



New Zealand Thirumurugan Temple Society

MURUGAN THUNAI

President's Report – 29 September 2019

Dear Thirumurugan Devotees,

“Vanakkam” and a very warm welcome to you all. With the grace of the Almighty, it is my pleasure to present to members the annual report for the year 2018 – 2019. The purpose of the report is to highlight and reflect on the activities of the year, celebrate our successes and to acknowledge the contributions of all devotees.

Our Management Committee sincerely and wholeheartedly thank you all for your kind presence this morning at our Annual General Meeting (AGM). We are entering our 20th year since we started the journey to build a permanent abode for our Lord Thirumurugan. This has only been achieved because all of you and many others not here today, made it happen through your significant contributions financially, physically and numerous other ways. We humbly request you to continue your support for the further growth of our much-treasured temple.

Code of Compliance Certificate

We were delighted to receive our Code of Compliance Certificate on 16 October 2018. This major milestone was achieved through some considerable amount of time, energy, hard work, skill, perseverance and commitment by many people. Our sincere thanks to the Trades People, Contractors, Engineers, Office Bearers and many others for their advice, input and hard work.

Project 145 Update

When the building consent for “Project 145” was obtained in late 2013/early 2014, it included three major aspects:

1. Temple Development
2. Community Hall Development
3. Rajakopuram Construction

Temple Development has been completed fully. It has been decided to defer the construction of Rajakopuram for further discussions. While the community hall development has been completed to a large extent and used well by the Thirumurugan community, it is believed that the full completion of the development will enable the society to realise the full potential of the investment, from the perspectives of financial and non-financial benefits.

Remaining Scope of Work

- Construction of Kitchen
- Construction of mezzanine floor store room
- Construction of storage/sound/office rooms
- Construction of green room
- Sound proof for community hall
- Stage improvement
- Floor covering

We are in the process of preparing full working drawings of Community Hall development. We are also working on funding strategy to support the construction. We look forward to your generous support to complete our collective dream, in the not too distant future.



New Zealand Thirumurugan Temple Society

Maha Utsavam (Annual Thiruvizha)-2019

This year Annual Thiruvizha, Maha Utsavam was celebrated during January/February for 10 days with devotees from all suburbs. It was very pleasing to note that the number of patrons sponsoring festivals increased this year. Overall, 270 families and 37 youth took the opportunity to sponsor the daily festivals and poongavanam respectively. We believe these numbers could be further increased next year with all of your support and network. As in the last four years, we were grateful to have the services of renowned Nathaswaram & Thavil artists, enhancing the vibration of the festivals with their divine music.

We look forward to next year's Mahotsavam that is scheduled to commence on 31 January 2020 and concluding on 09 February 2020.

Pooja Initiatives

The management committee is keen to offer maximum participation opportunities to our devotees, particularly at some of our major festivals. During 2018/19, we introduced the following new initiatives either replacing or adding to previous single sponsorships. These were supported very well by the devotees.

New Year Day (01 January 2019) - 108 Kalasa Abhishekam

Tamil New year Day (14 February 2019) -108 Sangu Abhishekam

We also invited multiple sponsorship of Thirukalyanam in June 19, resulting in five families jointly sponsoring it.

We have also introduced following new Pooja

Lalitha Sakasranama Archanai on Pournami days - This pooja encompasses the chanting of 1000 names of Devi which is said to evoke goodness in devotees' lives.

Total number of Poojas conducted including monthly special poojas in the year were 270. Number of individual abhishekams have also increased compared to same period last year.

Special Poojas

We were all shocked and saddened to learn of the two major tragedy inflicted on worshippers and other innocent civilians within a month of each other in Christchurch & Sri Lanka. These horrific, despicable acts caused immense grief, trauma and hardship to the victims, their families and the wider public both in New Zealand & Sri Lanka. Our temple observed Moksha Abhishekams to Lord Shiva for the athma shanthi of all those who lost their lives in Christchurch and Sri-Lanka on the 22nd of March and 26th of April 19.

Priests

Brahmashri Raja Rajeswara Kurukkal has been our Chief Priest since the inception of our temple in the year 1999. He has been an integral part of the growth of our temple from just a concept stage to where we are now. In October 2018, he formally advised us of his desire to retire from Temple services primarily due to health reasons. The Committee accepted his request taking into consideration all factors. We sincerely acknowledge and place on record our deep appreciation and gratitude for his invaluable service and dedication to the temple from 2000 to 2018. Raja Rajeswara Kurukkal has offered to provide advice and help in the future if required, when he is able to.

The Management committee appointed Mayuranathan Kurukkal as Chief Priest effective from 14 April 2019 (Tamil New Year Day). He has been with us over twelve years. His hard work and contribution to the growth of the temple is beyond measure. Our congratulations and best wishes go to him. Following extensive recruitment



New Zealand Thirumurugan Temple Society

and immigration processes, we have been successful in appointing Rathakrishnasarma to replace him. Rathakrishnasarma commenced with us just over a month ago. We extend a very warm welcome to him and wish him the very best.

We also would like to acknowledge and thank Venkatrama Iyer for giving remarkable moral and physical support to Mayuranathan Kurukkal in the interim period. We also would like to thank both Balachandran Iyas, Jega Iya and Nada Iya for their support and assistance.

Fund Raising Activities

Food Parcel Distribution

From a humble start in year 2000 doing around 300 parcels, this important fund-raising initiative of the temple has grown to more than 800 parcels. The planning, cooking, logistics and various other activities involved have made this a phenomenal achievement by our wider temple community. We sincerely thank all volunteers who support our quarterly food parcel fund raising activities with order taking, donations, purchasing of ingredients, frying eggplant, cooking, packing, delivering and cleaning.

Deepavali Food Festival

Deepavali Food Festival is an annual event which has been running for the past five years. This popular event has had great participation from the wider community, enjoying the delicious food, entertainment and the friendly atmosphere. The management committee takes this opportunity to thank the chief organizer, all sponsors, volunteers, music teachers and all participants who make this function a very enjoyable one for everyone, while of course generating much needed funds for the temple society.

Cultural Programmes

We have three cultural-entertainment-fund raising events in the Temple's annual calendar – "Pannum Bharathamum", "Muthucharam" and "Innisai Thendral". These events are presented by our community for our community. These programmes, while they help to promote our culture and engage our youth with the temple are also essential parts of our fund-raising and financial plans. We sincerely thank the coordinators, teachers, youth, students, parents, food donors, advertisers, sound-video-photography providers, decoration experts, car park helpers and audience at our public events such as "Pannum Bharathamum", "Innisai Thendral", "Muthucharam"

Educational & Welfare

Hindusim, Pannisai and Vedic classes are held every Sunday, These classes are well attended.

The weekly radio broadcast is used as a medium for educational purposes as well as updating the community on temple activities

Friday speeches are going very well. The topics young and adult speakers deliver are very informative and promote values

We organised a volunteer Blood Donation drive in December 2018. Few devotees volunteered and donated blood at NZ Blood Service.

Youth Participation

The contributions our youth are making by participating regularly in the temple devotional singing, the various dramas and musical programs they have been taking part in, such as Pannum Parathamum, Muthucharam, and Innisai Thendral are commendable. It must be recognised here that cultural activities such as music, dance, etc have been designed to confer health and happiness on youth. Physical fitness and mental health are equally important. Three unique benefits can be derived from these activities- team spirit, mutual understanding and joy. Hence cultural activities and music should be encouraged for young and adult youth. Youth will always continue to remain a priority for us. This is an area of challenge and opportunity. We will do everything we can to get the youth to take more ownership of the temple and get involved.



New Zealand Thirumurugan Temple Society

Defibrillator

We are thrilled to let you know that we now have a **Defibrillator** at our premises. This has been donated by the members of the NZ Tamil Medical Association. We sincerely thank them for their thoughtful contribution. Defibrillation is a treatment for life-threatening cardiac issues and this machine (Defibrillator) delivers a dose of electric pulse to the heart. By locating this machine at our temple premises this treatment is able to be administered immediately often before the paramedics arrive or the patient is taken to the hospital. In many instances this immediacy of treatment can be the difference between serious harm and recovery.

Communication

Regular communication with the members and community is vital for any organisation. We share this view strongly and place a lot of emphasis on keeping on everyone informed. We have many forms of communication with the members and the wider community. They include emails, web-site, radio, face book, Temple TV screen, announcements, notices and so on. We believe we have made considerable steps forward with the quality and timeliness of our communication in the past twelve months. We have also started to publish our quarterly newsletter. We are in the process of revamping our Website.

Health & Safety

This is another area that has become huge in recent years. We have a Health and Safety Committee that primarily focuses on the following:

Health and Safety Policy	Emergency Planning & Response
Documentation	Food Hygiene
Physical Hazard Management	Control of Hazardous Substances
Operational Activity Based Hazard	Electrical Installation & Equipment
First Aid	Contractors
Incident Reporting & Investigation	Building Safety & Security

Over past two years, we have focused quite a bit to ensure that devotees have a safe and healthy environment. We have area wardens on Fridays and Special Pooja days. There is a doctor on duty for all special functions. There is a concerted effort to enhance the overall Health & Safety standards of the temple. Health & Safety is everyone's responsibility so your support and co-operation is vital.

Regular Financial Donors

With a large building loan and overdraft balance of around \$1.2m, we have significant monthly mortgage commitment. These commitments have been met through the kind generosity of regular payments by many members and devotees. We do however have a large shortfall between the donations received and our monthly commitment. We would greatly appreciate if more members and devotees come forward to join the regular contribution scheme. The temple bank account details to set up your regular payments are:

New Zealand Thirumurugan Temple Society Inc - 12-3077-0455971-00

There is no minimum amount that one can contribute. Every dollar will count towards helping the temple. If you wish to discuss further about any financial matters, please feel free to speak to the treasurer or other Finance Committee members. Please note that as a registered charitable organisation, all donations made to the Society are eligible for a tax credit at applicable (presently 33.3% for individuals and tax-deductible expense for companies and partnerships) rates.

The temple has a long-held policy of not publishing the names of those contributing financially, through other resources or physically. As it is an unconditional service to God, most devotees are not in favour of us doing it. We thank you for your understanding on this matter.



New Zealand Thirumurugan Temple Society

Appreciation & Acknowledgement

Our Management Committee would like to appreciate and acknowledge some of our devotees for their great support and enormous contribution to the temple activities:

- Our Patron for his valuable advice, encouragement and guidance
- The Board of Trustees for their vision and direction.
- Our Priests for their commitment to excellence in conducting the poojas and festivals at the highest standard.
- All members for renewing their membership annually and supporting the core temple society.
- Our Honorary Auditor for his auditing services and recommendations.
- The regular financial donors without whose support we will not be able to meet our on-going regular costs and build towards the future.
- All regular donors who contribute towards the servicing of the temple building loan.
- All donors who have supported the temple capital project so generously.
- The volunteers who commit their time on a regular basis to look after the reception area and also help out with the pooja proceedings.
- The volunteers who look after the weekly library system.
- The volunteers taking responsibility for ongoing maintenance, regular cleaning after poojas and “siramathanam” days.
- The volunteers who make garlands for the temple every week.
- The volunteers who regularly help with sewing of clothes and other requirements.
- The sponsors and volunteers who provide meals after poojas
- The Thirumurugan Poongavana Team who take care of the temple garden
- The volunteers who regularly wash and iron the Deity materials.
- The volunteers who clean brass items.
- The annual “thiruvizha” co-coordinators for their energy and commitment
- Those members who provide material for our weekly radio programme and help to present them.
- Health & Safety representatives, area wardens and duty doctors
- Volunteers who carried out stock taking
- Volunteers who prepare Annual Calendar
- Pannisai, Hinduism and Vedic Teachers
- The music teachers, students and parents for their contribution at every Friday and at other special festivals.
- The volunteers organise Friday speeches and devotees and children who deliver speeches
- The youth for their contribution in temple help, fund raising and other requirements.
- Those members, in particular the youth who take an active part in helping at major festivals and events.
- Those members who help regularly with video and photography at temple events.
- Those members who help us with maintaining our web site, social media updates, audio-visual updates and email communication.
- The devotee who tirelessly help our priests, booking of Poojas and reminding sponsors
- The devotee who maintain our temple to high standard keeping tidy and clean
- The devotee who purchases all Pooja materials and other consumables for weekly use and various functions and also organise flowers for garlands
- The devotee who worked with new priest for visa application process. Due to his assistance, we managed to get Visa approval within 4 months.
- The devotee who is behind new pooja initiatives.
- The community as a whole for the remarkable, steadfast, continuous support at all times.



New Zealand Thirumurugan Temple Society

I may have missed out to thank some of you in this report. Overall, we would not have achieved these tasks without the support from you financially and physically.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the support of the entire management committee over the last twelve months. I would also like to thank past presidents for their advice and support.

It is very pleasing that we have a proper temple in Auckland to perform our prayers and celebrate all important festivals. With the provision of new facilities, one could see an increase in public participation in our temple with more and more new people attending.

This journey we cannot make alone as a committee, but it is through your support, encouragement and constructive suggestion for improvement that we shall do together for the benefit of our great temple.

May Lord Murugan's blessings be with all of our devotees.

Manoharan Subramaniam

President

The New Zealand Thirumurugan Temple Society

Auckland

Whatever has happened,
has happened for good.

Whatever is happening,
is happening for good.

Whatever will happen,
shall also happen for good

What have you lost,
that you cry for?

What did you bring,
that you lost?

What did you create,
that was destroyed?

You came empty handed,
and will go empty handed.

whatever is yours today,
was somebody else's yesterday,
and will be somebody else's tomorrow

