ideals of universality, harmony, service, and realization. I pray that we may all grow in sincerity and earnestness, to live up to the ideals of Vedanta, taking this new temple as an inspiration, so that each of our hearts becomes a Ramakrishna Temple, a center from which will blaze that Light of Universal Harmony!



Pravrajika Divyanandaprana is a sannyasini of Sri Sarada Math and is currently based at the Ramakrishna Sarada Mission in New Delhi. She serves as the editor of Samvit, an English journal published by Sri Sarada Math.

I am happy to know about the upcoming Universal Temple at the Vedanta Society of North Carolina. It is a matter of great pride that the devotees of the centre are working on this Temple which will broadcast the universal message of peace, unity and harmony amongst all religions and will stand as a beacon of spiritual light and inspiration for the welfare of humankind. I have witnessed the great enthusiasm in the hearts of the devotees during my visit to North Carolina in 2023. I wish the project a grand success and pray for the timely completion of this noble endeavour. I especially invoke the blessings of the Divine Mother on everyone involved in this divine project. Jai Maa!



Pravrajika Brahma-prana is a nun in the Vedanta Hindu tradition. She serves a community in Irving, the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Texas.

Dear Samrat Das,

I am so happy to know that you recently received the blessings of Most Revered President Maharaj Swami Gautamanandaji for the successful completion of the new Universal Temple of RKVSN. And what a grand vision will be accomplished when this Universal Temple is finally built and inaugurated! May the Divine Mother continue to guide you and the Raleigh devotees in the successful construction and completion of this noble endeavor.

During my first three-week visit to the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Carolina in February 2013, I was so impressed with the devotion and enterprising spirit of the trustees and core devotees there at that time. And recently, during my retreat in November 2025, I was equally impressed with the attendance and steadfast devotion of the long-time devotees and the enthusiasm of so many newcomers! I can see how the work in Raleigh has grown. And I can see how such a collective, long-lasting, faithful spirit of devotion has fructified in the construction, building, and establishment of a Universal Temple that will draw many more devotees and newcomers into the fold of the Ramakrishna Movement. Congratulations to you and all the trustees and advisors who have contributed to making this noble dream come true!

Yours in Sri Ramakrishna,

Pravrajika Brahma-prana
(Pravrajika Brahma-prana)

It is a matter of great joy that the Ramakrishna Vedanta Center of North Carolina's Universal Temple is progressing at a fine pace to be the spiritual home for many devotees. From a small nucleus of dedicated devotees, the work has expanded to include a much-needed Universal Temple with a commodious shrine and spacious property for the many people who will come in the future.

Swami Akhandananda, Sri Ramakrishna's great disciple, said that before the coming of his disciples, Sri Ramakrishna cried out in anguish: 'Come, wherever you are, come! I cannot live without you!' Many came, and many are coming, and many will come in the future. That cry is still ringing and will be heard for ages to come."

The creation of the Universal Temple by the Ramakrishna Vedanta Center proves that Swami Akhandananda's words have proved happily prophetic.

May Thakur, Ma & Swamiji bless this endeavor!

Pravrajika Vrajaprana
Vedanta Society, Santa Barbara



Pravrajika Vrajaprana is a prominent American sannyasini of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, a scholar of Hinduism, and a prolific writer. She joined the Sarada Convent in Santa Barbara in 1977.



Pravrajika Krishnaprana is a senior sannyasini and monastic member of the Vedanta Society of Southern California. She has resided at the Santa Barbara Convent for her entire monastic life

Swami Swahananda established this North Carolina center in 2008. He was a monk interested in spreading the word of Vedanta throughout the US. He said about one of the many independent centers that were started under his leadership - "...now that this Ashrama has been established, you have a permanent place. Here you can, not only gather for monthly meetings, but you can come in between also. Here you find a place dedicated to thinking of God. You will find peace. You will occasionally meet other devotees. Conversations with them about spiritual things.....will strengthen your own dedication to the spiritual path." The current opening of the official site of the Vedanta Temple for the devotees of North Carolina.

Swami Swahananda would be so pleased that the Lord's work is going along so well. The hard work and dedication to the precepts of Vedanta and cooperation by the devotees of N. Carolina has fulfilled his vision. This is an important stepping-stone in the work of the Ramakrishna movement in the US.

May all blessings of Thakur, Ma, and Swamiji be with you.



Pravrajika Shuddhatmaprana is an ordained sannyasini of the Vedanta Society of Southern California. She currently resides at the Vivekananda Retreat in Ridgely, New York.

The Importance of a Temple

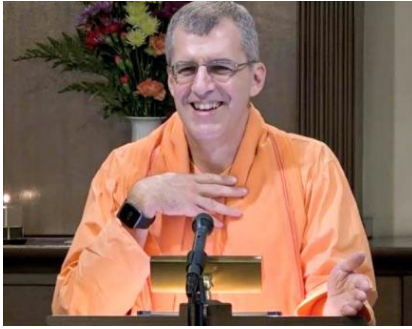
Why another temple? But perhaps the real question is, what is the purpose of a temple? And what is the purpose of this particular temple to Ramakrishna? Do we really understand what we are doing when we enter a temple? Most of us have, at some time or other, wondered about life—and about *our* life. Why are we here? Is there any purpose to our life? Perhaps we have tried to find the answer in science or history, or some other such subject, and found no answer. Even philosophy, we have found, cannot give the answer, because words can never go deep enough. So, who has the answer?

In this age, Sri Ramakrishna has not only given us the answer to quell all our doubts, but he has also showed us the way to realize this answer ourselves. Yes, he says, there *is* a purpose to life, and that purpose is to realize our own divine nature. This is, in fact, the only way to attain peace and everlasting bliss. Ramakrishna says: That divinity is within each one of us, and it *can* be realized. In fact, he says, to realize our divine nature is the goal of our life. Moreover, Ramakrishna also says that all religions are paths to that realization. We just need to take up one of them and follow it sincerely, and then we will attain the goal.

So why another temple? Actually, a temple is a sacred reminder of those teachings of Ramakrishna—that the divinity is within us and that we can realize it. It may seem contradictory that we go to a holy place outside to find the holy place within us, but it is not. How many of us can remember that divinity within us without a reminder outside of us? So, it works as a sacred reminder. Moreover, we may be surprised to learn that the whole point of the rituals in a temple is to reenact and revitalize the discovery, you might say, that the sacred, the divine reality, lives within us. You might think that the rituals are all about worshipping a deity sitting on an altar, outside of us—offering that deity food and drink and so forth. But the real worship that goes on during that ritual is the pujari worshipping the deity within himself or herself and then asking that deity to manifest outside.

But why a temple to Ramakrishna? Actually, Ramakrishna himself is a sacred reminder of the divinity within us, because his life is the embodiment of that teaching. In fact, his life embodies the sacred teachings of all the scriptures and of all the past saints and seers. And the power of all those teachings dwells in his life.

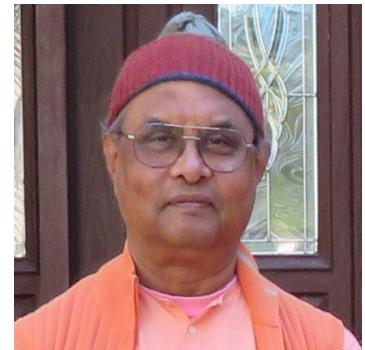
May Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda manifest in this temple for many, many years to come, and bless all who enter therein!



Swami Nirakarananda is a monk and teacher associated with the Ramakrishna Order and is based in the Vedanta Society of St. Louis. He is originally from Argentina and has graciously been performing Kali Puja for RKVSNC since 2018

It is a great joy to witness the unfolding of this sacred project. As the original ideas take shape in action, we see the love and sincerity of the many devotees and volunteers involved, along with the unmistakable blessings of Thakur, Ma, and Swamiji. It is clear that Sri Ramakrishna wants a new home in North Carolina!

Swami Ishtananda is a senior monk who joined the Ramakrishna Order in 1976. He currently serves as the Minister of the Vedanta Center of St. Petersburg, Florida



Om Namō Bhagavate Ramakrishnaya

It is a matter of great joy for me to learn that Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Carolina is bringing out a Souvenir as a part of Society's grand mission of building a new temple of Sri Ramakrishna. Being among those fortunate few who have witnessed the development of this Society, since its early days when handful number of devotees used to assemble in the house of late Sri Amitabha Sarkar through its present temple, it is but natural for me to feel truly happy.

There is an important advice to all householder devotees from Sri Ramakrishna: As a boy holding to a post or pillar whirls about it with headlong speed without any fear of falling, so perform your worldly duties, fixing your hold firmly upon God, and you will be free from danger. This new temple of Sri Ramakrishna shall serve like that strong pillar in everyday lives of his devotees in and around Raleigh-Durham, NC for a long time to come. I am praying to Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, Mother Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda Maharaj for successful completion of the temple project.

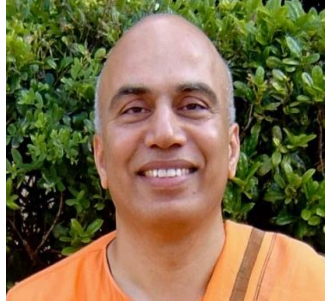
Swami Ishtananda

March 10, 2026

Honorable Visitors to RKVSNC



**Swami
Nishpapananda**



**Swami
Tyagananda**



**Swami
Baneshananda**



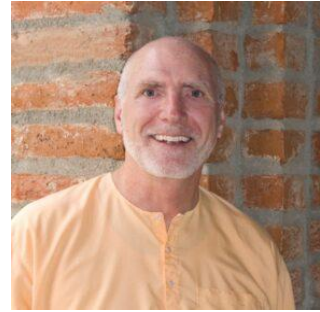
**Swami
Satyamayananda**



**Swami
Dhyananandananda**



**Swami
Shivarchanananda**



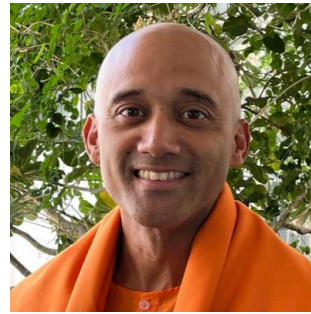
**Swami
Atmarupananda**



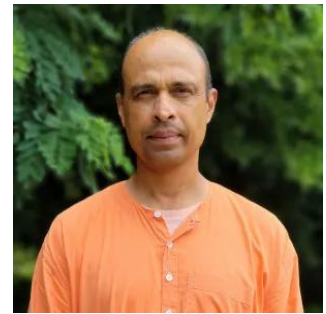
**Swami
Brahmarupananda**



**Swami
Harinamananda**



**Swami
Medhananda**



**Swami
Bhaswatananda**



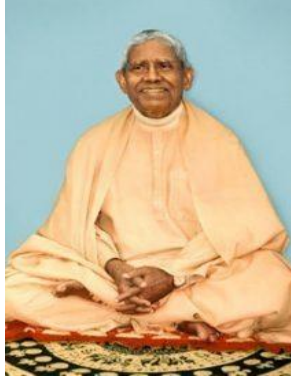
**Swami
Vedananda**



**Swami
Chidbrahmananda**



**Swami
Tattwamayyananda**



Swami Bhuteshananda

Swami Bhuteshananda, the twelfth President of the Ramakrishna Order, was born on 8 September 1901 at Somsar in Bankura district of West Bengal. His pre-monastic name was Vijay Chandra Roy. His parents were Purna Chandra Roy and Charubala Devi. As a student in Kolkata, he met Brahmachari Jnan Maharaj, a disciple of Swami Vivekananda. Under his guidance, he along with a group of other young boys started frequenting Belur Math and met many of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna.

In 1921, Swami Saradananda initiated Vijay with Mantradiksha. He was bestowed with the vows of brahmacharya by Swami Shivananda on 30 December 1923 and was named 'Priyachaitanya'. Swami Gambhirananda was among the others who were initiated into brahmacharya on the same day. He served at Belur Math in the temple of Sri Ramakrishna and received scriptural lessons from a pandit. On 23 February 1928, Swami Shivananda initiated him into sannyasa. Thereafter, Swami Bhuteshananda set out for tapasya and spent about two years in the Himalayas. On his return, he was sent to the Dhaka Centre where he served till 1932. Later he went to Mysore to join a study circle for studying scriptures and taught the Brahmasutra to his brother-monks.

In 1936, Swami Bhuteshananda was made the head of the centre at Shillong. In 1945, he was made the head of the Rajkot Math. During his tenure there, the ashrama thrived remarkably and he took much pain for getting the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature translated into Gujarati. He also rendered service in relief operations organized by the Order, including the flooded areas of West Bengal in 1926 and the Burma Evacuee Relief in 1942. In 1965, he was made a Trustee of the Ramakrishna Math and a member of the Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission. In 1966, he joined Belur Math as an Assistant Secretary. In 1975, he became one of the Vice Presidents of the Order and moved to Yogodyan Math, Kankurgachhi in Kolkata. Following the Mahasamadhi of Swami Gambhirananda, he became the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission on 24 January 1989. Though an extraordinary scholar who could speak untiringly on scriptural subjects, he did not author a book. His class lectures were transcribed and published as books noted for lucid expositions of profound thoughts.

During the long period as Vice President and President of the Order, he travelled to many countries including Singapore, Fiji, Japan, Australia, America, Canada, England, France, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, carrying the ideals of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement to innumerable people.

Swami Bhuteshananda was austere yet jovial in nature. His extraordinary scholarship, simplicity and humanity made him easily approachable, and he had motherly affection towards all. His personality beamed with universal love. He left his mortal body on 10 August 1998 at the age of 97.

Selected Sayings:

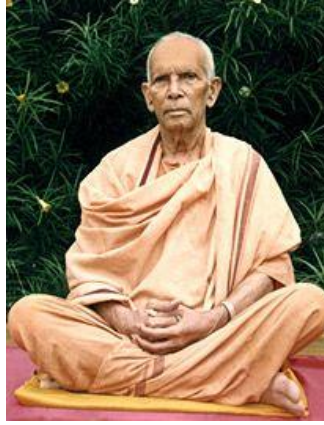
“Wisdom cannot be acquired without shraddha, deep faith. You must live up to your ideals.”

“Thakur’s grace is continually being showered. You have got to make yourself fit to receive and digest it.”

“Satchidananda is the guru. He is ever present in the hearts of us all.”

“Japa must be done with faith, concentration and perseverance.”

“Ultimately, we are all completely in the hands of God. Everything happens according to His will.”



Swami Ranganathananda

Swami Ranganathananda (1908-2005) was the 13th President of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission. During his long monastic career of eight decades, the swami traveled all over the world as a cultural and spiritual ambassador of India. He is recognized all over the world for his astounding contributions in the fields of spirituality, philosophy, religion, culture, and global integration. An enlightened proponent of Vedanta, he declined the Padma Vibhushan as it was conferred on him in his individual capacity but accepted the Indira Gandhi Award for National Integration in 1987 and the Gandhi Peace Prize in February 1999 as both were conferred on the Ramakrishna Mission. His books, Universal Message of Bhagavad Gita (Vol I to III) and The Message of Upanishads are a must read for seekers of Self, as are the four volumes of Eternal Values for A Changing Society. Swami Ranganathanandaji Maharaj provided **ten commandments** for Sri Ramakrishna devotees to guide their spiritual life and service, emphasizing regularity in practice, study of literature, attending the Math, and supporting service activities.

Ten Commandments for Sri Ramakrishna Devotees by Swami Ranganathanandaji Maharaj

1. Be regular and steady in your spiritual practices. This is the best way of serving one's Guru.
2. Keep in touch with the Ramakrishna, Sarada Devi, and Vivekananda literature as much as you can.
3. Visit the Math regularly, at least once a week and take part in the prayers and discourses. Do not miss the important celebrations.
4. Try to keep in personal touch with the monks by seeking interviews with them, once in a while, and make the best use of it and not fritter away the time in worldly talks.
5. Kindly remember to keep a percentage of your income for the service activities of the Math and thereby help the Math in rendering its services effectively.
6. Try to visit Belur Math, Dakshineswar, kamarpukur and Jayarambati at least once in your lifetime, if not more, by properly planning your pilgrimage.
7. Though you are free to visit other religious centres and persons, please remember that it should be without prejudice to your own way of life adopted as per the Ramakrishna Vivekananda traditions. It is better therefore, for you consult the local Head before doing so.
8. Avoid all occult practices and magic and miracles that will harm your spiritual life.
9. Co-operate with the activities of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, as much as you can, whole heartedly.
10. Make it a point to present only Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature as gifts on happy occasions to your relatives and friends. This is the best form of spiritual practices for this age.



Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Carolina was founded by Swami Swahananda in 2008 and is dedicated to the practice and propagation of the ideals of Vedanta as presented to the modern world by Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Swahananda

Our Mission

- ❖ Disseminate the teachings of the Vedanta to the younger generation to help develop a future generation of service-oriented community and national leaders with broad values of inclusivity.
- ❖ Provide an environment and facilities for appreciating, understanding, and practicing the philosophy of the Vedanta as taught and interpreted by Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda.
- ❖ Engage in activities including public education and community service to practice and spread the message of “Practical Vedanta”.
- ❖ Endeavor to pursue activities that are aligned with one’s own salvation, and for the welfare of the world - *Atmano mokshartham jagat hitaya cha*.
- ❖ Encourage devotees to pursue spiritual growth through prayer, meditation, worship, readings, discourses, and retreats conducted by monks associated with the Ramakrishna Order.

Board of Trustees

- Swami Sarvadevananda (Spiritual Head)
- Swami Atmajnanananda (Chairman)
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- Sivananda Tirumalaraju
- Seema Joshi
- Saikat Rakshit



President's Message

This Souvenir of Gratitude is offered with reverence and gratitude at the holy feet of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda. With the firm conviction that everything is done by Sri Ramakrishna Himself, all names and roles remain merely incidental.

We offer our pranams to Most Revered President Maharaj of the Ramakrishna Order, Swami Gautamananda ji, whose blessings we feel as the grace of Sri Ramakrishna Himself. We remember with deep gratitude Revered Swami Swahananda ji, whose vision laid the foundation of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Carolina. The guidance and encouragement of Revered Swami Sarvadevananda ji and Swami Atmajnanananda have been invaluable to our Center.

We remain deeply grateful to the revered monks and nuns of the Ramakrishna Order and Sarada Math who have blessed our Center through their visits, teachings, and spiritual guidance.

We also acknowledge with appreciation the leadership of our past presidents — Dr. Alok Uppal, Mr. Diju Raha, Mr. Amit Sanyal, and Mr. Abhay Datta — whose dedication and service helped guide and strengthen the Center over the years. We are grateful for the encouragement and support of many devotees and for the dedicated service of volunteers who lovingly care for the Center and who have also contributed their time, expertise, and devotion to this project. Through worship, meditation gatherings, scriptural reading and study, youth education programs, the Vedanta choir group, and service activities including outreach to the homeless, the Center continues to grow as a vibrant spiritual home while sharing the universal message of Vedanta in the West.

We are deeply thankful to our donors, whose generosity has made the construction of the Universal Temple of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Carolina possible. Many donations came at exactly the moments they were most needed and felt like divine interventions. Devotees from across the country and from many backgrounds have contributed, making this temple a truly universal place of worship and a reflection of Sri Ramakrishna's message: "As many faiths, so many paths."

Two important developments helped move this journey forward. In July 2024, during a pre-planning meeting, the City of Raleigh confirmed that our land, though covered with bamboo and sloping terrain, posed no obstacle for constructing a place of worship. Soon after, in August 2024, soil testing unexpectedly confirmed that an onsite septic system was feasible — a result that avoided an estimated \$787,000 sewer connection and felt nothing short of divine intervention. From that moment, the temple project moved from a distant dream to a tangible reality. We are also grateful to the city, county, and state officials, along with our architects, engineers, and contractors, who have worked with professionalism and respect to help bring this sacred project forward.

This Souvenir of Gratitude is offered as a humble expression of appreciation to all who have supported this sacred endeavor. It is our prayer that this Universal Temple of RKVSNV will serve generations to come as a place of meditation, spiritual learning, harmony of religions, and service to humanity. May the blessings of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda guide and protect this sacred work.

With reverence and gratitude,

Dr. Samrat Das

President

Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Carolina

(On behalf of the Board of Trustees)

Universal Temple Project – RKVSNC

A Sacred Journey of Faith, Service, and Collective Offering

With the blessings of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda, and the heartfelt devotion of our community, this sacred vision has steadily taken form.

Vision & Community Resolve

- **March 2024** – The need for a larger spiritual space became evident as the community continued to grow. With one voice, devotees expressed overwhelming support to move forward with this sacred endeavor.
- Sri Ramakrishna Jayanti – **March 2024** – Formal announcement of the plans to expand and construct a Universal Temple.
- **June 2024** – Meeting with senior devotees and a volunteer architect from the Washington D.C. center led to thoughtful design discussions. A future-ready foundation was planned to allow expansion with a potential basement level.

Feasibility & Early Approvals

- **July 2024** – City of Raleigh Pre-Application Meeting: Feasibility confirmed; zoning approved; septic and well permitted (subject to county approvals); recommendation to retain existing building.
- **August 2024** – Successful soil testing; septic permit approved.
- **November 2024** – Site Permit application submitted.
- **January 2025** – Well Permit approved.

Sacred Beginning

- **March 2025** – Groundbreaking ceremony performed by Revered Swami Sarvadevananda ji and Swami Atmajnanananda ji.

Major Approvals & Compliance

- **October 2025** – NCDOT driveway and encroachment permits approved; bonds secured.
- **November 2025** – City of Raleigh bonds secured (nitrogen, utilities, erosion control).
- **November 12, 2025** – Site Permit approved.

Construction Phase

- **December 11, 2025** – Site work commenced.
- **February 11, 2026** – Building Permit approved.

Current Progress & Timeline

- **May 2026** (Projected) – Completion of site work.
- **June 2026** (Projected) – Start of building construction.
- **March 2027** (Projected) – Weatherproof structure completed.
- **June 2027** (Projected) – Interior completion.

Culmination

- **July 2027** (Projected) – Pran Pratishtha and opening of the Universal Temple.

With Gratitude

Each milestone reflects the devotion, unity, and faith of our community. This temple is a sacred offering at the holy feet of the Holy Trio and a beacon of harmony and spiritual awakening.

“Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.”

— Swami Vivekananda

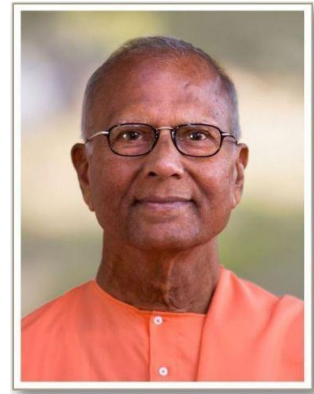
Moments of the Sacred A Visual Journey of Devotion



Teachings & Worship
Wisdom Shared in Devotion & Sacred Practice



Swami Chetanananda is the Minister of the Vedanta Society of St. Louis and Kansas City, Missouri, USA. His books and writings have been translated into German, Dutch, Spanish, French, Japanese, Croatian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Thai, and most of the Indian languages



Sri Ramakrishna's Teachings and Their Universal Appeal

Ramakrishna's gospel is simple and requires no commentary or any help from a teacher. He came to make religion simple so that everyone could understand and freely practice it.

His gospel is full of similes and day-to-day examples that people can visualize and incorporate in their lives. His gospel is based on truth, which is eternal and unchangeable. For example, Jesus said, 'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.' This is an eternal gospel truth, and so are the teachings of Ramakrishna.

His gospel came from his direct experience of God. He never taught anything that he had not practiced at least three times. In his gospel we find only God in the beginning, middle, and end.

His gospel is extremely practical and scientific. The scientific truth comes from experimentation, verification, and finally conclusion. Swami Vivekananda said: 'Ramakrishna came to teach the religion of today, constructive, and not destructive. He had to go afresh to Nature to ask for facts, and he got scientific religion which never says "believe," but "see"; "I see, and you too can see."'

His gospel is free from doctrine, dogma, creed, bigotry, sectarianism, and any kind of narrowness, superstition, and occultism. There is no hocus-pocus in his teachings. His gospel is rational and not based on blind faith. Ramakrishna told M. that God is both with form and without form.

Ramakrishna was an expert in solving problems. When people would come to him with their problems, he would say: 'Sit down. Listen to a story.'

Ramakrishna's gospel is universal. Aldous Huxley wrote in the foreword of the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna: 'its "essence", however, was intensely mystical and therefore universal.'

Ramakrishna's gospel is full of fun. He demonstrated that true religion is full of bliss. Ramakrishna's gospel relieves loneliness and boredom in our lives. As we read the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna, we enjoy the holy company of the Master. Ramakrishna's gospel is for all. As nectar attracts bees, so Ramakrishna's pure, unselfish, and divine love attracts people.

Ramakrishna sang the song of harmony and love. Ramakrishna's gospel of harmony of religions — 'As many faiths, so many paths' — is spread throughout this volume. 'The goal of human life is to realize God.'

'Let the boat be in the water and not water in the boat; otherwise, it will sink. Similarly, there is no harm in people living in this world but let no worldliness be in their minds.'

Three virtues are vital in human life: faith, hope, and love. All human beings of the world, knowingly or unknowingly, are seeking one thing: bliss. Permanent bliss comes through spiritual life—God-realization.

His immortal teachings are popular because they give a taste of immortality to the masses.

Community & Seva

Together in Devotion, Service & Fellowship



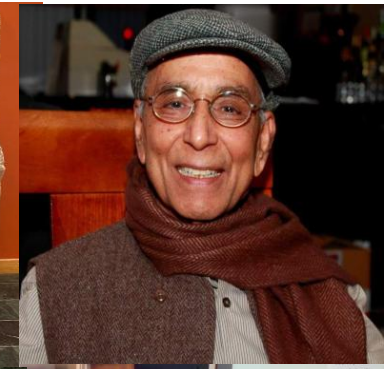
Seva & Service

Hands & Hearts in Service to All



Devotees & Activities

Our Center in Action



Pupils of Practical Vedanta – A Vision for Our Youth

The *Pupils of Practical Vedanta* program is a long-standing value-education initiative of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Carolina, serving children and young adults (ages 5–18). Rooted in the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda, the program seeks to nurture well-rounded individuals grounded in character, compassion, community service, and spiritual awareness.

For over 15 years, the program has provided a structured yet simple framework for growth through:

- **Yoga and physical discipline**
- **Devotional music and cultural expression**
- **Spiritual and character-building discussions**
- **Community Service**

These sessions are conducted by dedicated volunteers, and the program runs through the academic year, generally meeting on Sundays (1st, 3rd, and 5th), with sessions beginning in the fall. Alongside classroom learning, children participate in community service activities, cultural celebrations, opportunities to visit other religious/spiritual places, and opportunities to interact with visiting monks, helping them connect values with real-life practice.

Our Ongoing Effort and Direction

Our focus remains on **steadily strengthening and sustaining this program**, while remaining true to the ideals of Practical Vedanta—learning that translates into character and service. With the continued growth of the center and the construction of the future temple, we hope-over time and as resources permit - to:

- Provide a **more consistent and conducive space** for children’s activities
- Expand opportunities for **service, cultural learning, and spiritual interaction**
- Encourage **greater participation from families and the community**

Spirit of the Offering

Support for this initiative directly contributes to nurturing the next generation in values of **self-discipline, harmony, service, and spirituality** - ideals that Swami Vivekananda envisioned as the foundation of a strong and compassionate society.



Heartfelt thanks to our teachers who have endeavored to instill core Vedantic Values in the students over the past 15+ years:

Naren Thota, Vinod Menghani, Jayshree Raja, Priya Fadnavis, Ashish Fadnavis, Aditi Bose, Debjani Ghosh, Peter Diao, Sujoy Ghosh, Saavitri Ramanand, Swati Chakraborty, Anita Kulkarni, Fanya Becks, Chaitali Bhaumik, Nandini Dasgupta, Sivananda Tirumalaraju and Devi Kesavapillai to name a few. Thank You !

Youth & Culture

Pupils of Practical Vedanta - Next Generation in Devotion & Service



Seva – Worship Through Service

“Atmano Mokshartham Jagat Hitaya Cha”

(For one’s own liberation and for the welfare of the world)

The Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Carolina is deeply guided by the ideal set forth by Swami Vivekananda—that true spirituality finds expression in selfless service. His profound teaching, “*Jiva is Shiva*,” reminds us that serving others is not an act of charity, but an act of worship—seeing and serving the Divine in every being. With this spirit, the Center has committed itself to consistent and meaningful community service.

- **Monthly Food Seva** at the Durham Rescue Mission, supporting women and children experiencing homelessness
- **Quarterly Volunteer Service** at Urban Ministries of Durham, where volunteers actively serve meals in the community kitchen
- **Youth Seva Initiatives**, where children from our youth program volunteer at local food banks, helping pack and distribute food—instilling the values of compassion and service from an early age
- **Disaster Relief Efforts** during Hurricane Helene, with over 750 lbs of food and essential supplies donated in collaboration with partner organizations
- **Ongoing Contributions** to the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina and local service organizations including Urban Ministry of Durham
- **Community Food Drives during Diwali**, as part of *Sewa Diwali*, in collaboration with local organizations to support families in need
- **Global Seva Contributions**, including support of approximately \$30,000 during the COVID-19 pandemic to hospitals of the Ramakrishna Mission in India, aiding critical relief efforts



Donor Acknowledgements

The following devotees are gratefully acknowledged for their cumulative offerings of \$350 and above during the period January 1, 2024, through April 9, 2026, as well as for their future pledges. Names are listed with reverence; any omissions are unintentional and sincerely regretted.

Donor	Amount Donated	Additional Pledged	Donor	Amount Donated	Additional Pledged
Aarati Ramanand	\$ 605		Ashok & Manimala Mondal	\$ 2,500	
Abhay & Basabi Datta	Undisclosed		Ashwini Porwal	\$ 1,021	
Abhay Joshi	\$ 512		Asim Srivastava	\$ 512	
Abhijit & Deepa Som	\$ 1,000		Asrukana Das	\$ 500	
Abhijit Das	\$ 703		Bharathi Jagadeesan	\$ 2,600	
Abhineet Uppal	\$ 1,002	Solar Panels	Bhaskar Dey	\$ 366	
Ajit Gobbur	\$ 600		Bhaskar Roy	\$ 452	
Ajit Gobbur - Benevity Match	\$ 525		Bhavini & Neil Murthy	\$ 715	
Alok & Kabita Chakrabarti	\$ 6,598		Bidisha & Shib Sankar Basu	\$ 500	
Alok & Karuna Uppal	\$ 156,910	\$ 50,000	Bose Family Foundation	\$ 500	
Aloka & Asamanja Datta	\$ 6,312		Brij Moudgil	\$ 1,021	
Amalendu & Arundhati Chatterjee	\$ 10,451		Bush Kavuru	\$ 511	
Aman Hotani	\$ 1,846		Chandra Sekhar Ghosh	\$ 5,001	
Amar & Priya Amaresh	\$ 602		Chandrakant Gadre	\$ 500	
Amit & Sumali Sanyal	\$ 16,265		David Van Soest	\$ 450	
Amit Verma	\$ 5,000		Debasish Kuila	\$ 1,455	
Amitava & Mita Das	\$ 800		Debdas & Freney Mukherjee	\$ 5,000	
Amrita Banerjee	\$ 511		Deepak & Anita Kulkarni	\$ 506	
Andrea Flagg	\$ 500		Devi Kesavapillai & Sankar Loganathan	Undisclosed	
Aniket Bhat	\$ 600		Dhanesh & Shivangi Joshi	\$ 1,054	
Aniruddha & Manami Chakravarty	\$ 3,050		Diju & Lynne Raha	Undisclosed	
Anjana Bose	\$ 1,001		Dipto & Aloka Chakravarty	\$ 3,062	
Anonymous Donor	\$ 1,001		Durba Ghoshal	\$ 3,800	
Anonymous Donor	\$ 151,000		Durjoy Roy	\$ 1,644	
Anonymous Donor	\$ 1,925		Fidelity Investment Grant	\$ 1,000	
Anonymous Donor	\$ 19,022		G D Talwalkar	\$ 500	
Anonymous Donor	\$ 2,006		Gauri Sen	Undisclosed	
Antu & Poulumi Dey	\$ 1,274		Gautam Aggarwal	\$ 500	
Arnabh & Arpita Chakravarty	\$ 3,857		Girish Upadhya	\$ 351	
Arun & Dhriti Deb	\$ 1,000		Glenn Williams	\$ 2,550	
Arun Ajmera	\$ 500		Glenn Williams - Benevity Match	\$ 500	
Arun Ghosh	\$ 500		Govind & Madhu Chandak	\$ 1000*	\$40K ovr 4 yrs*
Asha & Sajjan Agarwal	\$ 150,000		Gunvant Bhakta	\$ 500	
Asha k Veeraswamy	\$ 500		Haimanti Banerjee	\$ 4,491	
Ashish & Priya Fadnavis & Arjun Trust	\$ 29,553		Indira & Ritayan Bhattacharjee	\$ 350	
Ashish Rawat	\$ 401		Indra & Nandini Lahiri	\$ 1,560	

* Earmarked for RKVSN Youth Activities

Donor Acknowledgements

Donor	Amount Donated	Additional Pledged	Donor	Amount Donated	Additional Pledged
Indranil & Nibedita Chakrabarti	\$ 1,000		Mohan Pamarthi	\$ 3,000	
Jayasree Reddi	\$ 500		Mohinder & Alka Singh	\$ 2,172	
Jayasri & Amitava Sarkar	\$ 6,951	\$ 8,500	Molly Roopan	\$ 405	
Jaydip & Madhumita Bhattacharya	\$ 4,002		Monoj & Madhumita Sircar	\$ 4,065	
Jc Ch	\$ 507		Moumita Banerjee	\$ 720	
Joydeep & Monika Chowdhury	\$ 1,203		Mrinmoy & Kajal Basu	\$ 5,001	
Jyoti & Abhijit Champanerkar	\$ 5,000		Mrudula & Jashwant Shah	\$ 10,000	
K Dinesh Chandra	\$ 508		Narayan Rajgopal	\$ 1,021	
Kaalinga Muralik Kannan Durairaj	\$ 1,022		Narayan Viswanathan	\$ 400	
Kalyan Ghosh	\$ 704	\$ 25,000	Narendhar & Vissu Thota	Undisclosed	
Kamalendu & Shyamali Das	\$ 1,254		Naresh & Kusum Nohria	\$ 5,821	
Kaushik & Ananya Sen	\$ 7,011		Neeta Chokshi / Sumanta Sharma	\$ 2,200	
Ketul Patel	\$ 501		Nehal Zaveri	\$ 1,522	
Kishore Yeddala	\$ 1,200		New Park Pharmacy Ltd	\$ 1,001	
Kowsalya Ganapathiraju	\$ 400		Nilesh & Geeta Kachalia	\$ 357	
Krishna Rajagopal	\$ 425		Nilutpal Das	\$ 541	
Krishnadas Nair	\$ 1,333		Nirmal Pitchai	\$ 500	
Kusum Walia	\$ 30,236		Nirmalya & Meena Ghosh	\$ 2,400	
Lakshmi Ganga	\$ 2,000		Nitya Kamdar	\$ 453	
Lata Chatterjee	\$ 3,000		Parag & Basavdatta Ghosh	\$ 11,320	
Late Mihir Mitra	\$ 500		Parikshit & Kaberi Das	\$ 1,552	
Linda Phillips	\$ 350		Paritosh & Kaushiki Biswas	\$ 350	
Madhulavi & Pranab Majumder	\$ 5,251		Partha Dutta & Arunima Bhattacharya	\$ 450	
Mahadev Banerjee	\$ 912		Pijush Dey & Kaveri Bose Dey	\$ 63,902	\$ 7,500
Mahasweta Mukhopadhyay	\$ 1,500		Pinaki & Payel Mukherjee	\$ 2,372	
Mallikarjun Metukuri	\$ 3,000		Pradip & Shikha Saha	Undisclosed	
Mallikarjun Metukuri- J&J Matching	\$ 4,000		Prafull Verma	\$ 3,302	
Man Prakash Gupta	\$ 1,129		Prakash & Vandana Devalapalli	\$ 602	
Manas & Madhumita Ray	\$ 2,000		Pramita Saha	Undisclosed	
Mandira Chatterji	Undisclosed		Prasanna & Padmanabhan Menon	\$ 5,001	
Maniraj Jeyaraju	\$ 520		Prashant Zanwar	\$ 1,360	
Manivannan Ravichandran	\$ 2,805		Pravin Shukla	\$ 2,955	
Manjusri Basu	\$ 3,278		Pushyak Kalkunte	\$ 511	
Milind Sinha	\$ 501		Radha Krishna Temple of NC	\$ 501	
Mithu & Debiprasad Chaudhuri	\$ 2,500		Rajatavo & Rupa Maitra	\$ 1,675	
Mocherla Rao	\$ 382		Rajesh Patwardhan	\$ 403	

Donor Acknowledgements

Donor	Amount Donated	Additional Pledged	Donor	Amount Donated	Additional Pledged
Rama Padmanabhan	\$ 756		Suchandra Bhattacharjee	\$ 456	
Ranjana Banerjee	\$ 1,000		Suchitra Dutta	\$ 1,256	
Ratan & Piya Ray	\$ 351		Sudhangshu Karmakar	\$ 500	
Ravikulan Ramanujam	\$ 2,011		Sujith Chakrapani	\$ 1,001	
Ravindra Rahangdale	\$ 500		Sumanta Chatterjee	\$ 1,000	
Ravisankar Avva	\$ 1,000		Sumit Ashtekar	\$ 1,000	
Richard & Carol Weingarten	Undisclosed		Sumit Jinaral	\$ 3,940	
Rina & Shyamal Mitra	\$ 2,052		Sumithra Ravi	\$ 994	
Robert Russell Snuttjer	\$ 500		Suparna Kanjilal	\$ 500	
Rupa Iyer	\$ 10,501		Suparna & Ashish Sarkar	\$ 525	
Rupama Pattrea	\$ 1,500		Suresh & Usha Belani	\$ 500	
Saikat & Gargi Rakshit	\$ 10,451		Sushrut & Bidisha Bhowmik	\$ 2,130	
Samiran De & Ananya Bhattacharya	\$ 2,408		Susmita Chakraborty	\$ 500	
Samrat & Trina Das	\$ 23,197	\$ 29,000	Swadesh & Manju Chatterjee	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
Samtha Reddy	\$ 1,174		Swarupa Vempa	\$ 1,001	
Sandeep Ramanujam	\$ 1,000		Sweta Deb	\$ 360	
Sandeep Tamboli	\$ 501		Tanmoy & Tanisha Choudhury	\$ 14,580	
Sanjib Gupta	\$ 603		Tejal Desai	\$ 400	
Sanjoy & Ruma Chatterjee	\$ 25,600		Tenkasi Viswanathan	\$ 501	
Saurabh Verma	\$ 858		Toishi Sharma	\$ 1,226	
Sawali Sudarshan	\$ 400		Trent Eisenbeisz	\$ 3,900	
Seema Joshi	\$ 108,721		Tushar & Shampa Ghosh	\$ 634	
Senthil Sridharan	\$ 500		Tusharadri & Ankita Mukherjee	\$ 601	
Shameek Konar	\$ 5,102		Uday Watwe	\$ 500	
Shashi Upadhyay	\$ 511		Umapathi Cattamanchi	\$ 2,102	
Shiladitya Paul	\$ 1,110		Usha & Umesh Gulati	\$ 38,002	
Shiv Ajmera	\$ 1,103		Vasu Kuraparthi & Shilpa Sood	\$ 4,306	
Siddharth Patel	\$ 1,248		Venkateswar Rao Vasireddy	\$ 582	
Sivananda & Rama Tirumalaraju	\$ 2,800		Vijaya Prabhu	\$ 1,000	
Sivaprasad Parnam	\$ 500		Vinod Gurwara	\$ 6,200	
Somashekhar Khot & Nilakshee B.	\$ 1,000		Vishal Bhandari	\$ 3,097	
Soumi Lahiri	\$ 500		Vivek Subramanian	\$ 355	
Sourjendra & Aparna Sanyal	\$ 6,512		Yashwanth Chakka	\$ 400	
Sridhar Narasimhan	\$ 501				
Srinath Krishnan	\$ 500				
Srinivas Kothapally	\$ 3,086		Patel Brothers, Cary **	\$ 200	

** Donation for Souvenir



RKVSNC is deeply thankful to each and every donor who has generously contributed to this Universal Temple project and we humbly accept every donation with reverence and shradha

Where We Stand Today – Finances at a Glance

Total Estimated Cost of the Universal Temple:

Pre-Construction (Permits, Architectural & Engineering):	\$ 160,000
Site Development (Grading, Stormwater, Retaining Walls, Parking):	\$ 680,000
Foundation & Weatherproof Structure (Roof, Dome, Walls, Windows):	\$ 820,000
Interior (Electrical, HVAC, Plumbing, Flooring & Fixtures):	\$ 320,000

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$ 1,980,000

With the grace of the Holy Trio and the generous support of devotees:

Transfers from RKVSNC Checking Account (Seed Capital)	\$ 36,000
Donations Received (as of April 9, 2026):	\$ 1,540,000
Additional Committed Pledges :	\$ 215,000

Total Raised (including pledges): \$ 1,791,000

Project Completion Status: **90 % Funded**

With these offerings, the project has reached a significant stage of completion, and the dream of a Universal Temple is now close to becoming a living reality

The Path Ahead:

Donation Offerings Still Needed for Temple Completion: **\$ 189,000**

With continued blessings and collective devotion, we move closer to completing this sacred space for generations to come.



A Moment of Gratitude

Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Carolina has been recognized as the **“Best Place of Worship in Morrisville for 2026”** by BusinessRate, based on publicly available review data (<https://businessrate.com>).

We receive this recognition in a spirit of humility and gratitude, offering it at the holy feet of **Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi, and Swami Vivekananda**, whose ideals continue to guide this spiritual center.

This acknowledgment reflects the sincere devotion and selfless service of our monks, devotees, volunteers, donors, and well-wishers. Through their love and dedication, the Society has grown as a place of worship, meditation, spiritual learning, fellowship, and service to humanity. If this center has been able to touch lives and bring peace to hearts, we accept it as a blessing of the Divine and a reminder to deepen our commitment to the ideals of Vedanta.

A Message from a Respected Donor

March 22, 2026

Dr. Samrat Das
President
Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Carolina
3109 Globe Road, Morrisville NC 27560

Dear Dr. Das,

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Carolina (RKVSNC) for undertaking the sacred task of building the Universal Temple. With the grace of God and blessings of Thakur, Swamiji, and the Holy Mother along with tireless efforts of you and your dedicated team, the temple is becoming a reality. We feel deeply honored and humbled to be a small part in this great project.

Though born into a religious Jain family with a strong spiritual foundation, my real spiritual journey began in 1995 when I started attending the monthly Bhagavad Gita discourses by Swami Brahmarupananda (a monk of the Ramakrishna tradition) at the Hindu Temple of Greater Chicago, Lemont, Illinois. Slowly, my interest in Vedanta deepened leading me to seek knowledge from various spiritual teachers and study the scriptures. Ashutosh, throughout his life, has been practicing the principle of Karma Yoga (Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Verse 47).

The teachings of Swami Brahmarupananda, “**We are not the doer; we are only instruments**” and “**The same divinity is present in everyone and to the same extent**” had profound impact on our spiritual outlook and guided our family life. Furthermore, Swami Vivekananda’s message about money “That Individuals should feel they are only a **trustee** or a **gatekeeper** of their money and comparing wealthy to **porters** carrying money that ultimately belongs to others” provided us deeper insight and guidance. Above all, God has been guiding us to become involved in spiritual and charitable activities.

Our connection with RKVSNC felt truly providential. One morning Ashutosh expressed a desire to contribute to Ramakrishna Mission in India. I suggested to consider supporting some initiative here in the United States. Same day, I came across an appeal by Swami Atmajnanananda on WhatsApp regarding the construction of the Universal Temple at RKVSNC. We felt that this was a direct blessing and guidance from God and Thakur through Swami Atmajnanananda.

We pray to God, Thakur, Swamiji and the Holy Mother for successful completion of the Temple. We are confident that the spiritual and cultural activities conducted there will help spread the message of Sri Ramakrishna and Vedanta across North Carolina and beyond, benefitting the community for generations to come.

With gratitude and reverence,
Sudha and Ashutosh Gupta

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Theresa serves clients throughout Cary and the surrounding Triangle area. Having been featured in area prominent publications Top Agent Magazine and Triangle Real Producers, she is an expert on the local market, and leverages her background in the financial sphere with acute knowledge of her region.

Theresa has earned a fantastic reputation throughout the Triangle area, with the majority of her volume coming from repeat clients and referrals.

Voted Neighborhood Favorite on Nextdoor, she remains focused on the elite standards of integrity that have set her apart.

"I'm constantly guiding my clients through the transaction," she says. "After all, communication is the cornerstone of every successful relationship, and for that reason, I'm always available for my clients —no matter what."

919.473.6341



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With heartfelt gratitude, the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society of North Carolina honors the dedicated Karma Yoga volunteers, Vedanta School teachers, and Choir members whose selfless service brings life, warmth, and devotion to our community.

Your time, selflessness, and loving spirit transform each gathering into a meaningful and uplifting experience for all who come. Through your quiet dedication and joyful participation, you embody the ideals of service and spiritual harmony that guide our mission. We are deeply thankful for all that you do.

This souvenir is a humble offering made possible by the dedicated efforts of the Editorial Team comprised of Sumali Sanyal, Seema Joshi, Samrat Das, and Amit Sanyal.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA SOCIETY OF NC

3109 Globe Road, Morrisville, NC 27560

www.vedantanc.org

Email: vedantanc@gmail.com, Phone: 702-358-6474

Earnest Appeal



We earnestly appeal to all devotees, well wishers, and friends to extend their generous support towards the construction of our Universal Temple - a sacred space that will radiate spiritual energy and stand as a beacon of Sri Ramakrishna's universal message of love, harmony, and selfless service.

Our current center on Globe Road at 1300 sq. feet, is too small for our growing congregation and activities. The new Universal Temple will be approximately 4,000 square feet and have the capacity to hold approximately 300 people. It will include a large shrine hall, dining area, classrooms for our Vedanta school, a bookstore, and dedicated quarters for resident monks, with scope for future expansion. This temple will allow us to deepen our service to the community in alignment with the ideals of the Ramakrishna movement.

Checks Payable To: "RKVSNC"

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