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# ISKCON Amsterdam

## Year Report 2024

### ISKCON Kerkgenootschap

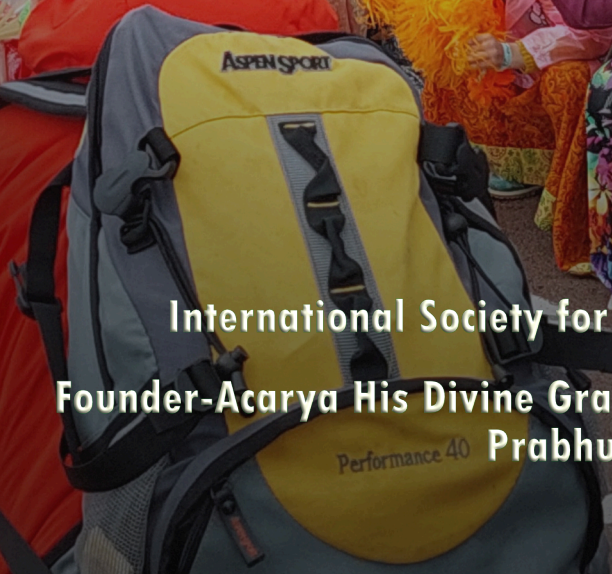
### Stichting ISKCON Trading



ISKCON  
AMSTERDAM

International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Founder-Acarya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami  
Prabhupada





*Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare*



**All glories to Srila Prabhupada, thanks to whose efforts we could learn about Krishna Consciousness. And by doing so, saved us all from this existence in material life.**

*Sri Sri Karuna-Nitai Gauracandra*



ISKCON Amsterdam Year Report  
2024

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With gratitude to: Jankinatha d, Rati  
Manjari dd, Citralekha dd, Ashta  
Sakhi dd, Prana dd, bh. Rimpu, bh.  
Sreenivasulu, bhn. Violeta



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# Preface

When Srila Prabhupada founded the International Movement for Krishna Consciousness in New York in 1966, he set out a clear mission. The seven goals in this mission are as written in the frame below

1 To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large and to educate all people in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values in life and to achieve real unity and peace in the world.

2 To propagate a consciousness of Krishna (God), as it is revealed in the great scriptures of India, Bhagavad-gita and Srimad-Bhagavatam.

3 To bring the members of the Society together with each other and nearer to Krishna, the prime entity, thus developing the idea within the members, and humanity at large, that each soul is part and parcel of the quality of Godhead (Krishna).

4 To teach and encourage the sankirtana movement, congregational chanting of the holy name of God, as revealed in the teachings of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

5 To erect for the members and for society at large a holy place of transcendental pastimes dedicated to the personality of Krishna.

6 To bring the members closer together for the purpose of teaching a simpler, natural way of life.

7 With a view towards achieving the aforementioned purposes, to publish and distribute periodicals, magazines, books and other writings.



As an official ISKCON temple, it is our duty to put these goals into practice as much as possible. In 2024, we have therefore organized various activities that cover these goals. In addition to the well-known Sunday Feast, where a lot of energy and time is spent by the volunteers every week, more attention is now also going into, for example, home programs. In addition, we try to be more present on street, by organizing Harinama more often. And for the Book Distribution on street, an activity that had been somewhat neglected previously, we organized a number of events for it (Book Distribution Party).

The challenge now is to maintain this very positive line in preaching activities. The activities of ISKCON Amsterdam are mainly carried out by a select number of volunteers. Finding new volunteers who want to contribute in a structural way has proven to be very difficult. In general, there is a need for pujaris, cooks and people who can do all-round work. The task of the temple board is to arrange this. Other challenges are finding a new temple building, something that also took a lot of time in 2024, but unfortunately has not yet produced any results.

In short, enough to do in 2025!

Looking back on 2024, we can say that it was a very successful year, in which we welcomed many new visitors, organised great events and were more present on the streets.

We would like to thank all guest speakers, volunteers, donors and visitors for your support or presence. And of course we hope that you will remain connected to ISKCON Amsterdam for a long time to come.

Haribol! On behalf of  
the Temple Board of  
ISKCON Amsterdam,

Your servant,

Bhakta Vidjay





# Harinama

By Rati Manjari dd

## WHY DO WE CHANT HARE KRISHNA IN THE STREETS?

If you have ever seen devotees of Krishna singing and dancing in the streets, you may have wondered, what is this?



Here follows a short explanation of the history of Harinam Sankirtan, and how we engage in it in ISKCON Amsterdam, and beyond.

### The Most Effective Process

Harinam Sankirtan, the congregational chanting of the Holy Names of Krishna, is at the heart of the mission of ISKCON. This practice, inaugurated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, holds a unique and essential place in the spiritual outreach of the Krishna consciousness movement. As emphasized in the scriptures, the chanting of the Holy Names—especially the Maha mantra, *Hare Krishna Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare*—is the most effective process of self-realization in this age of Kali.



### Goals we strive for by going on Harinam

By regularly going on Harinam Sankirtan, we hope to fulfill several crucial objectives:

#### Spreading the Holy Name:

Sri Krishna Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission is to share Krishna's Holy Names in every town and village. Through public chanting, we directly participate in this divine plan, offering everyone an opportunity to hear and chant the Holy Names.

#### Fulfilling Srila Prabhupada's Desire:

Srila Prabhupada, ISKCON's founder-acharya, emphasized the importance of spreading Harinam as a primary method of sharing Krishna consciousness. By engaging in this activity, we honor his instructions and contribute to the global Sankirtan movement.

#### Purification of the Environment:

The vibration of the Holy Name purifies the atmosphere, uplifting the spiritual consciousness of the surroundings and benefiting not only human beings but all living entities, including animals, birds, plants and insects.

#### Outreach and Compassion:

Harinam Sankirtan allows us to connect with people from all walks of life. By bringing the Holy Name to the streets we give individuals a chance to experience Krishna's mercy, even if they are unfamiliar with Vedic culture.

#### Devotional Unity:

Harinam Sankirtan is a collective act of devotion, where we aspire to come together in a mood of service. This unity not only strengthens the participants' faith but also creates a powerful spiritual energy that inspires others.

### Harinam in ISKCON Amsterdam

Members of ISKCON Amsterdam regularly assemble in front of the Central Station on a Thursday or Saturday. We walk into the busy city center and sometimes even the red light district, to spread the Maha Mantra to thousands of people at a time. After an ecstatic Maha Harinam, His Grace Mahatma Prabhu once stated: "Amsterdam is the Sankirtan Capital of the universe." Thus he pointed out the fantastic opportunities the many walkways of the



streets of Amsterdam offer to connect with unlimited souls in a short time. Therefore we go out as often as we can, and on Vaishnava Festival days we make it a point to, along with a Temple Program, go out on Harinam also, so everyone we meet can receive the mercy of the Lord.

### HSNL: Spreading the Holy Name all across the Netherlands!

Started in September 2020, the Harinam Sankirtan Nederland (HSNL) Team embarked on an incredible challenge: to spread the Holy Name of Krishna to every town and village of the Netherlands!

Guided by the mission of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, since then, we have brought the Maha mantra to 53 different Dutch cities and towns, slowly fulfilling the divine vision of spreading love and devotion to all corners of Holland.

### How it works

Every second Saturday of the month, our Harinam group visits a different province in the Netherlands, chanting Hare Krishna and dancing in public spaces, inviting everyone to connect with the transformative power of the Holy Name. Through rain, wind, and sunshine, our dedicated team remains unwavering, bringing joy, spiritual upliftment and a sense of unity to countless people. Now that we are entering the smaller cities, chances are that many of the onlookers have never before witnessed a Harinam Party! This simple fact excites us every time and inspires us to continue on and on. After the Harinam we sit together and honor prasadam, either in a nearby home of a

devotee or in a parking lot or shopping center. Thus the national Harinams offer a beautiful opportunity to associate with devotees and develop spiritual friendships, which warm and fulfill our hearts.

### Want to join us?

If you too would like to participate in one of our Harinams, either in Amsterdam or in the country, you are more than welcome! Please contact Rati Manjari devi dasi at [rati\\_nl@yahoo.com](mailto:rati_nl@yahoo.com) and +31621268369 for more details.

### Looking Ahead: Our Plans for 2025

As we move forward into 2025, our vision is to continue spreading the Holy Name with enthusiasm and dedication. This year, we plan to increase the local Harinams in Amsterdam, to print flyers to better connect with people and inform them about our activities, thus creating more opportunities for engagement. Additionally, we aim to dedicate more time to book distribution, sharing the timeless wisdom of Vedic scriptures alongside the chanting of the Maha mantra. We are also exploring ways to enhance the presentation of Harinam Sankirtan, making it even more accessible and impactful. With these efforts, we hope to deepen our service and inspire more individuals to join us in this transcendental mission of spreading love of God.

Thank you for your interest in Harinam Sankirtan! We look forward to meet you on the streets sometime soon!

Meanwhile, let's all Chant Hare Krishna and Be Happy!



# Book Distribution

By Jankinatha d.

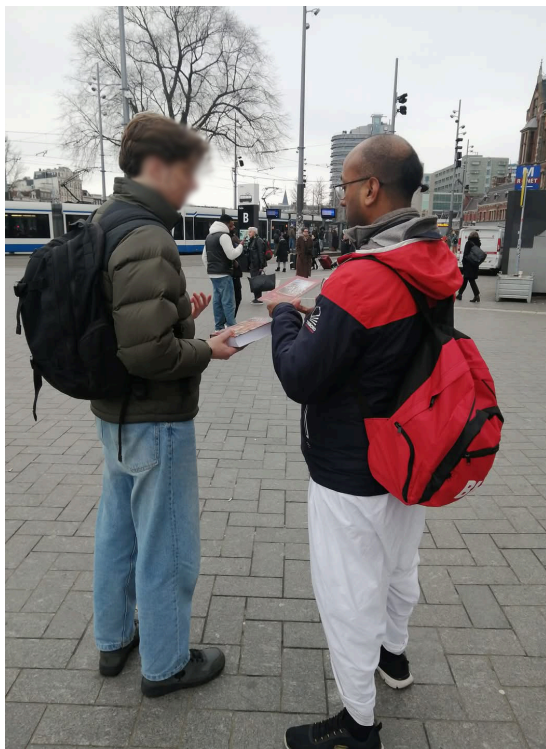
drstva tesam mitha nram  
avajnanatmatam nram  
tretadisu harer arca  
kriyayai kavibhih kṛta

**My dear King, when great sages and saintly persons saw mutually disrespectful dealings at the beginning of Tretā-yuga, Deity worship in the temple was introduced with all paraphernalia. (Srimad Bhagavatam canto 7 chapter 14 text 39)**

In the purport, Srila Prabhupada writes the following: Whenever there is a possibility to worship the Deity, we may establish many centers, but generally we should give more stress to the distribution of transcendental literature, for this will be more effective in converting people to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Dandavats, All glories to the devotees, Transcendental Book Distribution ki jaya!

Book distribution is one of the core activities of our movement. By distributing books gives the chance to let Srila Prabhupada preach to the people. People won't come to Krishna consciousness themselves, therefore it is important that the devotees go to them.



*“There is no doubt about it: To distribute books is our most important activity. The temple is a place not for eating and sleeping, but a base from which we send out our soldiers to fight with maya. “Fight with maya” means to drop thousands and millions of books into the lap of the conditioned souls.” (August 3, 1973, Letter to Rameshvara)*

Srila Prabhupada wanted that “every devotee in our movement will know the art of distributing books.” Book distribution pleases Srila Prabhupada, and pleasing Srila Prabhupada is the real basis of success.

*“My first concern is that my books shall be published and distributed profusely all over the world. Practically books are the basis of our Movement. Without our books, our preaching will have no effect.” (January 20, 1972, Letter to Mandali-bhadra)*

In Amsterdam most books are distributed by basically two groups of devotees. Via the temple on a weekly basis, a book is given to

all newcomers, and in addition there are the regularly recurring larger programs, such as Kingsday, Janmastami and the Kirtan Mela where there is always a book table. Books are also distributed in the outreach programs that take place in Eindhoven, Utrecht and other places.

The second group of devotees are individual devotees who often buy the books in the temple or at BBT and then distribute them themselves, during the harinamas, on special days and via the small libraries that can now be found everywhere in the Netherlands.

*“We can say that all these big so-called philosophers are simply mudhas. Perhaps I am the first to do it. Our philosophy is perfect, and we cannot be defeated by anyone. So it is up to you to learn it and be able to present it nicely. Now you have everything: respect, philosophy, money, temples, books – all these things I have given – but I am an old man, and my notice is already there. Now it is up to you how to manage it. If you cannot increase it, you should at least maintain what I have given you. You cannot accuse me that I have not given you anything. So it is a great responsibility you now have.” (August 26, 1975, Letter to Jagannatha Suta)*

Book distribution gives the chance to approach people on the streets, and if they are interested, engage in talks about Krishna consciousness with them. And at the end such a person might actually take a book to read. But even if someone does not look interested, it still can be worthy to give him or her a book. We have several examples in the past where these books ended up with someone who later became a devotee, maharaja or even initiating guru.

The street outreach, although there are devotees doing book distribution on individual basis, can be improved. Going on the streets on book distribution in groups has several advantages. It inspires and motivates all the participants, participants can learn from each other, and it might help devotees that are less comfortable approaching people on the streets. There is a need for training more devotees to become book distributors. And to reach that, it is necessary to create opportunities where devotees can go on book distribution in groups.

During the Book Marathon in December 2024, on the day of the Advent of the

Bhagavad Gita, a group of devotees actually went on book distribution in front of Amsterdam Central Station and surroundings. The experience was magnificent. Several conversations with interested people took place and many books were distributed.

The idea is to create more of these occasions. Of course it will be a challenge, since most of the devotees of our congregation have full time jobs and families. However, we see the importance of this activity and want to put this through.

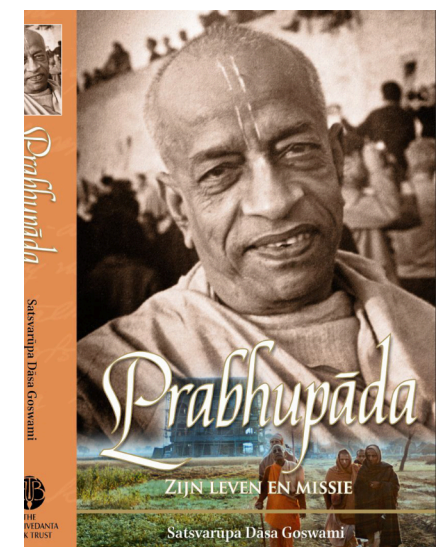
Supporting the book distribution can also be in a more indirect way. Devotees can for example prepare prasadam for the distributors, or drive them to places to distribute books. Donations for acquiring books are also very much welcome.

Perhaps it is also an idea to distribute the digital version of the books via social media. This is done in Suriname and there is interest.

Another possibility is to also ask aspiring devotees, those who want initiation, to distribute books for a certain period, for example 1 book per week for a set period.

And of course occasionally emphasize the importance of Srila Prabhupada's books and their distribution in lectures at the Sunday festival.

Whoever is interested, is invited to join this attempt. We can already organise a book distribution party with two persons. So please contact us if you feel inspired. In the meantime please continue reading Srila Prabhupada's books, chant Hare Krishna and be happy!





# New Temple Building

By Citralekha dd

The vision for this project has been in our hearts for many years. Our current temple, while cherished, has often proved to be too small to accommodate our growing community. It also has several limitations, including restrictions from neighbors and the inability to facilitate devotees staying overnight. These factors prevent us from e.g. ensuring continuous care for the deities, offering an ashram possibility for serious devotees and organizing a full morning program, among other activities. This has driven our strong desire to establish a new temple that meets the spiritual and practical needs of our community. We are incredibly enthusiastic to share the progress of this budding project with you, as it marks an exciting new chapter for our community.

In order to take practical steps in realizing this project, we have created three dedicated teams driving this project forward:



1. The Research Team - Focused on identifying potential locations for the temple.
2. The Financial Team - Responsible for ensuring the financial feasibility of the project.
3. The Promotion Team - Tasked with creating visibility and building support for the project.

These teams are interconnected, with their work forming a cohesive effort toward achieving our shared goal. The research team identifies potential properties, which the financial team evaluates for feasibility and funding opportunities. Meanwhile, the promotion team ensures the community and potential supporters are aware of the project, creating a cycle of visibility and engagement that supports the efforts of the other teams.

We will now elaborate on the roles and contributions of these three teams in more detail:



## Team 1: The Research Team

The research team is tasked with identifying potential buildings for the temple. Their responsibilities include searching for suitable properties and compiling a comprehensive list of potential buildings along with their specifications. This list is then evaluated by the temple board. Once a promising listing is identified, the next step involves scheduling a viewing. So far, one viewing has taken place, but unfortunately, the property did not meet our requirements.

## Team 2: The Financial Team

The financial team is focused on addressing the financial aspects of the project. Their primary goal is to explore ways to make the project financially viable. This includes seeking sponsors and identifying funding opportunities. The team's efforts are crucial in laying the foundation for the project's realization.

## Team 3: The Promotion Team

The promotion team is responsible for creating visibility for the project. Their tasks include developing a website and producing promotional materials to spread awareness and attract support. Their work ensures that the project reaches a broader audience, building interest and momentum.

## Collaborative Efforts

To maintain alignment and foster collaboration, regular meetings are organized where all three teams come together to share their progress. These meetings provide an opportunity to discuss challenges, exchange ideas, and ensure that everyone remains on the same page.

Although we are still in the early stages, the our enthusiasm gives us confidence that we are on the right path. Together, we are striving to make this vision a reality.

We are truly excited to share this project with you and look forward with hope and confidence to the future. It is a blessing to work together on creating a new temple that will not only enrich our spiritual community but also serve as a source of inspiration for many. We pray and hope that this project will come to a beautiful and fruitful conclusion in the near future, where together we can build a place of peace, love, and devotion.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada! Hare Krishna.







Picture by Just Shoot Me Sharma

# Ratha Yatra - Chariot festival

By Bhakta Rimpu

**!!Jai Jagannath!!**

On Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2024, was celebrated more than 5000 years old festival of Sri Sri Jagannath Ratha Yatra in the city of Amsterdam. Their Lordship arrives from Radha Desh Temple in Belgium to bless the citizens of Amsterdam. A big chariot (Ratha) on which sits the Lord of the Universe, Sri Jagannath Mahaprabhu, along with his brother Balbhadra and Sister Subhadra devi was pulled with a rope by all the enthusiast devotees. Ratha Yatra (Parade) starts from Hare Krsna Temple in De Pijp going through various bustling streets and markets of Amsterdam to Dam Square. Around 1000 devotees participated in this parade by lovingly singing and dancing on the spiritually eternal Hare Krsna Maha mantra: Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare.

At Dam Square, the destination of walking parade, a grand cultural festival of India was organized. More than 35000 people pass by dam square and got the opportunity to participate in this cultural festival. Around 5000 FREE vegetarian meals including lemonade were distributed. Various cultural performances including Vedic singing, dances, kirtan, etc. wins the heart of everyone.

People interested in Vedic philosophy and spirituality were found spending their time at the book stall and exhibition booths. Spiritual seekers got opportunity to interact with Vedic scholars and guru for a short conversation and Q&A.

Also, there were booths for Heena (Hand Tattoo) for the interested ones. Kids were queued up at stalls with free balloons and free popcorns. At festival of India, it was also possible to buy for an affordable donation various delicious Indian and Western snacks including Italian Pizza, Puffs, Cakes, Cupcakes, Bhelpuri, Pani Puri, Dosa, Surinamese Bara, Chole bhature, Lassi and other mouth-watering items.

Festival was realized by a 4-member team and with more than 100 volunteers. A budget of around 25000 EUR was needed which was generously donated by temple visitors and various shops like Little India Amsterdam, Indian Bazaar Amsterdam, Sai Baba Temple Den Haag, Ekirana Rotterdam, Star Asian Super Market Amstelveen, and more.



# Other festivals

In 2024, the ISKCON Amsterdam Drama team 'Akhandana Ananda' offered a series of presentations, endeavoring to bring the timeless tales of Lord Krishna's pastimes to life through creative performances and deepening the spiritual experience of the community.

By Bh. Reetam

**Ram Mandir Commemoration:** The year began with a heartfelt drama titled "Ram Bharat Milan" recounting the story of Bharat Maharaj's sacrifice, unwavering duty and devotion while waiting for Lord Ram's return to Ayodhya.



**Nityananda Trayodashi:** On this auspicious day, we performed "The Rising Moon of Ekachakra," a dramatic journey of Lord Nityananda's childhood pastimes and His eternal residence within the Ekachakra dham, witnessed through the eyes of Jahnava Devi.

**Gaur Purnima:** The drama "Gaur Gadadhara Leela" brought to life the eternal relationship between Lord Chaitanya and Gadadhara Pandit, highlighting their childhood, youth and the manifestation of the Tota Gopinath deity.

**Narasimha Chaturdashi:** We portrayed the devotion of Prahlad Maharaj and the appearance of Lord Narasimha, a testament to unconditional surrender and divine protection. The drama also explored the backstory of the demons Hiranyakashipu and Hiranyaksh as part of Lord Vishnu's cosmic plan.

**Ram Navami:** Our presentation "Sacrifice in Devotion" honored the history of the Ram Mandir, focusing on the sacrifices made by countless devotees, including the martyrs Ram and Sharat Kothari, who gave their lives in service to Lord Ram.

Other festivals celebrated at ISKCON Amsterdam include the following:

- Varaha Dvadashi
- Nityananda Trayodashi
- Gaura Purnima
- Appearance days of Advaitya Acarya, Gadadhara Pandita and Srivasa Pandita
- Disappearance day of HG Jayananda prabhu
- Vamana Dvadashi
- Appearance day of Matsya Avatara (during Sunday Feast)
- Nrsimha Caturdashi
- Panihati Chida Dahi Festival
- Ramanavami
- Balarama Purnima
- Janmashtami
- Radhashtami
- Srila Prabhupada Appearance and Disappearance Day
- Installation day Sri Sri Karuna-Nitai Gauracandra
- Govardhana Puja
- Gita Jayanti

**Panihati Chira Dahi Festival:** A delightful children's drama depicted Lord Nityananda's mercy to Raghunath Das, showing the power of divine compassion.

At the **Ratha Yatra in Dam Square**, we performed "The Story of Ajamila", portraying the redemption of Ajamila through his utterance of the holy name of Lord Narayan, demonstrating the transformative power of the Holy Name.

**Janmashtami:** We closed the year with "Eternal Vraja: Uddhava in Vrindavan", a drama illustrating Uddhava's visit to Vrindavan. His encounter with Nanda Maharaj and the gopis revealed the eternal, unconditional love of the residents of Vraja and the intimate relationship between Lord Krishna and His devotees.



## Cultural Janmashtami

The Cultural Janmashtami celebration held on the 31st of August at Oranjekerk was a spectacular and spiritually uplifting event! The organizers, ISKCON Amsterdam, had the great fortune of serving around 800 enthusiastic devotees and visitors. The venue came alive with vibrant festivities and a heartfelt devotion to Lord Krishna.

### Key Highlights of the Event

#### Food Stalls

Visitors delighted in a variety of flavorful dishes, offering a gastronomic experience that captured the essence of traditional and contemporary cuisine.

#### Cultural Performances

The event featured mesmerizing dance performances and captivating dramas that brought the stories of Lord Krishna to life. These performances showcased immense talent and dedication, leaving the audience spellbound.

#### Ecstatic Kirtans

Soul-stirring kirtans filled the atmosphere with divine energy, creating a collective sense of devotion and joy among the attendees.

#### Sacred Rituals

The spiritual segment included a beautiful Abhishek (ritual bathing of the deity), followed by an Aarti that resonated throughout the venue, inspiring devotion among all present.

#### Jhulan (Swing Ceremony)

The Jhulan ceremony, featuring a beautifully decorated swing for Lord Krishna, offered attendees an enchanting and participatory experience.

#### Sumptuous Prasadam

The evening concluded with the distribution of sumptuous prasadam, allowing everyone to savor the blessed offerings.

The blend of cultural expression, spiritual connection, and communal joy made this

Janmashtami event truly memorable!

## Amsterdam Kirtan Mela 2024

The Amsterdam Kirtan Mela 2024 was a spiritually enriching event that brought together devotees and kirtan enthusiasts from across the Netherlands and beyond. Hosted at the historic Oranjekerk in South Amsterdam, the Mela provided 11 hours of uninterrupted kirtan, mantra meditation, and community connection, inspiring the hearts of all who attended.

With over 300 participants, the event featured renowned kirtaniers, including HH Sacinandana Swami Maharaja, Gour Krishna, Radhika Das, Kavi and Kalindi, Ananda Monet from London, and Manu Das & Surabhi from Radhadesh, Shishtakrit from Ukraine, along with talented leaders from international and Dutch Yatras. Their soul-stirring renditions created an atmosphere of devotion and transcendence, making it a memorable experience for all.

Since its inception in 2022, the Amsterdam Kirtan Mela has grown into a hallmark kirtan festival for ISKCON Amsterdam, serving as a vibrant celebration of Krishna Consciousness.

From the very beginning, the team has recorded the kirtans and shared them via YouTube, allowing attendees to revisit the event's divine moments and spread the joy of kirtan further.

In 2024 we added 2 programs to the weekend as we started with an Adhivas ceremony on the Friday before Amsterdam Kirtan Mela and finished with a Sunday Feast with HH Sacinandana Swami.

As we look ahead to 2025, the team is committed to building upon this success, ensuring the Amsterdam Kirtan Mela continues to inspire and unite devotees in the spirit of bhakti. In 2025 we are feeling very grateful HH Sacinandana Swami agreed to come again in the weekend of 3rd and 4th of May 2025. Our team will organise Amsterdam Kirtan Mela on the 3rd of May and Holy Name Retreat on the 4th of May 2025.



## A blessed year of saintly visitors at ISKCON

Amsterdam In 2024, ISKCON Amsterdam had the great honor and privilege of welcoming several exalted souls, whose presence and guidance enriched and inspired our community very much. These special guests boosted our community through their enthusiasm, wisdom, and profound devotion. Among the most remarkable visitors were His Grace Madhava Prabhu, His Grace Mahatma Prabhu, His Holiness Svayam Bhagavan Keshava Swami and His Holiness Sacinandana Swami. Each of them brought unique blessings that helped our community grow spiritually and practically.

### A grand concert

Our time with His Grace Mahatma Prabhu was quite transformative. We were fortunate to spend several enriching days in his association, culminating in a grand concert held in a beautiful church in Den Bosch, which we rented for the day. This event was a remarkable success, drawing a completely new audience and filling the church with sacred sounds. The music and kirtan reverberated through the church and radiated outward across the Netherlands, creating a powerful atmosphere of spiritual vibration. His Grace Mahatma Prabhu's enthusiasm, personal approach and deep devotion infused every moment of our time together, making this event a memorable moment in the year for our whole yatra.

### Diving deep into the Holy Name

His Holiness Sacinandana Swami visited us around the time of the Kirtan Mela event. His visit to our temple was truly auspicious, as he helped to create an atmosphere of sanctity and divine presence before the main event would start the next day. On the day of Kirtan Mela, His Holiness Sacinandana Swami touched many hearts with his profound devotion and heartfelt kirtans. His sincere connection to the holy name was deeply inspiring and the energy he brought to the gathering was very uplifting. The following day, we were blessed with a Holy Name retreat in the serene Meditatietuin, a beautiful location nestled in the woods of the Amsterdamse bos. It was here, in the tranquil surroundings, that we had the opportunity to turn inward and connect with our hearts. His Holiness Sacinandana Swami's wisdom was conveyed in a practical and accessible way, guiding us deeper into our practice of chanting the Holy Name's of Krishna.

## Hearing with new ears

We were also blessed with the association of His Holiness Svayam Bhagavan Keshava Swami, who stayed with us for several days. During his time in Amsterdam, he led various house programs as well as temple programs, where he captivated us with his stories, personal experiences, and insightful teachings. His lectures were a source of deep inspiration and we found ourselves hanging on every word as he shared his wisdom, ideas and insights. A particularly memorable event was his visit to the University of Eindhoven, where he addressed eager students and shared the teachings of Krishna consciousness with them in a modern way. His presence was not only uplifting and fresh but also inspiring, encouraging all who met him to deepen their spiritual practice and igniting their curiosity about the path of Bhakti.

### A Year of Blessings and Growth

Looking back on 2024, we feel truly blessed to have received such esteemed and spiritually elevated guests at ISKCON Amsterdam. Their visits filled our hearts with joy, renewed our devotion and enriched our understanding of Krishna Consciousness. As we look ahead to 2025, we eagerly anticipate the arrival of more exalted souls to further enhance and enrich our community and give the Dutch Yatra another boost!





# Congregational development

By Bhakta Sreenivasulu

We have provided opportunities for volunteers interested in offering devotional services to serve Gaur Nitai. Through continuous personal follow-ups and Lord's mercy, we engaged 100+ volunteers to serve during festivals, retreats, and special programs.



We expanded our outreach by collaborating with the Eindhoven Bhakti Center, participating in celebrations and services together. We connected with many new individuals and engaged them in weekly Bhagavad Gita sessions. We also encouraged participation in ISKCON Amsterdam dramas, helping devotees connect deeper with Krishna and progress in their spiritual journey.

During Janmashtami and Ratha Yatra celebrations, we received wholehearted support from volunteers. As a token of appreciation, we gifted them Lord Jagannath's photo from Radhadesh along with special prasadam, which created a personal connection with them.

We have been organizing Bhagavad Gita classes across multiple cities in the Netherlands by connecting with families willing to host programs at their homes. During Karthik month, we approached 100+ new families, IT corporates for Deep Daan and conducted Damodar Arati and Bhagavata Katha at their homes, bringing our own Yasoda-Damodar picture, ghee wicks, and laddus prasadam. This initiative touched many families across various cities.



This Karthik deep Daan program was also published in the newsletter of Philips which touched many people made us to visit them every year.

To sustain this connection, we started weekly Saturday follow-up programs where these families gather to learn about Krishna Conscious living. We also participate in Sacinandana Maharaja's retreats at Golokadham every summer and winter to stay inspired in devotional service.

We have also automated our live streaming in YouTube which gave wider access to many new people and stay connected. Our WhatsApp groups also helped many new people to stay tuned to our regular programs.

Many young members of our congregation are taking steps toward initiation. Bhakti Marg Swami will soon visit to initiate three more devotees who have been consistently serving for over six years.

Our community is growing stronger, celebrating festivals, birthdays, samskaras, and anniversaries etc in a Krishna Conscious manner. This actually brought real meaning to many new families and are connected to us constantly.

We had the honor of being invited by the Indian Embassy for Gita Jayanti celebrations, where ISKCON Amsterdam performed a 24-minute drama encapsulating the essence of the Bhagavad Gita. Additionally, we delivered a talk on the Gita at the embassy.

We were also invited by the Indian Ambassador to present the work we do to inspire people in the process of Bhakti. This event brought together individuals from various communities, providing a wonderful opportunity to share our initiatives.

Furthermore, we were invited as chief guests for the Kannada Rajyotsava, Karnataka State Formation Day celebrations. During the event, we delivered a talk on the Ramayana, inspiring many to deepen their connection with Lord Krishna.

All of this is possible only by Srila Prabhupada's mercy, who has given us this beautiful journey to enjoy every moment with Krishna at the center.

# Kids Sunday School

By Bhn.Violeta, Prana dd and Radhadyuti dd



In September 2024, we launched a "Sunday School" at the temple, inspired by the successful program run by devotees from our Rotterdam Yatra. Announced during Janmastami 2024, the Amsterdam Sunday School began on the first Sunday of September and has since provided children aged 6 to 14 with an opportunity to deepen their Krishna consciousness and form friendships within our community.

The program is conducted entirely in English to accommodate the many expat families, ensuring that both children and parents feel comfortable participating.

The Sunday School is held biweekly on Sundays from 1:00 PM to 2:45 PM, and participants are warmly invited to join the regular Sunday program afterward. Attendance averages 10 children per session, comprising both active members' children and families who visit the temple specifically for this initiative.

An inspiring outcome has been the growing interest in Krishna consciousness among some parents, who often stay to observe the sessions and engage with the temple's activities.



Each session begins with prayers and a round of japa, setting a devotional tone. The program alternates between engaging formats, such as storytelling, quizzes, and creative projects where children actively participate. Homework is assigned in dedicated notebooks, and

lesson materials are provided in takehome folders, encouraging children to continue their learning at home. The lessons are closely tied to the festivals on the Vaishnava calendar, and we actively incorporate feedback from children and parents. For instance, at parents' request, elements of the Sunday feast program, such as guru puja and tulsi puja, have been explained in several sessions to deepen children's understanding.

Notable moments include the Kartik month programs, where children learned to offer lamps as part of Damodarashtakam prayers and continued this practice with their families throughout the month. Another highlight was constructing a model of Govardhan Hill, paired with storytelling about Krishna lifting Govardhan. These activities brought Krishna's pastimes to life and left a lasting impression on the children.

We maintain close collaboration with the Rotterdam Yatra, exchanging ideas and experiences to improve our program. In January 2025, the children from Amsterdam will join the Kirtan Mela in Rotterdam to build connections and strengthen friendships. Looking ahead, we plan to develop age-specific lesson plans tailored to different developmental stages, ensuring that children remain engaged and inspired. We also aim to organize joint activities, such as a kids' Ratha Yatra, fostering a sense of community and shared devotion among Yatras.

We express our gratitude to the temple management for their support, the parents for their trust, the volunteers for their contributions, and the children for their enthusiasm. Together, we are nurturing the next generation in Krishna consciousness and fostering a vibrant, connected community.



# Dinner Club

By Asta Sakhi dd

After a test period on the first Tuesdays of 2024, the vegetarian Dinner Club officially reopened on January 23. The Dinner Club concept for Prasadam meals originated in 2013 and has had many different faces since then until it had to close in March 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions.

In 2024, the temple room will be converted into a dining room during the Dinner Club and aims to provide a place where friends and devotees can meet and save for Food for Life, for which the profit is set aside. If necessary, the Dinner Club income supports the temple's household expenses. The best foot is put forward to offer beautiful, fresh menus in the hope of receiving generous donations from visitors.

Food for Life is a transcendental charity activity in which free vegetarian prasadam meals are distributed on the street. Food for Life is active all over the world and in 2025 it will also start again in Amsterdam, thanks to the volunteers and Dinner Club involved.



Guests have the opportunity to attend Gaura Arati which happens in the half hour before Dinner Club and since May it has been possible to be present half an hour before Gaura Arati at a new initiative; namely a reading group in which 'Chasing rhinos with the Swami', written by Syamasundar das, is read aloud. The reading aloud can also be followed live via a specially opened WhatsApp group.

The Dinner Club evenings are always pleasant and feature varied menus that playfully carry a current theme and delight in both regular and casual or curious visitors. The low-threshold accessibility creates an open atmosphere and guests feel free and inspired to make music for the Deities afterwards until the altar closes.

The volunteers and visitors look back with gratitude on no fewer than 46, including the start-up weeks, even 49 successful Tuesday Dinner Club evenings in 2024. The Dinner Club team needs more qualified chefs to continue running weekly and the search for chefs and assistants will continue in 2025.



# Deity worship

By Asta Sakhi dd

Over the past year, the pujaris of Śrī Śrī Karuna Nitai Gauracandra have once again fully committed themselves, as a team and in consultation with and support of the temple authorities, to serving the Lordships to their pleasure and satisfaction. A number of assistant volunteers have been able to help complete related tasks.

The daily manner of dealing with the Deities agreed upon at the beginning of 2021 was still successfully implemented in 2024. The manpower is modest and although a few pujaris have been said goodbye, new ones have also been recruited. The recruitment of more altar servants will continue in the coming year.

The knowledge, experience and solidarity of the pujari team has grown steadily and towards the end of 2024 it resulted in the formation of a working group for weekly pujaris in which this growth is applied.

In 2024, various projects to improve the altar and workability, plans that had existed for some time, were realized. This upward trend has caused an extra boost of enthusiasm and confidence among the pujaris to continue to implement plans for the Deities.



Through the working group, the pujaris want to be able to respond to the temple board with a concrete structure for festivals and special vaisnava days when it

designs the programs for those days, as well as to be able to present ready-made initiatives for further development of the entire Deity Worship department.

With the idea that the satisfaction of Śrī Śrī Karuna Nitai Gauracandra will reach the various departments of the temple and the services of those departments will reach the Deities, the pujari team intends to use this structure to advocate for the Deities to be ready for a new temple in which there is a more practical and extensive possibility to spread Their grace over the congregation and over Amsterdam and the surrounding area in the line of Srila Prabhupada's ISKCON.





# Financial report

Since the beginning of the year 2024, ISKCON Amsterdam has been using the services of an external accountant. This has initiated a process of professionalization in the accounting. This is noticeable because some amounts have been booked to different general ledger accounts than in previous years. This explains some of the differences that can be seen between the profit and loss accounts of 2023 and 2024. Based on experiences gained last year, some improvements will be implemented from January 2025. We hope that in this way we can provide better and more transparent financial accountability to the congregation.

## Result statement ISKCON Kerkgenootschap

| Omschrijving Description   | 01-01-2024 t/m 31-12-2024 |               | 01-01-2023 t/m 31-12-2023 |               | Begroting 2025 Forecast 2025 |               |
|--|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------|
|  | Verlies Expenses          | Winst Revenue | Verlies Expenses          | Winst Revenue | Verlies Expenses             | Winst Revenue |
| Opleidingskosten<br>Formation expenses   | 130,00                    |               |                           |               |                              |               |
| Onkostenvergoedingen vrijwilligers<br>Expenses volunteers                        | 4.355,75                  |               | 2.118,46                  |               | 3.000,00                     |               |
| Huur Gebouw<br>Rent Building   | 28.775,50                 |               | 28.992,90                 |               | 30.000,00                    |               |
| Huur storage<br>Rent storage   | 2.794,86                  |               | 1.933,39                  |               | 2.500,00                     |               |
| Onderhoud Gebouw, Keuken, Inventaris<br>Maintenance Building, Kitchen, Inventory | 3.132,10                  |               | 6.234,45                  |               | 6.000,00                     |               |
| Belastingen onroerend Goed<br>Taxes real estate                                  | 1.202,00                  |               |                           |               | 1.200,00                     |               |
| Overige huisvestingskosten<br>Other housing costs                                |                           |               | 1.149,50                  |               |                              |               |
| Kantoor benodigdheden<br>Office supplies   | 1.114,80                  |               |                           |               |                              |               |
| Onderhoud inventaris<br>Maintenance inventory                                    | 978,09                    |               |                           |               |                              |               |
| Internet & Telefoonkosten<br>Internet & phone costs                              | 582,63                    |               | 683,63                    |               | 600,00                       |               |
| Website Hosting, Domeinen<br>Website Hosting, Domains                            | 53,00                     |               | 20,00                     |               | 50,00                        |               |
| Administratiekosten<br>Administration costs                                      | 276,00                    |               | 942,47                    |               |                              |               |
| Kasverschillen<br>Cash differences   | 965,02                    |               |                           |               |                              |               |
| Algemene kosten<br>General costs   | 37,81                     |               | 101,00                    |               |                              |               |
| Afschrijvingskosten inventaris<br>Write-off inventory                            | 934,71                    |               | 934,71                    |               |                              |               |
| Bank Kosten Incasso Transfer<br>Banking costs collection                         | 766,43                    |               | 246,63                    |               | 650,00                       |               |
| Storno's Leden incasso<br>Collection return members                              |                           |               | 22,70                     |               |                              |               |
| Rente Spaarrekening<br>Interest savings account                                  |                           | 213,65        |                           | 1.214,91      |                              |               |
| Uitgaven regulier<br>Regular expenses  | 31.023,62                 |               | 10.299,43                 |               | 30.000,00                    |               |
| Uitgaven Festivals<br>Expenses Festivals   | 37.922,61                 |               | 36.980,73                 |               | 40.000,00                    |               |
| Uitgaven Deities<br>Expenses Deities   | 3.147,35                  |               | 4.216,32                  |               | 3.000,00                     |               |
| Uitgaven catering<br>Expenses catering   | 222,00                    |               | 1.415,53                  |               |                              |               |
| Inkoop boeken<br>Purchase of books   | 6.888,05                  |               | 6.557,28                  |               | 6.800,00                     |               |
| Donaties<br>Donations  | 7.861,15                  | 139.049,22    | 256,65                    | 111.006,60    | 8.000,00                     | 145.500,00    |
| Saldo  | 6.099,39                  |               | 9.115,73                  |               | 13.700,00                    |               |
| Profit/loss  |                           |               |                           |               |                              |               |
|  | 139.262,87                | 139.262,87    | 112.221,51                | 112.221,51    | 145.500,00                   | 145.500,00    |

## Clarification result statement ISKCON Kerkgenootschap

### Donations

ISKCON Kerkgenootschap's income comes entirely from donations. Donations increased in 2024 compared to 2023. Several donation campaigns during the year are responsible for this. The amount in the income statement is a sum of all donations made during the year, regardless of the purpose for which a specific donation was made. Donations can have been made for:

- \* General
- \* Sponsor Sunday Party
- \* Any event or festival
- \* Ratha Yatra
- \* New temple building
- \* Dinner Club
- \* Donation for books
- \* Donations made during Harinama and/or book distribution on the street
- \* A specific goal, such as new refrigerator for the temple kitchen

We are working on being able to specify and present this in a more transparent way at the end of 2025.

### Expense allowance volunteers

The reimbursement of expenses made by volunteers is higher in 2024 than in 2023. In addition to travel and accommodation costs for regular volunteers, this item also includes costs that have been reimbursed for, for example, kirtaneers from abroad. The increase in costs is related to the arrival of kirtaneers and artists from abroad, for example in the context of one of the festivals or the Ratha Yatra.

### Regular expenses

The regular expenses item includes expenses for the Sunday Feast, Bhoga and Dinner Club. This also includes amounts that have been advanced by volunteers, for example for groceries, and later declared to the temple.

The costs are higher in 2024 than in 2025. This is due to the better quality of ingredients that have been purchased. In addition, we have started the Dinner Club again in 2024. Costs are also incurred for this and these have now been included in this post.

Finally, expenses also include amounts that have been transferred to the savings account.

We also want to break down the costs better in the Result statement in the coming year.



Result statement Stichting ISKCON Trading

| Omschrijving Description   | 01-01-2024 t/m 31-12-2024 |               | 01-01-2023 t/m 31-12-2023 |               | Begroting 2025   |               |
|--|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|
|  | Verlies Expenses          | Winst Revenue | Verlies Expenses          | Winst Revenue | Verlies Expenses | Winst Revenue |
| Belastingen, onroerend goed<br>Taxes real estate                 |                           | 156,00        |                           |               |                  |               |
| Huisvestingskosten<br>Housing costs                              | 515,50                    |               |                           |               |                  |               |
| Inkoop inventaris en catering<br>Expenses inventory and catering | 5.544,57                  |               |                           |               | 5.000,00         |               |
| Administratiekosten<br>Administration costs                      | 2.100,00                  |               |                           |               |                  |               |
| Kasverschillen<br>Cash differences                               | 2.158,50                  |               |                           |               |                  |               |
| Bank kosten, iDeal, Paypal<br>Bank costs, iDeal, Paypal          | 83,13                     |               | 29,85                     |               |                  |               |
| Rente Spaarrekening<br>Interest Savings account                  |                           | 4,26          |                           | 0,67          |                  |               |
| Verkoop Sankirtan<br>Sales                                       |                           | 18.750,00     |                           |               |                  |               |
| Donaties Algemeen<br>General donations                           |                           | 264,16        |                           |               |                  |               |
| Donaties Leden<br>Donations members                              |                           |               |                           | 2.606,73      |                  |               |
| Saldo<br>Profit/loss   | 8.772,72                  |               | 2.577,55                  |               |                  | 5.000,00      |
|  | 19.174,42                 | 19.174,42     | 2.607,40                  | 2.607,40      | 5.000,00         | 5.000,00      |

Clarification result statement Stichting ISKCON Trading

In the last week of 2023 the temple was involved in a catering assignment, which has been booked in 2024. In the result statement this can be seen in the Sales post. Several tooling and other stuff to maintain or improve the temple building have been procured via Stichting ISKCON Trading.

In 2025 we do not expect again a big income like last year. Thus activity in Stichting ISKCON Trading will probably be lower than previous year.



Forecast 2025

The various activities that are carried out from ISKCON Amsterdam all aim to contribute to the goals that Srila Prabhupada has set for ISKCON. With this we try to please Lord Krishna and Srila Prabhupada. None of the activities that we carry out are meant to glorify or enrich ourselves, although everyone who carries out Krishna conscious activities is of course spiritually enriched. Whether it is preaching on the street, organizing a house program, temple service or festival, or reciting the Hare Krishna Maha Mantra, the ultimate beneficiary of the result of these activities is always Lord Krishna himself. With every activity that we carry out, the question is whether it will please Lord Krishna and whether it contributes to the mission of Srila Prabhupada. With this thought in mind, we work together to make the world Krishna conscious.

The coming year we have several challenges:

**Increasing our visibility:** During a Harinama on the street, we repeatedly hear the question: “Hare Krishna? Does it still exist?” It is of course positive that people have heard of the Hare Krishna movement, but it cannot be the case that people think that we no longer exist. Increasing our visibility is therefore important, not only on the street, but also with other (social and religious) organisations and government agencies.

**Attracting volunteers:** We regularly have a shortage of volunteers. Both the pujari team and the cooking team need more volunteers for the worship services and the preparation of prasadam. But also in other fields there is a lack of volunteers.

**Finding a new temple building:** The efforts that have been made by the team in question will of course continue in 2025.

The temple board would like to thank all visitors, volunteers, speakers, kirtaneers and donors for their dedicated service. Together we can make a big difference and help to make Srila Prabhupada’s mission a success.

Sri Sri Karuna-Nitai Gauracandra ki jaya! Srila Prabhupada ki jaya!







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