

**Hindu Temple and Cultural Society of USA Inc.**  
**Sri Venkateswara Temple (Balaji Mandir) and Community Center**  
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## Dhanurmasa Puja:

Pre-dawn worship has a special significance for Hindus. Early morning prayers are performed particularly during the Dhanurmasa (December middle to January middle) in most of the Hindu Temples. Dhanurmasa is also known as Marghazhi or Margasheersha. Lord Krishna in the Vibhooti Yoga of Bhagavad Gita says that among months He is Marghazhi. Such is the specialty of Dhanurmasa. Many Hindu saints advocated singing of the glory of The Lord, during the early morning hours when the mind is fresh, especially, during this month. Chanting of Thirupalliyehuchi, Thiruppavai, and Thiruvempavai are part of Dhanurmasa pujas. A number of devotees look forward to participate in the month long early morning prayers.

Thirupalliyehuchi is a poem of 10 songs, in Tamil, rendered by Thondaradippodi Alwar (vaishnava saint). These songs bring out the glory of lord Vishnu in the Beauty of early morning hours.

Thiruppavai is a poem of 30 songs, in Tamil, composed by Sri Andal, the only lady Alwar of the 12 Alwars (vaishnava saints) whose compositions of devotion and mystic experiences, put together is termed as Naalaayira Divya Prabhandha (4000 divine hymns). Sri Andal is considered as Sri Bhu Devi, the divine consort of lord Vishnu, who represents earth. Andal is also known as Sri Goda Devi. She was a great devotee of Lord Krishna and decided that she would wed none other than Lord Narayana. This innocent and pure devotee having a strong yearning for selfless service to the Lord, makes direct appeal to Him through her poems. Thiruppavai songs are in praise of the glories of Lord Krishna. Each one of the 30 songs of Thiruppavai are meant for each of the thirty days of the Marghazhi month. The composition of Thiruppavai is so lyrical, that it is set to classical ragas and sung by many leading musicians. The essential theme of Thiruppavai is to awaken and help devotees to make progress in the path with the goal of spiritual union with the Lord.

Thiruvempavai is a set of poem of 20 songs (hymns), in Tamil, composed by saint Manikavachagar, one of the sixty-three saiva saints, known as Nayanmars. The theme of Thiruvempavai is about the spiritual awakening of the individual soul (jeevatman) to seek union with the paramatman (God) and is directed at Lord Siva as an intense prayer. Ten Tirupalliyehuchi songs written by saint Manikavachagar, as early morning prayers directed towards Lord Siva is also included in the Dhanurmasa Pujas.

During Dhanurmasa our temple opens for Prayer at 5AM. Starting with Suprabhatam, devotees chant Thirupalliyehuchi, Thiruvempavai, Thiruppalliyehuchi, and Thiruppavai. Temple priests prepare special offerings to God and distribute the prasadam to the devotees after the early morning prayers. Goda Kalyanam is also celebrated during this month in our temple.

May The Lord Sri Venkateswara of New Jersey Shower His Best on you and your family.

HTCS