

Voice of East London Bhakti Vriksha

The East London Bhakti Vriksha - ISKCON London Newsletter

Aug - Sep 2026 (2nd Edition)

Jaya Srī Balarāma, Jaya Srī Krishna, Jaya Srī Rādhe



Dedication to Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (1896–1977)

Commemorating his divine Appearance Day on 5th September 2026, we offer our deepest gratitude and surrender to our beloved Founder-Ācārya, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. Everything accomplished across East London Bhakti Vriksha; our festivals, book distribution, and community care; is merely a drop of mercy originating from his boundless compassion. We pray that our united efforts in East London remain a pure, pleasing instrument at Srila Prabhupada's lotus feet.

🌸 ***"yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo... — By the mercy of the spiritual master, one receives the benediction of Krishna. Without his grace, one cannot make any advancement."***

— Srila Visvanatha Chakravarti Thakur reveals in the Sri Sri Gurv-astaka

Remembering that by pleasing Srila Prabhupada the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna is automatically pleased, we surrender our endeavors to his divine mission as a humble offering of love.

Divine Guidance by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu



Written by Anuradha Acyutapriya devi dasi

📿"Hare Krishna Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare"

In this age of Kali, when hearts yearn for peace and spiritual fulfilment, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has gifted us the most beautiful treasure; the chanting of Krishna's holy names. Out of His causeless mercy, ***He descended to awaken our eternal love for Krishna*** and guide every soul back to its true spiritual home.

These sacred names are not merely words; they are a divine invitation to experience Krishna's presence and mercy in our lives. With ***every sincere chant, we take a step towards cleansing our hearts***, deepening our devotion, and discovering the joy of our eternal relationship with the Lord. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu calls us to embody humility, tolerance, and genuine respect for every living being.

Let us renew our commitment to His divine teachings, ***take shelter of the holy names, and become instruments of love, compassion, and devotion*** in our homes and East London community.

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Celebrating Balarama Jayanti, Janmashtami & Radhashtami

Written by Anuradha Acyutapriya devi dasi



Balarama Jayanti offered an opportunity to honor Lord Balarama, the original spiritual master and embodiment of spiritual strength. East London Devotees welcomed the Lord into their homes with abhishekam ceremonies and ecstatic kirtans.

Warm invitations extended to newcomers from our outreach drives and Bhakti Vriksha groups enabled many families to experience the joy of congregational association for the first time.

Sri Krishna Janmashtami brought East London devotees together in a heartfelt celebration of the Lord's appearance. Across the yatra, local hall programs and home abhishekam ceremonies with vibrant kirtans welcomed families into the festivities. Devotees dedicated selfless hours to temple service, cooking, and logistics, staying late into the night for the ecstatic midnight darshan at the temple.

Across East London, Janmashtami hall programmes were organised at different locations, creating opportunities for devotees and members of the community to participate in this auspicious occasion. Taking Prabhupada's books to Grays High Street for the first time touched many inquisitive souls.

Sri Radhashtami was a special occasion to express deep devotion to Srimati Radharani. A magnificent highlight was the collective creation of hand-crafted lotus flower outfits for Deities across all Dhams. Together with home abhishekams, soulful kirtans, and temple darshan, devotees gathered in immense gratitude for Her boundless mercy.

Jagannātha Swāmī Ratha Yatra in Ilford

Written by Anuradha Acyutapriya devi dasi

3,500 Gather for Ilford Ratha Yatra 2026

On Sunday, **4th October 2026**, over 3,500 visitors gathered in Ilford, East London, to celebrate the grand Ratha Yatra of Their Lordships Sri Jagannatha, Sri Baladeva, and Srimati Subhadra Maharani.

The sacred procession began at Valentines Park with an auspicious classical dance performance. As the magnificently decorated chariot rolled past Ilford Station toward Ilford High Street, crowds of all backgrounds joined together to pull the ropes, chant the Hare Krishna Mahamantra, and recite the Jagannathastakam.

Civic Dignitaries Launch Damodar Puja

The festival was honored by prominent civic leaders, including ***Cllr Bert Jones*** (Mayor of Redbridge), ***Cllr Sunny Brar*** (Cabinet Secretary for Policing), and ***Cllr Yogesh Saini***. Senior ISKCON leaders ***HG Dayal Mora Das*** (Temple President, ISKCON London), ***HG Parusuram Das*** (Director, Food for All), and ***HG Tribhangananda Das*** also joined the celebrations. A special ceremony marked the launch of the sacred Damodar Puja season, inviting local families to offer lamps to Lord Damodara.

Festival Highlights

- **Main Tent:** Toddler dance performances, youth dramas, and ecstatic kirtans.
- **Bhakti Corner:** Connected visitors with local East London sangas and resources.
- **Kids Corner:** Engaged children with creative crafts, games, and fun.
- **Sankirtan:** Devotees shared Srila Prabhupada's books
- **Prasadam Distribution:** 3,500 warm plates of prasadam were served.





Bhadra Campaign: Spreading Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

Written by Ranjan Nimai das



With the causeless mercy of Sri Sri Guru and Gauranga, and the enthusiastic participation of devotees across East London, the Bhadra Campaign concluded on a wonderful note. Through collective devotion, the yatra surpassed its initial Sankalpa of 60 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam sets, ***distributing an inspiring total of 67 sets!***

The campaign brought together devotees from five Dhams, each contributing wholeheartedly towards this sacred service of sharing Srila Prabhupada's timeless teachings.

Bhadra Campain Highlights

- **Mathura Dham:** 17 sets distributed
- **Navadvipa Dham:** 9 sets distributed
- **Dwarka Dham:** 15 sets distributed
- **Ekachakra Dham:** 15 sets distributed
- **Jagannatha Dham:** 12 sets distributed

Beyond Numbers: A Legacy of Bhakti

Beyond the figures, this accomplishment represents 67 sacred opportunities to bring divine wisdom, devotion, and Krishna consciousness into people's daily lives. Every set placed in a home creates an enduring haven for families to read, reflect upon, and connect with the message of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

A heartfelt expression of gratitude goes to every devotee who participated in this seva through book distribution, sponsorship, encouragement, and prayer. The enthusiasm, dedication, and unity demonstrated throughout the campaign made this achievement possible.

📜 ***"There is no doubt about it, to distribute books is our foremost duty. If you sell one book, that means you go one step forward in your spiritual life."***

— HDG A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda

🎨 Gopal Kids School Events

Planting the Seeds of Bhakti in Young Hearts (written by Priyatama Madhavi devi dasi)



The toddlers club children enjoyed a vibrant summer filled with outdoor activities and devotional classes!

🍓 Summer Outings & Fruit Picking

Our little ones took part in several exciting outdoor trips, including playing together in local parks, and a fruit-picking farm trip. The children had immense fun harvesting fresh strawberries, blueberries, and blackberries directly from the fields. Through this hands-on activity, they discovered the beauty of Krishna in the form of Mother Nature and His kindness in providing us with food.

🌸 Joyful Weekly Classes

Our regular sessions were packed with spiritual learning and fun. Through singing, dancing, games, and creative crafts, the children learned:

- Simple shlokas and prayers.
- Inspiring pastimes of Lord Krishna.
- Core spiritual values and gentle etiquette.

Coming Soon: Stay tuned for an exciting new series to be launched by Gopal Kids School very soon!

Bhakti Vriksha Dham (Circle) Highlights

Bhakti Vriksha Highlights - Jagannath Dham

Written by Satyavati Harini devi dasi

Home Gathering with HG Pranavananda Das

On 10th August, East Ham BV hosted a special home gathering with HG Pranavananda Das, attended by around 70 devotees and newcomers. Prabhu spoke on "*How Bhagavan Protects His Devotees in Three Ways*", inspiring attendees to deepen their chanting and daily practice. The gathering warmly welcomed several new families introduced through book distribution.



Evening Discourse with HG Pranavananda Das

On 8th August, 70 devotees and guests gathered for an inspiring lecture by HG Pranavananda Das on the "Power of Association." Prabhu captivatingly presented Krishna Consciousness through pastimes like Gajendra Moksha, deeply impacting attendees and inspiring a new family to begin attending local Bhakti Vriksha sessions.



Srila Prabhupada Night

On 11th September, Dartford and Orpington outreach devotees arranged a special Srila Prabhupada Night, inviting HG Aravinda Das and HG Yamuneswari Devi Dasi. The speakers delivered inspiring talks on Srila Prabhupada's mission, personal struggles, historic achievements, and boundless compassion, giving attendees deep inspiration for their devotional lives.



An Evening with HG Chaitanya Charan Das

On 26th September, around 45 devotees from the Dartford and Orpington groups gathered in Orpington for an enlightening evening with guest speaker HG Chaitanya Charan Das. Devotees enjoyed sweet kirtan, spiritual katha, and uplifting association together.



Bhakti Vriksha Highlights - Mathura Dham

Written by Yogeshvara Gopinath das

Deities Anniversary at Dina Mataji's Residence

3rd August: Hari Tosnam BV celebrated the 3rd anniversary of Dina Mataji's Deities with sweet kirtan and congregational devotion.



Trip to Bhaktivedanta Manor

9th August: 15 devotees from Mathura Dham took an early morning trip to Bhaktivedanta Manor to attend Mangala Aarti and celebrate Dina Mataji's birthday.



Deities Anniversary at CenterWay BV

10th August: CenterWay BV gathered roughly 70 devotees at Sarvaishwarya Krishna Prabhu's house to celebrate his Deities' 2nd anniversary and receive Their Lordships' blessings.



HG Sundar Chaitanya Goswami Maharaj Lecture

13th August: Ujwala Mataji hosted a session at her residence with HG Sundar Chaitanya Goswami Maharaj. Roughly 40 devotees joined for an ecstatic kirtan and talk.



HG Yamuneswari Mataji Birthday Celebration

14th August: A combined Mathura Dham BV session provided association with HG Yamuneswari Devi Dasi and HG Aravinda Das.



Kirtan Evening hosted by Fremantle Road BV

21st August: Fremantle Road BV hosted a soul-stirring kirtan evening at Monica S. Mataji's house, where roughly 30 devotees gathered to relish the chanting.



An Evening with HH Bhakti Purusottama Swami

9th September: Roughly 60 devotees gathered for an enlightening evening and scriptural association with HH Bhakti Purusottama Swami.

Community Food Hub Grand Opening in Barking

10th September: Mathura Dham devotees supported the grand opening of the new Food Hub at Barking Hall, inaugurated by local Barking councillors, community dignitaries, and Food For All founder HG Parasuram Das.



Bhakti Vriksha Highlights - Dwaraka Dham

Written by Manohar Nitai Chadra das and Supriya Jahnava devi dasi

Sri Chaitanya Chandra Nithyananda Ram Anniversary

23rd August: Dwaraka Dham celebrated the 10th anniversary of Sri Chaitanya Chandra Nithyananda Ram. Nearly 100 devotees gathered for the celebration, which concluded with an inspiring spiritual class by HG Yamuneswari Devi Dasi.



Janmashtami Children's Talent Showcase

12th September: Local devotees from Grays and South Ockendon, supported by Nimai Nitai Bhakti Vriksha from Barkingside, hosted a Janmashtami Children's Talent program celebrating young devotees' talents and devotion.



Bhakti Vriksha Highlights - Navadweep Dham

Written by Rasaraja Gopikesha das

Colchester Japa Marathon (26th September)

Devotees from Nimai BV (Colchester) organized a dedicated Japa Marathon session to deepen their daily chanting practice and spiritual focus.



ISKCON London - Temple Services

Written by Dipankar das



Krishna's Janmashtami Festival

4th Sep: Our biggest celebration, honoring Lord Krishna's birth, is a vibrant display of community love. Here, a devotee is captured dedicating service to Their Lordships, Sri Sri Radha-Londoneswara.

Sunday Feast Cooking

It was a beautiful experience welcoming devotees from Nawadwip Dham (Chelmsford, Southend, and Basildon) for their first cooking service for Sri Sri Radha-Londoneswara.

Nawadwip Dham Devotees prepared and cooked with great enthusiasm and humility. Their eagerness to serve was heartwarming, finding spiritual fulfillment in simple yet meaningful service.

It reminded us that devotional service is measured by love and sincerity, not the size of the task.

Through teamwork, they experienced the joy of offering their time for Their Lordships' pleasure.

May Sri Sri Radha-Londoneswara bless and inspire more devotees to develop their relationship with Krishna and feel the bliss of devotional life.

London Mellows (Kirtan Mela)

A collective immersion into the nectar of Kirtan, connecting hearts through the Holy Name—capturing a devotee's joyful Kirtan service in London.





📖 Sadhana Corner: Chanting the Holy Name

Written by Anuradha Acyutapriya devi dasi

📜 ***"Hare Krishna Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare,***
Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare"

Chanting the Hare Krishna maha-mantra is more than a spiritual practice; it is a loving invitation to welcome Krishna into our hearts. With sincere chanting and attentive hearing, we gradually cleanse our consciousness and awaken our dormant love for Him.

A Simple Daily Chanting Practice

- **Begin with gratitude:** Offer a short prayer to Krishna and seek His blessings before you begin.
- **Chant attentively:** Set a fixed time daily to chant the maha-mantra, focus on hearing every syllable.
- **Create a regular habit:** Choose a peaceful time, in the morning, and gradually build consistency.
- **Carry Krishna in your heart:** Always remember His holy names and offer your activities to Him.

Remember, spiritual progress begins with **sincere effort, not perfection**. Let us make chanting a joyful part of our daily lives and allow Krishna's holy name to guide us towards peace, devotion, and lasting happiness.

🎯 **THIS MONTH'S SĀDHANA CHALLENGE**

👂 Don't just chant the mantra; **HEAR IT!** Hear every syllable

🧘 **Be fully present:** When you notice your mind wandering towards other thoughts, gently bring it back to the sound of Krishna's name. Don't become discouraged; simply focus on the Holy Name.

🙏 **Chant with the intention to hear:** Instead of focusing on how many rounds you complete, focus on how attentively you chant each mantra.

💭 **Reflect at the end:** After your chanting, take a moment to reflect: How much of my chanting was I actually hearing?

🥗 Bottle Gourd (Sorakkai/Lau) Kootu

Written by Tamohara Jagannath das

🥣 Ingredients

- Bottle gourd – 500 g, peeled and diced
- Yellow moong dal – ½ cup
- Grated coconut – ½ cup
- Cumin seeds – ¾ tsp
- Black pepper – ¼ tsp, optional
- Turmeric – ¼ tsp
- Salt – to taste
- Water – approximately 1½ cups



🔥 For Tempering

- Olive oil – 1 tbsp
- Mustard seeds – ½ tsp
- Curry leaves – 8–10
- Hing – pinch

☀️ Sattvik Summer Benefits

- Light and easy to digest
- Rich in water and fibre
- Moong dal provides plant protein
- Coconut adds healthy fats and flavour
- Gentle, nourishing and
- Suitable for a sattvic, no-chilli meal
- Complements rice and sambar.

👩‍🍳 Method

1. Cook moong dal with turmeric until soft.
2. Cook bottle gourd with salt and a little water until tender. Don't add too much water as it releases moisture.
3. Grind coconut + cumin + black pepper with little water.
4. Add cooked dal and coconut paste to the bottle gourd.
5. Simmer for 5–7 minutes until creamy and thick.
6. Heat olive oil, add mustard seeds, curry leaves and hing.
7. Pour over the kootu and mix.

💡 ***Devotional Note:*** *Offer to Lord Krishna with love and gratitude before serving to your family and guests!*



Upcoming Events Calendar

Written by Vinoda Srigauranga das

Date	Day	Festival
07-Oct-26	Wednesday	Gita Gyan 1st day - START
18-Oct-26	Sunday	ELBV retreat with HH Bhakti Pracharak Swami Maharaj
25-Oct-26	Sunday	Karthik Maas begins, Damodar Pooja begins
08-Nov-26	Sunday	Deepawali
09-Nov-26	Monday	Govardhan Puja
13-Nov-26	Friday	Disappearance of Srila Prabhupada (Fast till Noon)
17-Nov-26	Tuesday	Gopastami, Gosthastami
20-Nov-26	Friday	First day of Bhisma panchak
24-Nov-26	Tuesday	Last day of Bhisma panchak
15-Dec-26	Tuesday	57th Anniversary of Sri Sri RadhaLondoniswara
20-Dec-26	Sunday	Moksada Ekadashi - ELBV Gita Yajna
27-Dec-26	Sunday	Disappearance of Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur (Fast till Noon)

Seva & Volunteering Call-outs

Written by Vinoda Srigauranga das

🪔 **Gita Yajna — Sunday, 20th Dec**

Location: Soho Temple

Sevā: Various Service Opportunities (Major)

Contact: Dipankar Prabhu

📞Dipankar Prabhu: 07511 165909

📞Tamohara Prabhu: 07919 332954

Announcements & Notices

Written by Vinoda Srigauranga das

📲 **Stay connected with East London BV - Join our new official WhatsApp Channel!**

We are **transitioning our official communications**. The existing ELBV Announcements WhatsApp group will be closed by the end of December. Join the channel today to receive all upcoming event updates directly to your phone! Scan with your phone camera to join instantly!